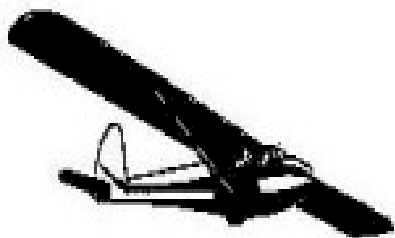
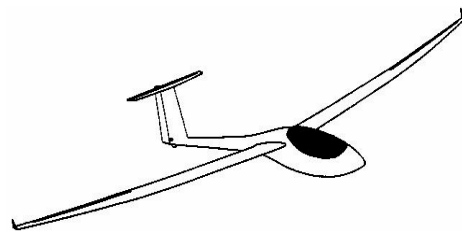


## From the home of the *Scottish Gliding Centre*

# Portmoak Press



The Scottish  
Gliding Union  
Celebrates its  
70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



The weekend of 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> July 2004 saw the SGU celebrate the club's 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The two-day event was planned to coincide with the opening of the new hangar. Our Chairman, John Williams, sums up the weekend's activities:

*On Saturday we entertained and flew our National, European, and Local political representatives as well as a number of ex-members. These included legendary pilots like Roy Surtees, James Allan, Andrew Wood, Bob McBain, Bob Smith and Geoff Berry. We were particularly pleased when Geoff agreed to "Cut the Tape" for the official opening of the new hangar. This was especially fitting, as Geoff had been involved in the building of the original hangar way back in 1957. The politicians learned a lot and seemed to enjoy their flying, and they went away with a new level of understanding of our sport, which can only be a good thing for us all.*

*Some of the ex-members cast considerable doubt on our thinking on "currency" – after two minutes handling an unfamiliar aircraft after a twenty five year break and they looked like getting their names back on those club-trophies yet again!*

*We had good press coverage with reporters from The Scotsman and the Perth and Kinross group on the day and they produced some excellent articles during the following week.*

*In the evening we saw a busy clubhouse, a packed bar, a cealidh and an excellent buffet.*

*Rab's Lake of Menteith trout*



Geoff Berry Cutting the tape at the official opening of the hangar, watched by Mike Barnacle, John Purvis, Martin O'Neill and Chairman. John Williams.

*catching prowess and Steven's cooking seem to be a very fine combination.*

*Sunday saw a continuous stream of members' spouses, friends and children being flown with the tug and three two-seaters in non-stop operation all day. No less than 37 aero-tows were done – something of a recent record I think. Did anyone spot the 2050 CFI among those P2s just tall enough to see out of the rear seat of a K21?*

*All of this took an enormous amount of organisation, time, effort, and dedication from an awful lot of individuals. All deserve our heartfelt thanks, and should feel very proud of the part they played in marking this piece of club history in such an enjoyable and successful way.*



**Editorial-Ian Easson**

First of all, apologies to all regular readers for the slight delay with this issue. I decided to hold back until after our 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event. As can be seen from John Williams’ report on page one, a good weekend was had by all. It was a privilege to meet some of the people I have been reading about as I collect my material for the book on the history of the club. The press people seemed to enjoy themselves too and I wonder if they, or the local dignitaries, knew the significance of their flights over the “T in the Park” site at Balado airfield. For anyone unsure of the link – it was at Balado that the SGU was based in the late 1940s and from there that the purchase of Portmoak was negotiated.

The hangar opening went according to plan. For reasons best known to the BGA, their gliding simulator was double-booked over our weekend and despite e-mail confirmation and acceptance of our deposit we were unable to secure it. However, we have been promised another date – which we are considering, but in the end the weather was good and everyone got to fly in real gliders.

The book is still in progress and I’m still on the lookout for more material. I am keen to get stories and photos (B&W, colour or digital). All photos will be returned so please write your details, along with the photo details - date, location, names etc. – on the back and send them to me. The best photo will get pride of place on the cover of the book, so get rummaging.

Send them to me either at the club or to “Overhill”, Ferntower Road, Crieff, Perthshire, Scotland PH7 3DB, or by e-mail.

We are still keen to get as many issues out by e-mail so if you don’t already receive this by e-mail, and would like to get an instant copy, drop me an e-mail with your details please.

Please note the cut-off dates for future issues: End of September for October, end of December for January, end of March for April, and end of June for July. Material can be sent to me either typed or hand-written and dropped in my mailbox beside the payphone in the clubhouse or you can e-mail me at [ian.easson@btinternet.com](mailto:ian.easson@btinternet.com)

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**Board Members.**

Chairman	John Williams
Secretary & Caravans	Bruce Marshall
Treasurer/Buildings/Property	Kevin Hook
Vice Chairman and Gliders	Chris Robinson
Tug, WOA and Tech. Officer	Joe Fisher
Winch & Ground equipment	Douglas Tait
Membership Comms, Office re-orgs and Publicity.	Ian Easson

**Club News**

Just after the last issue of *PP* we received news of the death of Betty Barr. Betty and her husband, Charlie, were the club stewardess and steward since the opening of the clubhouse at Portmoak. After Charlie died, Betty continued to operate the catering facilities for several years until she was involved in a car accident.

Then a couple of weeks ago we got even more shocking news.

Steve Back - Glider Pilot:

*Born June 30, 1954*

*Died July 9, 2004*

*Killed in a gliding accident at La Motte Du Caire in the French Alps.*

Steve was a unique character in the Scottish gliding world. He was a member of Feshie Gliding club and a regular flyer at the SGU. Steve was never happier than when he was flying.

Steve made an impression on everyone he met. He brought a relentless and unique sense of humour with him, wherever he went.

He will be sadly missed by his family and his many friends in the gliding community.

Chic Sermanni



Nick Stratton is organising a trip to Gransden Lodge (Cambridge Gliding Club) for 16<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> August. Gransden is a great place especially in late August: the harvest is in and the flat stubble fields are huge. There is lots to do on a non flying day the Imperial War Museum of Aircraft at Duxford is breathtaking, and Cambridge itself has a lot to offer. There are loads of B&B's, you can camp on the Airfield, and there are plenty of country pubs etc. Anyone interested should either contact Nick directly or put their details on Nick's list on the notice board.

In case anyone had been wondering why the green mobile was out of action for a few weeks – it was down to a very considerate (?) member, or visitor, going off with the ignition keys thus rendering the vehicle unusable. After some deft work with the heavy tools, and a bit of club expenditure the A-Team brought the vehicle back into service. Morale of the story? Please check your pockets before you leave the site, don't take the keys away with you!

#### **Wanted:**

The club is on the look out for volunteers to join the Board of Directors. This is an excellent opportunity to put something back into the club whilst at the same time being involved in the decision making process that will shape the club in the years ahead. Anyone interested should speak with any Board member for more information and/or to get them to complete a nomination form.

#### **Achievements since last Issue**

The following details have been taken from the Achievement Log on the notice board. For newcomers to the club, here's what to do: The log should be completed by the individual pilot and can be anything from first solo, badge legs or fully fledged badge claims. In the event of a badge claim, please note that the pilot must still complete the BGA paperwork with appropriate signatures etc.

Recent Achievements:

Robin Birch – 50K to complete his Silver Badge.

Peter Clayton – 50K to complete his Silver (See article on page 4).

John Guy – 50K to complete his Silver.

Scott Kennedy – Cross Country Endorsement.

Mike Cartney –  
Bronze Badge.

Peter Giacobazzi – first Solo.

Ken Donaldson – first Solo.

And last but not least, Sant Cervantes' daughter, Helena, completed her solo whilst on a course with John Riley at the end of July.

The rules regarding alcohol levels have changed and our CFI, Neil McAulay, has summarised what this means for us:

#### **Alcohol Limits for "Aviation Duty"**

The Railways & Transport Safety Act – 2003 has introduced alcohol limits for Pilots and others who perform an aviation duty.

The limits are four times stricter than the drink drive limits, e.g. blood-alcohol count:

- Driving – max. 80 milligrams/100 millilitres
- Aviation – max. 20 milligrams/100 millilitres.

Police Officers in uniform now have the power to use the breathalyser on anyone involved with flying if they have "reasonable suspicion" that an offence has been committed.

For further information, please consult the BGA web site.

*Neil McAulay. CFI.*

#### **Laws & Rules for Glider Pilots**

An updated version of the current (14<sup>th</sup>) Edition of Laws & Rules is available for download from the BGA web site. This updated version incorporates some additions, a complete new section on trailer construction and corrects all known errors and omissions.

The updated version is only available via the web site. You can view the update by going clicking the following link:

<http://www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/news.htm>

#### **The Hangar Site**

Although the hangar was officially opened in mid-July, work is still continuing on the electrics and small snagging jobs. We are still waiting for the fabricated doors to arrive and hopefully these should be in place in the coming weeks. All aircraft have been allocated a bay and their registration



details have been attached to the top of each bay. Please remember that this is still a construction site. To comply with health and safety rules, any person who has not had a safety briefing, or is not wearing appropriate protective clothing must not enter the fenced area.

### Thanks

As most of you will be aware we had a problem a few weeks ago with the trusty old winch when the fluid flywheel gave up its struggle for existence. It was decided not to repair it again or temporarily rebuild it on safety grounds, as the possibility of a vane, or part of one detaching and jamming, was too high. This may well have resulted in a) the glider pilot receiving a sharply increased pull on the cable and b) the flywheel disintegrating and the winch driver receiving a shower of shrapnel. Both somewhat undesirable!

Having made the decision to purchase a replacement, several members and employees came to the immediate rescue and I would personally like to take this opportunity of thanking them, one and all.

Especial thanks, in no particular order, go to Irene, Dave Clempson, Steve Boston, Neil Gow and Kevin Hook. If I have missed anyone out I apologise.

Several members have put forward the point that we should purchase a second winch as a stand by in case such circumstances happen again. From SGU records the winch has been down, apart from maintenance, some 8 days since its purchase in 1991 and in the 10-year plan it is scheduled for replacement in the foreseeable future. The cost of a new winch is of the order of £60k and I have no plans to purchase a second winch as a stand by. Having visited quite a few gliding clubs around the country, I find that those that have held on to a superseded winch as a stand by do not use it on a regular basis as the new one is better, and that when they come to use it they encounter the usual problems.

Again many thanks to all helped when the 'bells went down'.

*Douglas Tait*

### South African Soaring Safari - by Peter Clayton

It all began on a wet day at Portmoak last October (an all too frequent occurrence!). To pass the time I was looking at the notice board in the clubhouse and saw a poster with a photo captioned "13,000 feet and climbing at 8kt". Now that didn't sound like Portmoak! I read on, to see the other attractions advertised by Dick Bradley's Winter Performance Camp at Bloemfontein in South Africa. All of which looked great, especially when compared with the rain outside. I looked at Dick's web site that evening and then e-mailed him. In due course an LS4 was booked for the second and third weeks in February – right at the end of their season. I trawled the web to find a way of getting to Bloemfontein and booked a 6am KLM flight from Edinburgh to Johannesburg via Amsterdam (great views of the Sahara on the way) and a hire car for the easy drive 400km drive to Bloemfontein on good, almost empty, roads.

What a change from Scotland in the winter! Blue skies, 35°C temperature and SUN! I found the Gliding Club from the directions on the web site. It seemed empty in the early afternoon, then I found Reb Rebbert packing gliders from the UK into the container to return home. All the "local" gliders were away on the day's task. Dick's Soaring Safari operation uses his ASH25, Ventus, LS6 and LS4 (as well as the gliders from the UK in the main season). They use the facilities of the Bloemfontein Gliding Club at New Tempe airfield, which is part power - using hard runways as well as the grass runways used by gliders.

As the afternoon progressed, gliders began to return and Dick briefed me on the local airspace, flying conditions, radio routines, etc. Interesting to hear that because of the high altitude (ground level is 4,500') TAS is significantly higher than IAS. One key briefing item was "brown fields are good, green fields are bad" for landing out – due to the hidden presence of hard termite mounds in the green fields. The large ploughed "brown" fields are excellent for landing out, as the soil is very fine and gliders stop quickly.

After briefing I was introduced to the LS4 and its Cambridge navigation instrumentation (GPS is



very helpful in the flat countryside). When setting the instruments, I tried in vain to zero the altimeter only to be told that they “won’t wind back that far” and have to be set at 4,500’ – the true height. No check-flight in a two-seater but briefed to be careful of the dust cloud behind the Cessna tug and the hard bumpy ground on take off. Once in the air it was clear why gliding in South Africa is so good – the air was very unstable and the tow to 2,000 feet pretty vigorous, similar to Feshie on a good day. Off tow and have a good look around to try to register the landmarks, identify the edges of the airspace and get used to the LS4. Lovely glider, similar to the Pegase but nicer, and more forgiving. Lots of strong lift and equally strong sink. Great!

Every morning Dick gives a weather briefing at 10am, following which each pilot is set a task for the day. At the end of the day, the loggers are downloaded onto “See You” software and a full debriefing given. This was very useful as I was given a lot of advice about the need for tight turns in thermals, not to waste time in weak thermals, speeds to fly, etc, etc.

On my third day I was tasked to fly to Dealesville and return for silver distance. This was the first time I had attempted a “real” cross-country in a glider so it was quite a thrill to fly away from “home”. The Cambridge system gave a clear indication of the course to follow; distance to go, etc., and I arrived over the tiny town at almost 10,000’ (5,500’ AGL) I returned to New Tempe, then flew around the area to enjoy the fabulous flying conditions.

The conditions the next day were not so good, with warning of thunderstorms. I was tasked to go to Dealesville again, but half way there was faced with the storm and attempted to fly round it. After an hour I was forced to give up and land out. I found a nice-looking brown field near a farmhouse and landed. After phoning New Tempe, who asked for my detailed GPS latitude and longitude (mobile phones seem to work everywhere in South Africa), I left the glider and went to find the farmhouse. The farmer was away but when I got back to the glider there were farm workers there who were very helpful.

One of them spoke some English and offered to get a tractor to tow the glider out of the field. In the end the

retrieve crew were able to get the 4-wheel drive and trailer to the edge of the field and we de-rigged and carried the parts to the trailer. If we had tried to drive onto the field we would have been bogged down in the fine soil. Because the farms are huge by our standards and the good roads few and far between, it helps to land near a road or retrieves can be difficult. The GPS co-ordinates are very useful to the retrieve crew.

The next day promised to be much better and I was tasked to fly out and return to Andersfield, a total of 165km. The conditions were amazing by my standards with 10 up thermals and a cloud base of 13,500’ – most of the flight was between 10,000’ and 13,000’ and I arrived back over the start point at just over 10,000’! In those conditions it was quite easy and it would have been easy to repeat the task.

Oxygen is fitted in all the gliders but as the ground level is 4,500’ and one soon acclimatises, it is suggested that it is not necessary below 13,500’.

The following day was not so good, with a 20% chance of thunderstorms, but I was tasked to fly a declared 305km triangle to Hoopstad, Hertzogville and return to attempt a gold and diamond goal distance claim. It seemed a huge distance for me to attempt but the previous day had given me more confidence – misplaced as it turned out! The first leg to Hoopstad was 155km and was not too difficult until some 25km from the turn point when it all seemed blue over Hoopstad in the distance.

There was a promising looking cumulus about 20km to the East between the turn points so I went towards that. As I approached the cloud, I was about 3,000’ AGL, and as I went under the cloud the sink rate went up until it was off the bottom of the clock at 10+ down! Finally when I was down to 1,500’, and my nerve was about to give in, I hit the lift – bliss! The lift was equally off the clock and I climbed to cloud base at 10,000’ – a great experience as I started the climb thermalling tightly over a farmhouse, which then got smaller as I climbed almost over the same spot! After that I flew to the first turn point, then backtracked under the same thermal to get to the second turnpoint at Hertzogville. I found another good thermal over the

town which took me back to 11,000’, then turned for the 118km leg



back to the start point to complete the task. At first all went well, but with 60km to go the sky in front went almost completely blue (I later learnt that a thunderstorm had gone through and soaked the ground). I tried to final glide from 5,000' AGL but about 20km from New Tempe it was clear that I wasn't going to make it and I selected a field near to a farmhouse. However I misjudged the height, turned final too high, landed too far into the field and had to ground loop and slide sideways into the fence at the edge of the field. Again a phone call to New Tempe telling them I had landed out, with the bad news that I had damaged the undercarriage and the underside of the fuselage on the stones at the edge of the field. During debriefing after the retrieve the view was that part of the problem was probably that, in spite of drinking all of the water in my 2 litre Camelback, I was dehydrated in the hot dry air after a flight of over 5 hours and my judgement suffered. In future I must get a bigger Camelback and drink as much water as possible before take off. So much for gold distance and diamond goal hopes!

The silver lining was that shortly after I landed a 4-wheel drive came across the field driven by the Afrikaans farmer and his wife to check that I was all right. They took me back to their farm to wait for the retrieve and could not have been friendlier. We all sat in the shade of a tree in the garden drinking home made ginger beer and eating peeled prickly pear from the garden (tastes like kiwi fruit, but nicer). The next day I went back with suitable gifts to thank them and spent most of the afternoon there. I was invited to come and stay next year and to bring my wife with me this time! Wonderful people with whom I hope to keep in touch.

After this the weather began to change, with thunderstorms and torrential rain. There were big floods in Bloemfontein with water up to car bonnets. The other visiting pilots did fly but had several land outs. I had a flight in the front seat of the ASH25 with Dick, who showed me just how easy it was (for him!) to fly cross-country even in poor conditions. It would probably have been a good idea to have had such a flight at the beginning of my visit.

Bloemfontein is the capital of the Orange Free State but has little of great interest to visitors except the museum

and the botanical gardens. The atmosphere at the Gliding Club is very relaxed with an honesty system for drinks from the bar, snacks, etc., which are all very reasonable. Four nights a week an evening meal or barbecue is prepared at the clubhouse and on the other evenings most visitors go out to a restaurant in Bloemfontein. Everybody is very friendly and I never felt threatened anywhere during my visit – not at all the violent image that one can get of South Africa in the media here. A great place to visit – especially during the Scottish winter!

On my return I sent off my silver distance claim to the BGA and waited for the reply. After a month I spoke to Basil Fairston who told me that he was not happy that the claim had not been signed by a BGA official observer. Apparently other (much more exalted) claims were also held up. Eventually the problem was solved by the Soaring Society of South Africa officially appointing Dick Bradley as their international claims officer entitled to authorise BGA claims in South Africa and four months after my claim flight I received my silver certificate. The trip was well worth while and very enjoyable. I didn't get gold or diamond distance and even the silver caused problems, but I learnt a lot and, in spite of that unfortunate field landing, gained a lot of confidence and experience. I cannot recommend Soaring Safaris highly enough. Log onto [www.soaring-safaris.com](http://www.soaring-safaris.com) and see for yourself – or even better just go there!

*Peter Clayton*



**Duty Instructor Rota**

Sat	3 <sup>rd</sup> Jul	Ian Trotter
Sun	4 <sup>th</sup> Jul	Ray Hill
Sat	10 <sup>th</sup> Jul	Gerry Marshall
Sun	11 <sup>th</sup> Jul	Jonathan Pryce
Sat	17 <sup>th</sup> Jul	Ian Dandie
Sun	18 <sup>th</sup> Jul	Neil Irving
Sat	24 <sup>th</sup> Jul	George Ross
Sun	25 <sup>th</sup> Jul	Mike Carruthers
Sat	31 <sup>st</sup> Jul	Joe Fisher
Sun	1 <sup>st</sup> Aug	Ray Hill
Sat	7 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Frank Smith
Sun	8 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Bob Petrie
Sat	14 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Neil McAulay
Sun	15 <sup>th</sup> Aug	John Henry
Sat	21 <sup>st</sup> Aug	Bob Jones
Sun	22 <sup>nd</sup> Aug	George Ross
Sat	28 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Neil Irving
Sun	29 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Mike Carruthers
Sat	4 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Joe Fisher
Sun	5 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Bob Petrie
Sat	11 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Andrew Bates
Sun	12 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Chris Robinson
Sat	18 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Neil McAulay
Sun	19 <sup>th</sup> Sep	John Henry
Sat	25 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Gerry Marshall
Sun	26 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Jonathon Pryce

**Duty Pilot Rota**

Sat	31 <sup>st</sup> July	Gerald Marshall
Sun	1 <sup>st</sup> Aug	Douglas Tait
Sat	7 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Andrew Young
Sun	8 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Hamish Eagleton
Sat	14 <sup>th</sup> Aug	James McGouldrick
Sun	15 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Kenneth Cowie
Sat	21 <sup>st</sup> Aug	Gary Scott
Sun	22 <sup>nd</sup> Aug	Colin McAlpine
Sat	28 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Steve Hartley
Sun	29 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Bruce Marshall
Sat	4 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Dave Thompson
Sun	5 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Derek Storey
Sat	11 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Derek Higson
Sun	12 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Ricky Jackson
Sat	18 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Richard Lucas
Sun	19 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Kate Byrnie
Sat	25 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Scott Kennedy
Sun	26 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Ian Meacham
Sat	2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct	Alex Rougvie
Sun	3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct	Jim Miller
Sat	9 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Bill Jones
Sun	10 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Richard Rigby

If unable to attend, PLEASE arrange a swap with someone on the list and update the list on the notice board.

*Pete Benbow*

There are too many days and not enough instructors, which means that some people have to do two duty days. Any instructors who are not on the rota, feel free to take one of the above slots.

*Andrew Bates*

**Duty Pilots**

Calling all solo pilots – how would you like to put something back into the club? What about volunteering to become a duty pilot on a Saturday or Sunday? Pete Benbow is always on the lookout for more people so please have a chat with him and he'll explain what it's all about. Eligibility being current members who are solo with more than ten hours flying in the last 12 months.

