

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

# Portmoak Press

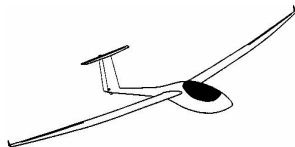
### Editorial – Ian Easson

Happy New Year to one and all, and I hope you all achieve your New Year resolutions – particularly those gliding related ones! Last year was a very successful year in many ways. SGU pilots achieved some good results, and the year ended with John Williams' epic 750K Diploma. One sad ending to the year, however, was the news that Old Joe had died after a short illness.

Joe Gadzinski, also known as Joe the Pole, or Joe the Winch, was a well-known face around Portmoak for many a year. Visitors to the SGU will remember him sitting quietly with his bowl of soup or cup of tea, looking out at the airfield. In 1978, Joe was our professional winch driver and he had many epic flights in his Cumulus, and his rebuilt Lspatz. He will be greatly missed, and the clubhouse seems empty without him.



"Old Joe"



For those people who have ventured into the old hangar recently and wondered where the open-cockpit two-seater, complete with RAF roundels came from, check out "The T21 Story" on page 2. DVDs of the flight are available from John Guy – see the list on the notice board. There are two DVDs, "Flight of the T21" and "Building the Hangar", price is £3 each. If you cannot get to the club and have e-mail access, contact John on [john.guy36@btinternet.com](mailto:john.guy36@btinternet.com).

As well as the annual club awards and the visit from Platt (see page 2), an intrepid band of Walking on Air representatives went to meet HRH the Duke of York in London at the beginning of February (see page 2).

A must read article on the changes to controlled airspace can be found on page 6.

The book is still in progress and I'm still on the lookout for more material, particularly for the late eighties an early nineties. 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 to [ian.easson@btinternet.com](mailto:ian.easson@btinternet.com)

Please note the cut-off dates for future issues: End of March for April, end of June for July, end of September for October, and end of December for January. Material can be sent to me either typed or hand-written and dropped in my mailbox beside the payphone, or e-mail me at the above address.



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York presented the award and was seen chatting to the group after the ceremony. Don't know (yet) what Rab was saying but it caused HRH to laugh and smile about something!  
 Other Gliding award winners included: RAeC Gold Medal to Russell Cheetham who, in 2004, won the European Championships and achieved the first ever 1000km FAI triangle to be flown in Britain; the RAeC Diploma was awarded to Roger Coote, the BGA Development Officer.  
 More details are on the RAeC web site at <http://www.royalaeroclub.org/award04.htm>

**SGU Annual Dinner and Awards**

It was a wild Saturday night at the club on January 8th - and that was just the leg from the car park to the inside of the clubhouse! Despite some peoples' worries, the power (and the roof) stayed on and a good night developed. The place was full to overflowing and Steve, Irene and the team managed to somehow deliver an excellent dinner (after reminding a few of us what we'd once ordered and long since forgotten) to the packed tables. Then began a wee experiment - a combination of a bit of home entertainment and a wellkent guest speaker. John Guy's talents as a Hollywood producer soon became evident with a dvd of "The flight of the T21" - compiled on that cold December day when an intrepid trio of Jim O'Donnell (Pawnee), Joe Fisher and John Henry (alfresco at the cold end of the aerotow rope). Great fun to watch. After that John Williams introduced our guest speaker, none other than Mike Bird, with an "Address to the Platypus". Mike did us proud, somehow managing to entertain both pilots and normal people alike with a mixture of wit, wisdom and his vast experience. Things like "there are two ways to increase cross country performance, span and talent - and the good news is that you can buy span!". It's astonishing how quickly twenty minutes disappears when you get the opportunity to listen to someone like this.

Dave Thompson's peerless organisation then allowed the presentation of trophies to go smoothly - no trophies being mixed up and hardly

**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, & PR.      | Ian Easson     |

**A Message from the CFI**

Would all members please note that any work carried out on a Club glider must be noted and signed for, in the glider D.I. book. Any work which requires the authority of an Inspector must be supervised and signed for by the Inspector

*Neil McAulay CF*

**Walking on Air**

The Royal Aero Club (RAeC) Certificate of Merit was awarded to our very own Walking on Air at a ceremony held at the National Army Museum in Chelsea on 3<sup>rd</sup> February. Joe Fisher, Rab Mitchell, David Tuttle and Irene Donald accepted the award on behalf of WOA. HRH the Duke of



anyone being mis-kissed - although the chairman's own accumulation of trophies was seen by some to be nothing more than a desire to do just that. (See *next page for a full list –Ed*)

The evening finished with another John Guy masterpiece showing the hangar construction and scenes from the 70th anniversary celebrations back in July.

Huge thanks to him, to Dave thompson and to Steve and Irene and the team for making the evening, and a very special thanks to Mike Bird for making the journey and giving such a fine address - next time we'll get the weather so that you can actually fly Mike.

*John Williams*

PS any ideas for how we might arrange next years event or what we should include would be really welcome.

The following is a list of award winners:

### ***The Thorburn Two Seater Trophy***

For the Longest (handicapped distance) flight in any Two Seater (Evidence:- Photographic / GPS.

Does not need to be declared. Maximum of 3 TPs.)

Winners: **Brian Scougall** and **John Galloway** in Turbo Duo Discus, 977 - Flight details: Task: POR-LOM-LDR-DOU-POR. 244 km Actual, 239 km handicapped distance. Date: 25<sup>th</sup> April 2004

Note: Brian's solo flights in the Turbo Duo Discus of 15<sup>th</sup> June and 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2004 were both actually further (both POR-EDZ-BDO-FET-POR, da 344 km; dh 337 km,) but trophy was awarded for the flight in which there were two persons on board.

### ***The Boyle Altitude Trophy***

For the greatest gain of height. (Evidence:- Calibrated barograph trace as per BGA badge claim.)

Winner: **Kevin Hook** in DG400, 320. Flight details: Height gain of 17,060 ft. Date: 21<sup>st</sup> September 2004.

### ***The Marshall 100 Km Triangle Trophy***

For the fastest (handicapped speed) 100 km triangle [but less than 125 km]. (Evidence:- photographic / GPS). Fully declared and witnessed flights only; as per rules for

100 km diploma part 2; must be 28% triangle.

Winner: **John Williams** in LS8/18, Z7. Flight details: Task: PCS-STI-MVN-PCS 103 km actual distance, 88 km/h handicapped speed. Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2004.

### ***The Andy Penswick Trophy***

For the longest (handicapped distance) flight in a club glider [not including S.G.A. owned aircraft.]

(Evidence:- As per Trophy 1). Winner: **Tony Brown** and **G. Fraser** in the DG505/20, 5GC. Flight details: Task: PCS-ABL-MUN-PCS dh 150 km; da also 150 km. Date: 21<sup>st</sup> August 2004

### ***The Parker Distance Trophy***

For the longest distance flight originating from Portmoak. Not handicapped. (Evidence:- As per Trophy 1). Winner: **John Williams** in LS8/18, Z7. Flight details: Task: BOC-BSS-ABD-LBU-BOC 753 km actual distance, dh 710 km; va 102 km/h; vh 96 km/h. Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2004

### ***The Docherty Handicapped Distance Trophy***

For the longest (handicapped distance) flight originating from Portmoak. (Evidence:- As per Trophy 1.) Winner: **John Williams** in LS8/18, Z7. Flight details: Task: BOC-BSS-ABD-LBU-BOC. 710 km handicapped distance, da 753 km; va 102 km/h; vh 96 km/h. Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2004

### ***The Sutherland Out and Return Trophy***

For the farthest (handicapped distance) turnpoint achieved from Portmoak for a flight originating and ending at Portmoak. (Evidence:- As per Trophy 1). Winner: **John Williams** in LS8/18, Z7.

Flight details: Task: BOC-BSS-ABD-LBU-BOC Furthest TP is BSS (Bunessan) which is 182 km actual from PCS, 172 km handicapped. Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2004

### ***The Lomond Trophy***

For the longest triangular flight achieved from Portmoak subject to the 28% rule. (Evidence:- As per Trophy 1, flights do have to be pre-declared).

Winner: **John Williams** in LS8/18, Z7. Flight details: Task: PCS-DAM-TAD-PCS. 367 km actual and 346 km



handicapped. Va 81 km/h, vh 77 km/h  
Date: 25<sup>th</sup> June 2004

### ***The McClay Championship Trophy***

For the winner of the Open ladder competition.

Winner: **John Williams** Flight details: 13,109 Points

### ***The Peter Copeland Trophy***

For the winner of the Weekend ladder competition.

Winner: **Brian Scougall** Flight details: 3611 Points

### ***The "Hot Wings" Trophy***

For the winner of the "Hot Wings" ladder competition. Winner: **John Williams** Flight details: 5435 Points

### ***The Junior Ladder Trophy***

For the winner of the Junior Ladder competition.

Winner: No winner this year.

Details: No junior claims this year.

### ***The Height Gain Ladder Trophy***

For the winner of the Height Gain Ladder

Competition Winner: **John Williams** Details: 3289 Points

### ***The Darren Powell Shield***

For service to the club during the year. Winner:

**Charlie Guthrie.**

### ***The Nick Wales Trophy***

For the "most improved pilot". Winner: **Steve**

**Derwin**

### ***Instructors Quaich***

Most popular instructor. Winner: **Colin Hamilton**

### ***Service Salver***

For outstanding service to the club. Winner: **Kenny**

**George.**

## **Club News**

### **Tuesday and Wednesday Evening Flying**

Its time to make arrangements for the summer evening flying instruction. See below for the latest position:

#### **Instructors.**

With Mike Ward leaving for sunnier climates and a number of other changes, we need to be clear as to who can commit what to when in terms of evening flying. I'd like if everyone who can give of their time let me know so I can collate a "pool" of instructors to cover the whole 26 weeks of BST.

#### **Ab-initios**

I'd like to compile a list of ab-initios in which they state their preference for Tuesday or Wednesday evening.

#### **Old hands**

We need experienced members to help kick start the new-comers into well oiled machines. In return, these old hands will get some help towards their post-solo progress. - Again I need to compile a list of those who can help on which evenings.

#### **Other Post-Solo pilots**

Post-solo pilots need to appreciate that opportunities for the type of flying they need to progress their careers will be limited if they stick only to evening flying. The club employs the services of a full time instructor and post-solo pupils should take every opportunity to fly with him. Again, in order to try to match instructor capacity with pupil demand I'd be grateful if post-solo pilots in this category let me know of their intentions.

As for my own commitment, I've been doing this evening flying thing for 18 years without a break and need a wee rest. I've given a commitment to fly with the motorglider syndicate and would like to do some flying of my own having bought a share in a Ventus. This will leave little time to commit to a full summer evening programme but I should be able to stand in on the odd occasion.

I know there are some who have given me their details over the last few months and I would ask if they could re-confirm by responding to this present request.

*Colin Hamilton*



### A Message from the Safety Officer

As mentioned in the last issue of Portmoak Press, I have taken over from Neil Irving as the Safety Officer of the SGU. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Neil for all of the hard work that he put in, which I can only now begin to appreciate, and for his help in making the hand-over run as smoothly as possible. I'm sure that I share with you all in wishing Neil well with his new job in Aberdeen and I hope that he'll still be a regular visitor to Portmoak.

At this time of year, with the shortest day behind us, we can all now look forward to the flying opportunities that the longer daylight hours will provide. However, with the inevitability of several weeks of cold, damp, weather ahead it's easy to forget that the useful part of the day can be brought to an abrupt halt, well before sunset, by canopy misting. We're all familiar with the effects of canopy misting as we wait for the "all out" signal at the start of a launch. Often, this is not a problem and we reassure ourselves that the ventilation will clear the areas of condensation once the glider is in motion. However, if there is misting at the start of a launch we must always consider abandoning it particularly if there is a delay after the canopies are closed. Always think about the possibility of a launch failure and whether the area of condensation would obscure your view to such an extent that it would prevent you from safely coping with such a situation. If in any doubt, first pull the yellow release knob to release the cable and shout stop to alert the wing tip holder. If the condensation is internal, the canopies can then be opened and cleared before another attempt is made. Late in the day, the conditions could deteriorate to such an extent that the canopies mist too quickly for safe launching and the day's flying may have to be abandoned. This will always be the case if condensation occurs on the external surfaces of the canopy as this will be unlikely to clear even when the aircraft is in motion. It is also worth bearing in mind that, as temperature decreases with altitude, the effects of misting can be even greater once airborne and the glider's ventilation may not then be able to remove the condensation, even with the DV panel fully open. If areas of condensation are

forming that can't be removed then it is safer to land well before both forward vision is obscured and a safe lookout can no longer be guaranteed. The observant amongst you may have noticed that the design of the weak link sleeves on the winch cable strops has been changed during the past few months. The new design makes the sleeves much more resistant to bending that would otherwise result in damage to the weak-link and prevent it failing at its designed stress limit.

The fact that the old sleeves were bending in the first place highlights an important safety issue when winch cables are being attached to gliders. In order for the weak-link to function correctly, the load of the cable must pass through it properly. If the strop is just thrown on the ground after the glider is attached to the cable, the rings containing the weak-link can become twisted around each other so that a knot can form. As the stress can then no longer pass directly through the weak-link, which is often fouled on the strop rings, a bending force is applied and the weak-link will not break at its design limit. This knot could free itself during the launch which would result in a sudden shock-load on the weak link. If this does not cause the weak-link to fail, in certain circumstances the whole strop can disconnect from the winch cable. I've seen this happen on a number of occasions. If the knot does not free itself, the load on the cable is effectively by-passing the weak-link, and the glider is then in danger of flying beyond its safe load limit, particularly in the latter stages of the launch. If you are attaching a cable to a glider, make sure that you pull on the cable so that the links connecting it to the strop, via the weak-link, are not kinked and then lay the cable on the grass, while maintaining a slight tension, so that the links remain straight.

*Dave Allan*



## Airspace update

Lots going on on the airspace front:

1. On 17th Feb 2005 the bases of P600 and B226 will go up. After much discussion and a lot of waiting we have a major improvement to our lot. Details in the clubhouse (and for those who use pda type moving maps Kevin has written new files which are downloadable from the club website). Here is an attempt to describe the changes in words - please make sure you look at the real picture at the clubhouse to make sure you stay safe and legal. Basically the "transition pieces" at either end of the airways which are currently at FL55 stay at FL55. Then divide each airway lengthwise into roughly four quarters. The end quarters go up from FL65 to FL85. The two middle quarters (is that the middle half?) go up from FL65 to FL105. So on weekday wave days we could set the old Allcoat PCS EDZ HEL ABO PCS (510k) without P600 getting too much in the way and so on.
2. The debate about reducing the UK upper airspace limit (currently FL245) to the European limit FL195 continues - it seems that the only thing in doubt about this change is the date it will happen. Best current guess is March 2006. We are however in discussion with the authorities about creating extensive wave boxes in Scotland where we will be allowed significantly higher. We've coordinated an all Scottish Club suggestion of where these boxes should be.
3. Edinburgh Airspace. At present the airspace outside the Edinburgh "circle" is class E to 6000ft - ie available to us. There is a strong demand to make this Class D and to reduce the ceiling as commercial air traffic grows. We are in discussion with the BGA and with Edinburgh to try to keep a thermal route South available for gliding - watch this space.
4. We are in discussion with Prestwick to update our procedures for getting P600etc. opened for gliding at

weekends. This option will continue to be available even after the airway bases are raised on Feb 17th.

*John Williams*

## Skylaunch Demo

Brian Scougall has arranged for a Skylaunch to be demonstrated at Portmoak on the 19/20 February. These are provisional dates at the moment and I will put up a notice confirming or amending these dates once known. It would be very useful if as many members as possible come along and give it a try. Skylaunch representatives are prepared to have a wee talk/discussion on their product in the clubhouse on the Saturday night.

*Douglas Tait*

## SGC Friday Evening Gliding Subject Talks

We are holding talks, as is our usual practice, on gliding subjects on Friday evenings in the Briefing room on alternate Fridays, during the early weeks of the year.

The talks are aimed at encouraging solo pilots to improve their knowledge of flying and gain Bronze, Silver and subsequent gliding badge qualifications. Although timing may be better suited to Friday group members, any SGC members are welcome. The format is a start at 7.30pm prompt, a talk lasting 45 minutes and an opportunity for discussion followed by a 20 min. tea break. A second subject talk following a similar pattern and concluding the evening about 10pm.

These evenings are not formal class lectures, they are intended to engage your interest in subjects you need to know to advance in our sport and improve your knowledge and enjoy safe flying.

In addition to these lectures there will be classes on Radio, aimed at pilots who may need a CAA license to enable them to penetrate controlled airspace. This will be best suited to Bronze badge pilots and above. Also one evening in March will be devoted to a glider rigging and trailering exercise.

Information about these items will be posted on the Club House notice board in future.



I attach the provisional programme for the rest of the year, for your interest, and hope to see you on these Friday evenings.

*Joe Fisher for CFI*

11th February

Surviving at High Altitudes & Club Oxygen Systems

John Hasler & Joe Fisher

25th February

TBA (See Notice Board)

11th March

How to Survive Launce Failures & Parachute Care and Use  
Don Johnston & Steve Hartley

### **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:

Roland Adams – Re-solo in Canada.

Brian Cox – Bronze.

Ricky Jackson – Gold Height

Derek Storey – Silver Height and 50K to complete Silver, and Gold Height.

### **West by Northwesterly?**

*(The following article was originally printed in the Dec/Jan issue of S&G – Ed)*

Squeezing 750k into Scotland isn't all that easy. Sooner or later you're likely to get a view of a Caledonian MacBrayne ferry and I've found it more relaxing to see those from wave than from thermal flights. For years I've been obsessed with satpics that seem to show lenticulars over interesting places, and have come to believe that in a strong N-NWly there was often wave well out to the west of the then most westerly BGA TP at Lismore Lighthouse, offshore from Oban.

So back in September 2001 I tried declaring a 750k task using Portmoak, Bunessan (a homespun TP at right out on the SW edge of Mull overlooking Iona), Rhynie and Lismore. That day I actually got to Bunessan in lift just as the satpics had shown, but couldn't get to the more conventional TP at Rhynie over about thirty miles of clag coming in from the Moray Firth and came home to Portmoak to think again. A year later Ian Strachan was happy to put a few TP's (some of which would be more suitable for yachtsmen) that Jack Stephen and I had suggested on the official BGA list. Then it was just a matter of waiting for the right day.... and waiting.... and waiting....

The third week in September 2004 was full of promise – remnants of a big hurricane season across the pond. For six days the routine was well established:- lose sleep in anticipation of what might be “the-big-one”, stare out of curtains before after and during dawn, await the first webcam pictures and satpics, program and reprogram the logger, then of course sit around the clubhouse wondering why the sky hadn't read the forecast. However by Wednesday September 22<sup>nd</sup> the wave at was starting to perform - giving diamond heights locally even if at 70kts the upper wind was too strong for useful cross-country flights. The forecast for Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> was for reducing wind, increasing pressure and just the right direction for the awaited task.

So into the logger went the task, BOC (Bridge of Cally – just west of that infernal P600 airway) as start and finish, Bunessan as TP1, ABD



Aboyne Dinnet as TP2 and Lochbuie also on Mull as TP3. That Bridge of Cally start meant crossing the airway – either by doing all the airway-crossing radio bit – or preferably by getting an aerotow under it if only I could find a tug pilot. John Henry, bless him, agreed to fly the tug instead of going straight to his own glider and at 09:17 I released at Methven on the edge of P600. As usual the best lift was in the airway but a dirty dive round, through and under the cloud gave a climb from 4,800ft to 11,300 in exactly ten minutes – which was enough to negotiate the obligatory sink near the start and to be in sector at 10am exactly.

The line down track looked promising, and flying at 80 to 90 kts in the weaker lift and slowing down to 60 or 70 in the better parts made for rapid progress as far as Dalmally at Loch Awe, about half way down the 180k first leg. There lay a large blue gap, wonderful for its open view of Scotland's maelstrom, the great tidal race of Corryreckan, but a bit daunting for the next problem of crossing the Firth of Lorne. There is something about crossing an open expanse of water to a great wild granite island (which has precious few crash sites never mind fields) that makes you ease back on the stick even at 8500ft. Still after jumping two weak bars over the water the solid line of mountains around Ben More gave a reliable line of lift almost all the way to Bunessan and a first leg of 118kph. Good progress with the task was pleasing enough, but just being there in that sky and seascape was ten times better. Out came the camera for a shot of Iona to remind me later how extraordinarily privileged we are to experience such things. What would Columba have given to arrive at Iona this way 1441 years ago?

The same energy line helped to run back to Lismore easily enough, but from there the view was grim. The fine gaps of the first leg had merged into a solid mass of cloud with only a few places where imagination or hope suggested there might be a view of the ground. The thinking became simple – the biggest chance of a big wave climb ought to be downwind of the biggest mountain – so I turned N of track to try the lee of Ben Nevis. Edging in over upswellings in the cloud mass I found a gap NE of Glencoe. It was no more than a few hundred metres long and the same across

– but it signalled lift that took only 15 short minutes to double my height to 15,000ft. From there I could see just how few gaps there were to the east – one in the lee of Schiehallion was in gliding range and setting off gingerly I found it worked too – so did the line of Glen Tilt and so too did the lee of the big Cairngorms as I approached Braemar. Calling Aboyne to ask if there were any gaps there extracted a reply from Roy Wilson “rain showers, not launching at present, and good luck”. Creeping over Dinnet at 15,000ft I was bemused to find I'd done the 220k second leg at 107kph and thanked goodness that I'd not had to go any further north or east where the showers were blowing in from the coast.

Turning around to head back to Mull there was still almost eight octas cloud cover, but a hint of an upper wave system was visible in the lee of Ben Alder – and with nothing else to go for I burned 5,000ft to get there and found it delivering 5kts to 17,000. This was looking promising, and there were actually wave gaps ahead! So I put the stick forward confident that I could at long last see where the lift and sink would be. Result? Twenty-five minutes later I'd lost 8000 ft and was downwind of track south of Oban wondering how to get back onto Mull or if I even ought to be trying... Still nothing ventured nothing gained and a push out in front of some bulging curves of cloud near Lismore island gave a gentle approach to Lochbuie without much loss of height for a third leg at 111kph.

If I could just get back across to the mainland into good wave a really fast last (and shortest at 150k) leg should be on. Wrong again! Twenty minutes into the leg I'd lost 3,000ft and was ridge soaring over Cruachan's mighty ridges – twenty more minutes and I'd dived for a “certainty” of a wave cloud and dropped to 4,000ft on the southern edge of Rannoch Moor watching rain showers head my way at an alarming rate. Time for loud expletives (if I ever fly a turbo the noise sensor is sure to go off at such times) then a resolution to use ridge and thermal to get as far as I can – and to rather more landable territory. At least I can take heart from it already being my longest ever flight. Two chopped-

up thermals near Loch Rannoch leave me with enough height to dash





downwind to a cumulus that's not yet showering near the east end of Loch Tay. The L Nav tries to tell me I can almost make it to the Bridge of Cally finish – but it doesn't know how much granite there is in the way of that particular glidepath. A mile short of the target cumulus there's a tiny kick on the vario and turning across wind the averager creeps up to half a knot – then one then two then four! In no more than sixty seconds the tired brain shifts from “forlorn hope” to “If I really press on I can still get this task done inside seven and a half hours and break 100kph”. Minutes later I'm above 10,000ft with 40k to run and squeak into sector at BOC for a last leg of 75kph and a total just shy of 102kph. The 50k home to Portmoak takes exactly 15 minutes and Kevin Hook as official observer relieves me of the logger. Thoughts on the whole thing? As I write this I'm still mentally replaying the flight every day just to check that it really happened. I've learned that if you keep trying and keep waiting in hope your day *will* come – just make sure you're ready when it does. I've also reminded myself that there is absolutely nothing (well *almost* nothing, my love) to compare with wave flying in Scotland's wild places – just turning Bunesan is worth more than any win at any competition that I can think of. Come and try it for yourself.

*John Williams*

### The T21 Story (so far)

I'm not too sure when it all really started, but my first encounter with a T21 was in the summer of 1960 at RNAS Condor in Arbroath. I had joined the Air Training Corps (981 Squadron) at the school I was attending in Glasgow, around 1958. I had a few air experience flights in Chipmunks out of Turnhouse when I was 16, I was sent up to Condor to attend a gliding course. On arrival I found that the school operated Sedberghs, as the ATC called the T21, and Kirby Cadet Mk 111 (T31). Launches were by winch, to around 700 ft., or so but I don't remember the high rate of cable breaks associated with that era of gliding. Although completing my A and B badges towards the end of the week, I didn't participate in gliding again until the late 1990s when I came

to a summer course at Portmoak and found that gliders had changed a bit since my last flight. By this time T21s were just a folk memory.

My holiday habits are to wander around the British countryside with the caravan on tow, although Muriel has noticed that since my return to the gliding fold we always seem to end up somewhere not too far from a gliding club. In line with this we encamped just outside Stafford in the summer of 2002 and went along to the local club. As always seems to be the case, we were made welcome, so we put our names on the list and waited for our turns to fly the club's K13. In the latter part of the morning a T21 (XN187) was brought out and flown by its owner. Some time after my flight in the K13, it developed a problem and was declared U/S (*you really will have to master this landing thingie – Ed.*) Not wanting to disappoint Muriel, Andy Oultram, one of the T21's owners, kindly offered her a flight in the T21. It was lovely warm summer's afternoon and Muriel thoroughly enjoyed the winch launch and subsequent all too brief flight. The long and short of it was that I also managed to wangle a flight, and discovered that nostalgia is potent. On the way back to the caravan the lady wife asked why we didn't have something like a T21 at Portmoak, as it had been fun to fly. At that point I didn't believe that there would be sufficient interest and said so (How many lengthy sage advises, the husband from the wife despises). But back to our tale: Nothing happened until the middle of May 2003 when a few of us from Portmoak mounted an expedition to the Bowland Forrest club in Lancashire, where they had a T21 mounted on the end wall of their hangar. Mike Cartney was part of the expedition and he suffers from addictions above and beyond gliding in that he is involved in vintage cars. Mike and I then began to wind each other up and thought that we would see if there were enough people interested in bringing a T21 to Portmoak. We feared that there would be insufficient people interested enough to form a viable syndicate for what we saw as a fun venture, and not to be taken too seriously. Mike and I find that we are often wrong in life but in this instance we were

spectacularly wrong. We were hoping for about a dozen potential



members but by the time we had asked about half a dozen and had instantaneous uptake we had club members approaching us wanting further details and to join in. We called a meeting and the group decided to start looking for a T21 with a view to purchase but only to go ahead with a purchase if we could secure hangar space at Portmoak. The T21 Syndicate applied to the SGU for a space in the old hangar when tone became available. To date we have not succeeded in buying a T21 although we are still looking. During our searches for a T21 we found that the Strathaven Gliding Club has a T21 syndicate with an aircraft that they do not get to soar very often, so it seemed a good idea to bring this aircraft over to Portmoak and see how it all goes. Both Strathaven and SGU T21 syndicate members hope to get the aircraft into the air and soaring a lot more than it has done in recent years, by using the topography at Portmoak. Strathaven is small club and as the T21 is the club's back-up two-seater trainer and it is likely that it will be at Portmoak over the winter months only.

By November of 2004 it was clear that the easiest way of transporting the T21 from Strathaven was by aerotow, and suitable volunteers were sought. Jim O'Donnell volunteered to fly the tug with Bob Jones as volunteer back up. John Henry and Bob Petrie volunteered to fly the T21 with Joe Fisher as back up. There was quite a bit of discussion as to whether the Pawnee could fly slowly enough for the T21 without overheating and a fair bit of discussion with the Strathaven guys before a provisional date of the 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2004 for the aerotow across was set.

As tug pilot, Jim O'Donnell made the decision on the Thursday night's weather forecast to at least make a try on the Friday, although the start of the day was to be wet. My part was to turn up at Strathaven and report back to Portmoak on the weather conditions. At 09:00 it was raining and the visibility very poor so my first report was not encouraging. As the morning rolled on more and more bodies arrived at Strathaven airfield, including Mike Cartney, Tim Barnard (Strathaven), George McKay (Strathaven), Joe Kennedy and Stewart MacFarlane (Connel). Slowly but surely the weather cleared and the atmosphere was one of a grand day out even though we had done nothing

yet except talk to Portmoak by phone. Unfortunately I had to leave about mid-day and missed the fun of the Pawnee arriving, Richard Rigby getting stuck in traffic coming across with the T21 pilots, the flat tyre on the T21, the concerns about running out of daylight and all the other joys of aviation.

Just as there was a reception committee at Strathaven airfield there was a similar group at Portmoak waiting to welcome the T21 with John (three flying suits) Henry and Joe (helmet) Fisher as the two frozen but jubilant pilots. Fortunately quite a few people took videos of the event and John Guy, who had willingly agreed to edit the resulting material, also managed to turn up for the arrival and obtain some additional video material. John has produced a very professional short video of the event and hopefully we will be able to show it at the club(s).

When I arrived at Portmoak on the Friday evening it was good to see the smiling faces, not only of those who had taken part in the venture but also of those that had watched the arrival or even just gone into the hangar for a look at the aircraft. I had forgotten that there are people younger than I am who have never seen a 'barge' before.

Every day that we have brought it out to fly there have been more customers than places and priority has been given to T21 Syndicate members - as they paid to bring it to Portmoak and pay for the insurance and hangarage. The intention is that when we get sufficient T21 syndicate pilots signed off to fly it, they will be in a position to take club members along with them, subject to SGU Rules and the CFI's approval. We are not in a position to let anyone fly it as P1 who is not a syndicate member or an authorised instructor. However, the aircraft is with us for fun and enjoyment so please give us a little time to get on with the training and then come and fly in the 'barge'. If you haven't flown in one before you won't forget it and if you have flown in one before it I hope that it brings back happy memories.

My thanks go to all that have helped directly and indirectly in this project, it's great to see the fun it has created.

*Slarty Bartfast*



**Duty Instructor Rota**

|     |                      |                 |
|-----|----------------------|-----------------|
| Sat | 5 <sup>th</sup> Feb  | Frank Smith     |
| Sun | 6 <sup>th</sup> Feb  | Bob Petrie      |
| Sat | 12 <sup>th</sup> Feb | Neil McAulay    |
| Sun | 13 <sup>th</sup> Feb | John Henry      |
| Sat | 19 <sup>th</sup> Feb | Bob Jones       |
| Sun | 20 <sup>th</sup> Feb | George Ross     |
| Sat | 26 <sup>th</sup> Feb | Ian Dandie      |
| Sun | 27 <sup>th</sup> Feb | Mike Carruthers |
| Sat | 5 <sup>th</sup> Mar  | Joe Fisher      |
| Sun | 6 <sup>th</sup> Mar  | Bob Petrie      |
| Sat | 12 <sup>th</sup> Mar | Neil McAulay    |
| Sun | 13 <sup>th</sup> Mar | Chris Robinson  |
| Sat | 19 <sup>th</sup> Mar | Gerry Marshall  |
| Sun | 20 <sup>th</sup> Mar | John Henry      |
| Sat | 26 <sup>th</sup> Mar | Jonathan Pryce  |
| Sun | 27 <sup>th</sup> Mar | Bob Jones       |

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 help out on any of the above slots.

*Andrew Bates*

**For Sale**

I'm selling my quarter share in the Pilatus B4 (248) as I'm joining another syndicate. This glider has been based at Portmoak for a number of years and has been a very popular first glider for many members of the SGU. Apart from being very cute in appearance, it's a lovely flier and has good gliding performance (similar to the junior). The airbrakes are extremely effective and it can be landed in a very short distance. Its all-metal construction makes it extremely strong and the Pilatus B4 is a popular aerobatic aircraft. The Pilatus is very well equipped with the usual instruments plus: turn and slip; oxygen; and an old but serviceable radio. The trailer is wooden but is in very good condition and the current syndicate are planning to repaint it later this year. The glider comes with a full year's C of A (starting from the end of January). Reasonable offers will be considered. Photos of the glider can be seen at:-

[http://www.ph.ed.ac.uk/~dra/Pilatus\\_248/index.html](http://www.ph.ed.ac.uk/~dra/Pilatus_248/index.html)

Dave Allan

**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.

home: 0131 447 1263  
mobile: 07971 003218  
e-mail: d.r.allan@ed.ac.

