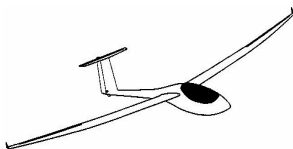


**From the home of the *Scottish Gliding Centre***

# Portmoak Press

**Editorial – Ian Easson**

Here we are at my 20<sup>th</sup> edition since I took over as editor, way back in



October 2000. Such a lot has happened since then, both in terms of world events, and Gliding events. At SGU level, we have lost a few old friends but welcomed some new ones too. As I write this editorial, the G8 Airspace Restrictions have been lifted from around Gleneagles and cross-country flights are back on the agenda.

This is the time of year for all those New Year resolutions to be reviewed and if one of those was to finally get that 50K to compete your Silver C, then now is your chance. A cross country course is being planned for 11<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> September – for details see Club News or follow the links from the club web page - [www.scottishglidingcentre.co.uk](http://www.scottishglidingcentre.co.uk)

If your resolutions were Bronze C related, please note that the BGA are currently considering a proposal to replace the existing Bronze Paper Examination at the end of 2005 with a new examination delivered by CDROM.

I have included a paper from Mike Carruthers on the SGA (Scottish Gliding Association) ASH25. If you are at all interested in the future of the ASH, please read Mike’s document on page 7

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, or 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 & Winch etc.	Douglas Tait
Tug, WOA and Tech. Officer	Joe Fisher
Winch & Ground equipment	Douglas Tait
Publicity & PR	John Guy
Membership Comms	Kate Byrne

**Caroline Trust Awards.**

The Caroline Trust is a registered charity with the objective of helping deserving young people to glide. The trust can help if you are between 15 and 21 and need help to go solo, get a badge, become an instructor, enter your first competition or achieve another specific objective. It can also help those with disabilities who need help to participate and gliding clubs with specific programmes for young or disabled people. For further information, see your CFI or contact the Caroline Trust chairman Pete Wells at [carolinetrust@tideswell.net](mailto:carolinetrust@tideswell.net). You can also support the trust by making one-off or regular donations or by bequeathing money.



## Club News

Just in case you haven't been to the club and haven't seen this on the notice board:

CAA Safety Awards. Neil Goudie of Cambridge GC has been awarded the CAA General Aviation Safety Award for 2004. Neil was taking part in a gliding competition in August 2004 when he saw a competitors wreckage in a field. The pilot was seriously injured. Neil was nominated for his actions in arranging for an emergency call to be made and then landing in the field himself to give first aid, using his telephone to obtain guidance from a doctor friend, until an air ambulance arrived. The CAA Tiger Moth Trophy was presented to Neil by Martin Robinson, AOPA Chief Executive, at an award ceremony held at the RAF Club in London on May 10th.

The club has recently installed a weather web-cam. To see the current weather at Portmoak, take a look at the following web page:<http://www.aorc85.dsl.pipex.com>. Or follow the links from the club web-page.

The following was sent in by Les Lodomery

### Just in case your day was getting serious.....

After every flight, Qantas pilots fill out a form, called a "gripe sheet", which tells mechanics about problems with the aircraft. The mechanics correct the problems; document their repairs on the form, and then pilots review the gripe sheets before the next flight. Never let it be said that ground crews lack a sense of humour...

Here are some actual maintenance complaints submitted by Qantas pilots (marked with a P) and the solutions recorded (marked with an S) by maintenance engineers.

By the way, Qantas is the only major airline that has never had an accident. ...

P: Left inside main tire almost needs replacement.  
S: Almost replaced left inside main tire.

P: Test flight OK, except auto-land very rough.  
S: Auto-land not installed on this aircraft.

P: Something loose in cockpit.  
S: Something tightened in cockpit.

P: Dead bugs on windshield.  
S: Live bugs on back-order.

P: Autopilot in altitude-hold mode produces a 200 feet per minute descent.  
S: Cannot reproduce problem on ground.

P: Evidence of leak on right main landing gear.  
S: Evidence removed.

P: DME volume unbelievably loud.  
S: DME volume set to more believable level.

P: Friction locks cause throttle levers to stick.  
S: That's what they're for.

P: IFF inoperative.  
S: IFF always inoperative in OFF mode.

P: Suspected crack in windshield.  
S: Suspect you're right.

P: Number 3 engine missing.  
S: Engine found on right wing after brief search.

P: Aircraft handles funny. (I love this one!)  
S: Aircraft warned to straighten up, fly right, and be serious.

P: Mouse in cockpit.  
S: Cat installed.

And the best one for last...

P. Noise coming from under instrument panel.  
Sounds like a midget pounding on something with a hammer.  
S: Took hammer away from midget.



**Silver Distance & Cross Country Week**

11<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> September 2005

- Got bronze and looking for your silver distance?
- Done silver and still hoping for a 100km diploma?
- Keen to fly cross-country but don't have anyone to retrieve you?

This week aims to help all of the above. Starting with a briefing at 18:00 on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup>, we aim to make sure you have all the equipment and planning to make your cross-country successful.

We aim to set tasks to take best advantage of the weather on each day but if it is not soarable, exercises will be set to convince you of the glide performance of your machine and to ensure that you go home with increased experience of field landings and retrieves. If we suffer non-flying days, we will discuss cross-country theory on the basis of your questions and worries.

Everyone will be expected to be available to retrieve one another, so land outs should be almost completely hassle free. Each pilot will be expected to ensure that his aircraft has a roadworthy trailer prepared for use before the first day's flying.

Run by John Williams and Kevin Hook, there will be some opportunities to fly cross-country in a two-seater or to fly on a lead and follow basis.

Bring your own glider or make use of one of the club's single-seaters. To take full advantage of the weather, there should be no more than two pilots per aircraft and one pilot per aircraft is highly recommended (the courts may not consider this to be a valid reason for murdering your syndicate partners!)

Facilities available for the week:

Junior, HRG – sign notice in clubroom to use this aircraft

Junior, KKW - sign notice in clubroom to use this aircraft

Pegase, 591 - sign notice in clubroom to use this aircraft

***DG505, 5GC when appropriate***

Barographs for all club aircraft  
Tug with pilot on standby for the week  
Met, NOTAM and task briefings each day  
**Encouragement to give it a try**

**Duty Instructor Rota**

Sat	23 <sup>rd</sup> July	Jonathan Pryce
Sun	24 <sup>th</sup> July	John Henry
Sat	30 <sup>th</sup> July	Bob Jones
Sun	31 <sup>st</sup> July	Chris Robinson
Sat	6 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Ian Dandie
Sun	7 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Gerry Marshall
Sat	13 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Jonathan Pryce
Sun	14 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Mike Carruthers
Sat	20 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Willie Laing
Sun	21 <sup>st</sup> Aug	Ray Hill
Sat	27 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Joe Fisher
Sun	28 <sup>th</sup> Aug	John Henry
Sat	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sep	Neil McAulay
Sun	4 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Bob Petrie
Sat	10 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Ian Dandie
Sun	11 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Gerry Marshall
Sat	17 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Bob Jones
Sun	18 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Andrew Bates
Sat	24 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Chris Robinson
Sun	25 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Willie Laing

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*



**Duty Pilot Rota**

Sat	23 <sup>rd</sup> Jul	Richard Lucas
Sun	24 <sup>th</sup> Jul	Kate Byrne
Sat	30 <sup>th</sup> Jul	Scott Kennedy
Sun	31 <sup>st</sup> July	Ian Meacham
Sat	6 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Alex Rougvie
Sun	7 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Richard Rigby
Sat	13 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Bill Jones
Sun	14 <sup>th</sup> Aug	John Dunnington
Sat	20 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Mike Cartney
Sun	21 <sup>st</sup> Aug	Tadzik Karczewski
Sat	27 <sup>th</sup> Aug	James Mattocks
Sun	28 <sup>th</sup> Aug	John Galloway
Sat	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sep	Peter Williams
Sun	4 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Herbie Milton
Sat	10 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Iain Russell
Sun	11 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Mark Dickson
Sat	17 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Scott Hardie
Sun	18 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Ken Donaldson
Sat	24 <sup>th</sup> Sep	James Cowie
Sun	25 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Alan Thomson

all the work, but needs to make sure there are sufficient competent “volunteers” to keep the Launch Point running safely and efficiently. With the co-operation of other members, there should be an opportunity for Duty Pilots to fly on their duty days.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

Arrive early and make yourself known to the Duty Instructor, who will guide you as to the Initial Tasks – typically these could include:

- ensuring that the caravan contains the flying list, log sheets, ballast weights, seat backs, weak links etc.;
- disconnecting the caravan from the battery charger and taking it to the launch point;
- with suitable help, unpacking the required club gliders from the hangar;
- cleaning the gliders and canopies as necessary;
- ensuring that the full complement of batteries and parachutes is put in the gliders;
- organise carrying out the Daily Inspections;
- organise moving the gliders to the launch point.

[obvious, but true – the earlier these things happen, the earlier flying commences!]

**Flying List:**

- Monitor the list and TRY to prevent queue jumping!
- The flying list is also useful for identifying new members and visitors, and you should help them get the best from their time at the club. Make sure that newcomers are given a safety briefing, and monitor what they are doing.
- You should recruit competent people from the list waiting to fly to help with tasks at the launch point.

**Log Keeping:**

- Accurate log keeping is essential. It is a safety requirement, for monitoring the “landed” or “flying” status of each glider. It is also a legal

*Alec Stevenson*

**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? Alec Stevenson 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.

**SGU Duty Pilot Briefing**

[These notes are not a comprehensive guide to flying procedures, but merely a guide to the responsibilities of the Duty Pilot. All solo pilots with more than 10 hours in the last year should have sufficient knowledge of Airfield organisation to carry out the role of Duty Pilot.]

The Duty Pilot is the person responsible, under the direction of the Duty Instructor, for the efficient running of the Launch Point. (S)he is not required to do





requirement, and the Treasurer becomes deeply unhappy if he does not get the correct information to charge for launching and flying fees!

- Make sure that the log is competently manned at all times, briefing each new log keeper on the duties if needed.
- Pilots' names, membership numbers and glider numbers must be entered in the log BEFORE launching takes place.
- Record the launch time from the watch attached to the log, and keep a good lookout around the field to record landing times.
- Log sheets should record out-landings, if the information is available.
- If a glider is not logged down at the end of flying, the Duty Instructor MUST be informed. [Although, if a glider lands back on the Airfield and is not logged down, it is the pilot's duty to check the entry in the log.]

#### Glider Queue:

- We use a two-drum winch, so gliders should normally be organised into a queue of two lines, one either side of the cones between which the cable retrieve vehicle drives.
- Pilots approaching the front of the queue should be encouraged to complete cable release checks and positive control checks before reaching the front of the launch line, so that they are ready to launch as soon as the cables arrive.
- Normally, use the downwind cable first to reduce the risk of tangles – unless the winch driver confirms that the upwind cable can be used.
- If a pilot is not ready for the cable, give it to the next pilot who is ready, if this is practicable. Leave the first pilot to complete checks, etc. Do not try to “hurry up” any launch – safety comes first!
- Do not let anyone handle the second cable until the first is fully drawn in, and the amber light on the winch has stopped flashing.

- As soon as the two launches are complete, move up the next two gliders and ensure that the pilots are ready to launch. Good organisation at the launch point is a habit that should be practised even when things are quiet.

#### Signalling:

- This should only be entrusted to someone who fully understands the launch procedure.
- The wingtip holder and signaller MUST have a clear view of each other, failing which a third person MUST relay the signals.
- Visual signals must be used.
- When briefing someone on signalling, ensure that (s)he fully understands both (1) the Stop signal, and (2) that ANYONE may stop a launch if they perceive a safety hazard.

#### Weak Links and Cable Handling:

- There should be at least two weak links of each colour at the launch point, on the rack on the caravan. If any are missing or broken, ask the winch driver to send a replacement.
- The correct weak link should be waiting with each glider before the cables arrive. There is a table at the back of the red ring binder describing the colour of weak link required for various glider types.
- Make sure that when weak links are swapped, they are returned to the rack on the caravan and not left lying on the airfield.
- Be vigilant in preventing anyone from handling the second cable while the first one is still live.

#### Parachutes etc:

- Parachutes and other ancillaries such as batteries, ballast weights and seat backs provided for use in club gliders are SAFETY-RELATED items and must be carefully looked after and returned to safe storage at the end of the day.
- Parachutes must be treated with great care at all times – never lay them on the ground or let them

get wet. They must be bagged and



returned to the store in the hangar at the end of flying. Your life may depend on this procedure. If you have any doubts about a parachute, take it out of service until it can be checked.

- Similarly, batteries must be returned to the store in the hangar at the end of flying, and connected to the battery chargers.
- Seat backs and ballast weights must be returned to the caravan.

#### Cable Retrieve:

- Anyone who can drive can learn to retrieve cables, although they will require a demonstration of the process before going solo.
- Ideally, the retrieve vehicle will be on its way back to the winch before the first cable is used, but make sure it stays clear of the launching glider in case there is a launch failure. Return trips to the winch should use the ash track or farm road where practicable.
- Brief the drivers to bring the cables in a straight line from the winch to the cones adjacent to the caravan.

#### Glider Retrieve:

- This is a very important part of the launch point organisation. Landed gliders causing an obstruction will halt launches, and landed club gliders left out on the airfield cost the club money and deny members the opportunity to fly.
- Retrieve of club 2-seaters takes priority.
- Make sure the retrieve drivers know where to look for approaching aircraft, and behave predictably. They should go around the edges of the field and then straight to the glider, returning straight to the launch point.
- **THEY MUST NEVER DRIVE ACROSS THE PATH OF A LANDING AIRCRAFT – IF IN DOUBT, STOP!**

#### Clearing Up:

- During the summer months, flying may go on late into the evening, and the Duty Pilot is not expected to remain until the

end of the day. However, if still on duty at the end of flying, ensure that the following actions are taken:

- duty instructor **MUST** be informed if any pilot is not accounted for;
- tyres cleared away to the edge of the field (but not stacked up into piles);
- club gliders returned to the hangar;
- club parachutes returned to the hangar store;
- batteries removed from club gliders and put on charge in the hangar;
- caravan returned to the old hangar, master switch turned off, and connected to the battery charger;
- log sheets returned to the clubhouse.

Like everyone else at the club, the Duty Pilots are here to enjoy themselves. Don't treat the job as a chore. Take pride in running a friendly, efficient launch point and make sure that you get some flying of your own.

*Neil McAulay, CFI*



# SCOTTISH GLIDING ASSOCIATION

*Angus Cairngorm Deeside Dumfries Highland SGU Strathclyde*

*Mike Carruthers  
39 Church Street  
ALLOA  
Clackmannanshire  
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*Operations Committee Chairman*

At last year's AGM Richard kicked off his term as Chairman by stating that he intended to deal with the issue of "replacement of the ASH25". My response to Richard was that that was putting the wrong question first. Before we consider whether the aircraft should be replaced there are a number of other questions we should attempt to answer first, including -

- What is our goal, what are we trying to achieve with the SGA operation?
- Are we achieving that goal?
- If not, why not?
- What can we do about it? What could we do to improve the operation and better achieve the primary goal?
- Is the primary goal still worthwhile? Do we still think it's worth the effort?

I would like to see these and similar questions debated in an open forum, eg this EGM, before we even begin to consider the question of replacement.

Subsequent to last year's AGM three options have been put on the table for discussion at the forthcoming EGM –

1. Keep the ASH as "The Scottish National Gliding Facility"
2. Sell ASH and replace with another glider
3. Sell the ASH and SGA to concentrate on funding

The starting point of "replacement of the ASH25" would seem to preclude option 1 before we have even debated the options. It seems to me we started by looking for solutions before we actually identified what the problem is and have presupposed that the ASH25 will/should be replaced or disposed of. I fear that delegates will arrive at Easterton with their minds (or those of the clubs they represent) already made up which of the three options they intend to vote for before any meaningful discussion has taken place. I find that deeply disturbing. My own views are clear and I will express them here but first let me recap.

Yes, there is capital tied up in the ASH25 but it wasn't our capital in the first place. We got it for nothing thanks to a generous Scottish Sports Council grant. Even so, it wasn't easily come by. The purchase was the culmination of 6 or 7 years of very hard work by a number of individuals with vision including Glen Douglas, Terry Slater, and Colin Hamilton (and others whose names I don't know). The people involved had a vision of doing something positive for Scottish gliding clubs that eventually bore fruit in the form of the SSC grant to fund the ASH25 purchase.

Now it seems we are about to throw it away without a full public debate of the issues, so lets look at the options that have been put on the table, and I'll tackle them if I may in reverse order –

**Option 3 – Sell the ASH25 and the SGA to concentrate on funding.** Essentially, the ASH25 would be sold and the proceeds banked then the interest, and possibly the capital, used to subsidise training. In effect the SGA will become a grant-awarding body to Scottish clubs. I recognise that this is a bold and radical proposal, however I'm not aware if there has been any broad-based debate of the details of how this would be put into practise, and the things I think should be discussed before any decision is made include –

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- Would the SGA organise cross-country courses? Would it hire coaches/aircraft?
- Would it depend on individuals booking themselves on courses then applying for subsidy?
- What type of activities would be subsidised eg cross-country, aerobatic, basic/assistant instructor courses, full cat conversions, capital asset expenditure by clubs, revenue expenditure by clubs?
- What level of subsidy would be offered, obviously somewhere between 0 – 100% of the cost?
- What other promotional activities are envisaged?
- Would the operation depend entirely on a volunteer administration?
- Would the SGA capitation charge continue as is/be reduced/be discontinued? I think it is envisaged that it will remain unchanged however I think one of the benefits clubs would expect from disposal of the ASH25 would be the end of, or at least a considerable reduction of, the SGA capitation charge.

I suspect one of two things would happen following this option – after just a few years we would find we had an appreciating sum sitting in the bank gathering interest, with a tiny amount trickling out to a very small number of beneficiaries, or we would come under pressure from clubs to subsidise capital projects until eventually it was all gone.

**Option 2 – Sell the ASH25 and replace with another glider.** The proposal is that the ASH25 should be replaced with an aircraft such as the Duo Discus or DG1000. Two arguments are regularly used to promote this proposal – one is the difficulty of staying current on the ASH25 leading to lack of confidence in field-landing and hence reluctance to go cross-country. That I can understand, however, and I’m prepared to be corrected by those with more experience, I believe the Duo Discus has poorer approach control than the ASH25 with an approach that is generally flatter and faster. I can’t speak for the DG1000 but suspect it has better approach control than the Duo. The question would then be which of them has the better handling and performance.

The other argument used to promote replacing the ASH25 is that “more pilots would be able to fly” the alternative. What they really mean is that we could open up P1 qualification to those who can’t satisfy the current minimum requirement of Gold badge and 500 hours. Why were these minima set in the first place – because the ASH25 is so difficult to fly? No, because the Ops Committee at the start considered that for P1s to deliver the sort of coaching envisaged they would have to have achieved a certain minimum standard themselves. Basically, the SGA needs P1s who can talk the talk *and* walk the walk! P1s are expected to keep themselves in current cross-country practise, preferably in competition practise as well. To get a Gold badge you only have to do one 300Km flight. To those pilots who think they should be allowed to fly P1 in the SGA aircraft (whatever it is) I would say if you can’t motivate yourself to do even one 300Km cross-country then what do you have to offer less-experienced pilots in terms of your cross-country experience and knowledge? How can you expect to motivate them?

If this proposal really means lets forget about advanced training, we just want a toy to play with, then count me out. I’m not prepared to put in the effort I do now just to provide a toy. I don’t know how many hundreds, maybe thousands, of miles I’ve driven, or hundreds of pounds I’ve spent out of my own pocket, towing the ASH25 all round Scotland and England, but I do it because I still believe the goal is worth the effort and I’m prepared to give towards that goal.

**Option 1 – keep the ASH25 as the “Scottish National Gliding Facility”.** We have an exceptional asset, gifted to us by the SSC, a once in a lifetime opportunity. If we get rid of it we’ll never have anything like it again, certainly there is no indication from SportScotland that such funding will ever be available to us again from that source. I’ve spoken to a few P1s in recent weeks eg John Tanner, Jack Stephen, Colin Hamilton, and Kevin Hook. Although we agreed on virtually everything Kevin admitted that he had, in his own words, given up. Colin, whose view I value because of his involvement right at the start, still believes in the principle of what we are trying to do. The others indicated their unequivocal support. I’m sure most of the other P1s still believe in the goal as well. When it looked like it might be written off or disposed of a couple



of years ago Terry Slater impressed on me very strongly that we shouldn't allow that to happen. Do we appreciate what we've got?

If we keep it, and if there is general agreement that we're not achieving our goal, then I'd like to see a debate about what we can do differently. But first let me just mention utilisation. Yes it's low if compared with a general use club aircraft used for circuit bashing and basic training, but that's a false comparison. It really should be compared with a privately owned aircraft, and how many private owners will bother to rig if there is no prospect of a worthwhile flight? Like the private aircraft it will generally only fly when the weather offers the prospect of a decent cross-country flight and that's as it should be. Ah yes, the weather, there's the rub.

So, back to the question – what could we do differently? Basically we need good weather *and* we need to be able to take advantage of it when the opportunity presents itself. It doesn't matter how good the weather is if we're stuck in an office. We can't guarantee good weather anywhere but we can improve the odds by moving south – England to begin with, or maybe even Spain. Some might consider this a radical proposal but surely no more radical than selling it and putting the money in the bank. The Ops Committee proposed basing the aircraft at Bicester for the summer season a couple of years ago but met with opposition. If we really want to improve the quantity and quality of cross-country activity then I think we should consider it again.

How would we operate it? Suppose we based it at Bicester from May to September – say 21 weeks less 5 weeks for comps/transit = 16 weeks – firstly could we man it with P1s? We'd need a number of P1s to commit one or two weeks each. I think we could also quite easily find volunteers among the "hot" pilots down south to do the odd week or few days. I'm certain Terry has the contacts. We could get even more radical and consider hiring a top pilot to provide coaching, or negotiate some sort of tie-in with the BGA or Spreckley coaching operations as Kevin Hook suggested last year.

We'd need P2s – individuals could book it or clubs could book it and organise club expeditions around their week or fortnight. Some clubs have run similar expeditions on their own in the past. In Spring and Autumn we would operate it in Scotland, in wave hopefully.

These are just suggestions. There are many things that could be done to improve the operation. They might require more commitment from P1s, clubs, individuals, or more effort from the Ops Committee, but I would hope the rewards would be worth it. Most of all, I feel very strongly that before any vote is taken on its future we should discuss such ideas in an open forum and agree collectively either to go forward or to give up. If the decision is to give up then so be it, but remember once it's gone it's gone.

Mike Carruthers