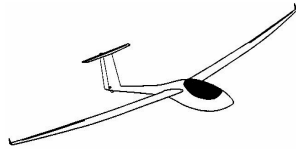


From the home of the *Scottish Gliding Centre*

Portmoak Press

Editorial – Ian Easson



First of all, apologies for the late publication of this issue – where did June & July go? There has been a lot happening at club and national level, not to mention the successes at the recent world championships. On a personal note, a big thank-you to Peter Clayton who came to retrieve the Peg and me from my second (failed) attempt at 50K. Soon after Peter arrived, the heavens opened up and we both got drenched in probably the wettest retrieve ever.

For those who enjoyed the exploits of our pilots in Australia in the last issue, you can follow the concluding part of John Guy’s “More daring Do’s Down Under”.

The Board, at the meeting on 6th August, faced the challenge of responding to rapidly rising costs both of insurance and of fuel. John Munro has issued a letter, which gives information on price increases for flying fees at Portmoak (see page 2).

I am interested in hearing from new members – what are your impressions of the club? How have you progressed towards that first solo? Gone solo already? – tell us about it. Any ideas to improve our club – or this club mag? All constructive feedback welcomed.

For the more experienced pilots – I am keen to hear about those DIs which caused you to mark a glider as U/S, and what was done to rectify the problem. The aim is to share these with the less experienced pilots to help raise awareness of the type of defects to look out for.

On a more serious note, you will probably have seen the recent publicity about the Civil Aviation Authority’s proposals on Mode S transponder use in UK airspace. The

BGA’s experts believe that these represent a threat to

gliding for no tangible benefit. It is important that we all respond to these proposals and spread the word. In order to make sure we all know what is proposed, I have included an extract from the proposals on page 2. More details can be found at: <http://www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/airspace/transponders.htm> August 29 is the deadline for responses to the CAA and it would help the BGA if any response you decide to send to the CAA is also copied for information to the BGA at office@gliding.co.uk

Cut off dates are as follows: 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

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Publicity & PR	John Guy
Membership Communication	Kate Byrne
Club Secretary	John Munro



Price Increases from 1st October 2006

Our activities are coming under threat from many directions at present.

- During the course of this year, insurance underwriters have subjected us to premium increases of around 50% in addition to imposing age restrictions and a 200% increase in deductibles.
- Avgas prices have risen by 17.5% since March of this year
- The price of red diesel has more than doubled in the last two years
- The cost of electricity to parts of our premises has risen by 89% since the turn of the year
- Threats to local airspace threaten both our cross country activities and potentially our viability as a visitor attraction during the wave season
- The threat of mandatory transponders could cost us as much as £3000 per aircraft and £300 per year per aircraft, threatening the viability of both the club fleet and many of the privately owned aircraft at Portmoak.

Although many people are working very hard to minimise the effects of rising costs, we are unable to continue to absorb all of the increases. In addition to the already scheduled rises to the cost of a winch launch (by 50p) and an aerotow (by £1), the board have been obliged to make further price increases. The cost of aerotows has been further increased by 60p with effect from 4th August. With effect from 1st October, the cost of flying club aircraft will increase by 16% (from 33p/min to 38p/min for most flights). Had we continued to insure the club fleet under the renewal terms, the increase would have needed to be 23% (to 41p/min).

The board have taken the decision to self insure the hulls of the club gliders and only to pay the (150% increased) premiums on the legally required 3rd party cover. In order to provide a buffer against a serious disaster in the early years of this new era, the insurance settlement from the KKW accident has been ring-fenced, and HRG has been returned to service indefinitely. We aim to augment this fund by setting aside 25% more funds than our long term claims average each year. Hopefully, we will be able to obtain

any repairs necessary at rates cheaper than the insurers have been paying over recent years. As a club, we are facing a number of serious challenges. Your board are doing everything they can to minimise price increases and to maximise the services available to members. To continue to keep prices under control, we need the help of every member. Besides not having accidents (even unavoidable ones!), we need members' help wherever it may help us to avoid paying professional fees for jobs that we have the skills to tackle ourselves. Please let any board member know if you have a skill that we should be taking advantage of.

Right now, we need the help of all members if we are to be successful in avoiding the transponder threat. We need all members to fill in the CAA's very unwieldy questionnaire on the subject before August 29th. Please see the BGA's web site for full details on how to respond to this questionnaire. There will be an opportunity to discuss all of these issues at an information meeting in November, when we will also be looking at the effects of these changing times on our long term plan.

Wishing you all every success with your gliding ambitions,

John Munro
SGU Secretary

Mode S Transponder Consultation

We appeal to all clubs and glider pilots to respond to the current CAA consultation on the carriage of Mode S transponders.

It has become clear that the impact of the CAA proposals, if passed, will be greater than we were originally advised by the CAA and the costs will be higher than originally imagined - all for no tangible safety or other benefit to the gliding population. The current CAA proposals are flawed and represent a threat to our sport.

Please respond. More information about what the CAA proposals really mean to you, full details of how to respond, including suggestions for your responses, and links to various background

documents are now on the BGA web site at



<http://www.glidering.co.uk/bgainfo/airspace/transponders.htm>

Responses must be received by the CAA no later than 29th August.

Glider & Pilot Insurance - Advert

Due to the recent changes in E.U. Legislation, we have launched a new and innovative scheme for gliding/microlight insurance with an International Insurer. This means that we can offer your members a new way to insure both themselves and their craft at very competitive rates.

Our mission at onrisk.co.uk is to challenge the insurance industry!

As this product is new to the market we are currently seeking ways in which to promote it.

For more information, please contact us on FREEPHONE 0800 043 9342

Rowena Roebuck

Marketing for Gliding/Microlight Division

Air-Ex evenings

Air experience evenings are continuing to be popular with many evenings operating at capacity. It would be very helpful if instructors could arrive in plenty of time for first launch at 5:30.

Just to make sure everyone knows what's going on, here's a list of the evenings and who is booked in.

Tues 8th August (Mags & Dave Thomson).

Tues 15th August (Mags & Dave Thomson).

Mon 21st August (Peter Clayton).

Tue 22nd August (Mags & Dave Thomson).

Mon 28th August (Peter Clayton & Mike Forrster).

Tues 29th August (Mags & Dave Thomson).

Mon 4th September (Mike Forrster)

We generally need a minimum of three instructors although it is preferred to run with four. If there is any instructor who would like to come along for an evening's flying, please contact Irene and let her know. This is a great way to make sure you have sufficient hours for renewal and all categories of instructor are welcome. If you are a full-cat or ass-cat instructor these evenings are an opportunity to get some hands on practice on flying two seaters, something you might be short of during normal instructional flying.



Finally a special thanks to all those who've instructed and helped on the Tuesday evenings. At the moment we're planning to stop the Tuesday evenings on 29th August as I will be on holiday for the first two weeks in September so we're on the home straight now!

BGA

Bob Jones

More Daring Do's Down Under (part 2)

Over the weekend, I had business in Perth, my daughter was moving house and needed a hand, but I was able to get back to Cunderdin by noon on Sunday.

It was another cracking day. Peter had declared a 300k triangle, so I had to hover in the background as his official BGA observer. Eventually he managed to get away, so we settled down to wait for his return.

Out in the wheat belt, one network of mobile phone works. After five hours, we were expecting a call but he had made it and landed back a short while later looking absolutely shattered. The logger had been flashing at him for some time, "Battery low!" so he had switched off virtually everything else including the radio to conserve what power was left, in the hope that the logger would keep on working.

We all retired to the computer room, with bated breath, to download the trace. There were several recorded for the day, what had gone wrong? We downloaded the last. It was an artefact of only a few minutes. Several others were the same. We thought, bad luck Peter, but then wait a minute, there it was a trace of five and a half hours. It was all there. What had happened was that when he landed he had not switched the logger off, so on the trundle back to the hanger, it had recorded some more traces which were really artefacts. What a relief. That night we dined at the pub in town and guess who picked up the tab!

The next day, Monday, the RAAF arrived. Twenty trainee pilots from their airbase in Perth. They were all due to start a conversion course onto Pilatus PC 9's but there was a shortage of aircraft, so a gliding course had been arranged with the club at

Cunderdin, to keep them out of mischief. They were all solo on power

and as keen as mustard. They looked a scruffy lot in their knee length shorts and trainers, but we got on with them well.

Beverley gliding club had been enlisted to help with a tug, instructors, a Puchaz and a K21. They had all come up the night before. The two-seaters on a dual aerotow. They all managed to land, just before it got dark. The sun goes down very quickly in these latitudes.

Monday morning the briefing room was packed. Kevin had taken the week off to manage the new arrivals, who were raring to go. We felt a little in the way, but managed to get launches when we needed them. The weather was not soarable to begin with, so I helped Kevin with the Blanik which was needed. He had stayed up half the night finishing the CofA. By lunch-time Tuesday it was ready for a test flight. With two tugs and four two-seaters, the launch point went like a fair all week.

By Wednesday, some of the students had gone solo and by the end of the week they had all done so. Some had even been cleared to do aerobatics. So all in all it was a very successful week for the club.

From our point of view, Tuesday of that week looked promising, so David and I set our own tasks. This was to be a 300k attempt for me. Things started off well but when approaching the first turn, a high overcast started to dampen things down. So I abandoned the task and turned for home. The thermals gradually became weaker and weaker, so at 1,500ft. there was nothing for it but pick a field. I radioed my distance and bearing from Cunderdin with a view to an aerotow retrieve. Went through my pre-landing cockpit checks, including lowering the undercarriage. Checked the wind bearing from the logger and came round onto finals.

Checked for drift, was a little high so cracked the airbrakes. Then panic! The undercarriage buzzer suddenly sounded. I, in my confusion, had reversed the undercarriage lever, but by this time was in roundout. The touchdown was somewhat solid, but otherwise smooth. I had landed wheel up! I had not locked it in the first place.

After I ran out of expletives, I got out to inspect the damage. The doors looked intact. But in front of them rather a lot of gel coat was missing. The fibreglass was

exposed and looked well polished, but otherwise intact. Now it was confession time. I was able to contact the launch point with the mobile phone and talk directly to the CFI. "No worries, we'll get a retrieve crew out to you, where are you?"

Of course, I had no idea where I was, somewhere along the line of my first leg. I said I would phone back and started walking. I had seen a fairly main road to the east, so started to make for it. I was shocked to find that a little further down the field it was covered with small sharp rocks. I fortunately had chosen a smooth sandy patch. Then there were also sheep, but as the field was over 100 acres, there was room in it for both of us, with none in my half. The overcast was complete by now, with a stiff breeze blowing. I had a full water bottle and it was cool. Eventually, I hit a dirt road. Along came the school bus, going the wrong way for me. He stopped. "You OK mate?" Nobody walks along dirt roads, miles from anywhere, in Australia. "Are you coming back this way?" He shook his head. "It's about one K to the main road", so I started walking again.

Soon after a "ut" appeared going in my direction. I thumbed a lift and was dropped at the junction with the main road. I was just north of a small town and was able to phone in my position. The retrieve crew consisting of Kevin the CFI and Peter were already on their way.

The only way I survived the flies on that corner, was to stand facing into the wind. If I tried to shelter, they were all over me in a flash. In my eyes, nose and mouth.

After an hour the crew arrived and I directed them to the scene of the crime. I got a rocket for not staking the glider. Another lesson learnt the hard way.

Kevin inspected the track made by the landing. The first impression made in the soil was lined by scraps of gel coat. He paced the distance to the glider, forty metres, dead into wind. It had been an otherwise normal landing, thank God. "Should be OK to fly" said Kevin, "We'll just put some tape over the scrapes and re-gel at the CofA at the end of the season." The next problem was to tip the glider up

and get the undercart down. We just managed it on the second attempt,



or other wise it would have meant digging a hole in the ground to make room for the wheel and then pushing it out of the hole.

De-rigging went well. The next job was to pick up David on the way home. He had landed out back along virtually the same leg. He had been a good boy and staked his glider. Found him in the local pub with new friends who were plying him with beer. David normally does not drink much beer, but when in Rome.....!!!

As no human being would come within about three miles of the glider, it was safe to leave it to retrieve the next day. David could have gone out in an Auster called Agnes and had an aerotow home, but he decided to take the trailer. De-rigging and rigging is an interesting exercise on unfamiliar types, but we got it right in the end, with both the Jantar and the Pilatus.

Next soarable day was Friday, last chance to do a 300k. Plenty of small cumulus about at 8,000ft. This was it. Programmed the logger, caught a thermal to 5,000ft, over the airfield. Pressed the start button on the logger. Nothing! Try for the first turning point. Wrong one came up. Damn! Seem to have got it all wrong with the programming. Ah well, nothing for it but to go for a joy ride up and down the Great Eastern Highway. Stayed up at cloudbase and motored for 100k up the highway and 100k back home with tons of height. What a wasted chance, I could have done a proper 300k triangle easy. But that's life for you. Prepare your flight well, is the motto.

But it was an enjoyable flight. Maybe next year.

John Guy

Duty Pilot Rota

Sat	19 th Aug	Alec Stevenson
Sun	20 th Aug	Hamish Eagleton
Sat	26 th Aug	Jeff King
Sun	27 th Aug	Angela Fraser
Sat	2 nd Sep	Donald Cowan
Sun	3 rd Sep	John Crighton
Sat	9 th Sep	Alastair Doig
Sun	10 th Sep	Gary Donachie
Sat	16 th Sep	David Gardiner
Sun	17 th Sep	Rowan Griffin
Sat	23 rd Sep	Gareth Francis
Sun	24 th Sep	George McKay
Sat	30 th Sep	Martin Ling
Sun	1 st Oct	Scott Hardie
Sat	7 th Oct	Bruce Duncan
Sun	8 th Oct	Kate Byrne
Sat	14 th Oct	Amy Barsby
Sun	15 th Oct	Lee Mitchell
Sat	21 st Oct	Ben Golding
Sun	22 nd Oct	Paul Barnett

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.

