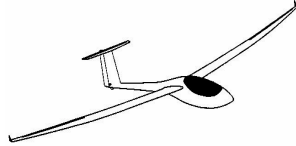


From the home of the *Scottish Gliding Union*

# Portmoak Press

**Editorial – Ian Easson**

Before putting skin to plastic for issue 27, I looked at my introduction



for the last issue and saw the reference to the bad weather that we had been experiencing at the beginning of the year. Little did I know that this was nothing compared to the extreme weather waiting to flood the Midlands later in the year. Notwithstanding the obvious trauma of being flooded out of house & home, I felt sorry for some SGU members who travelled south to take part in comps and task days only to report that their gliders had stayed locked and dry in their trailers for most of the time.

On a recent non-flying day, as I partook of the excellent beverages provided by Steve & Irene, I noticed some of our older members watching a group of newer members chatting about their “epic” flights and experiences. As I watched, an idea struck me (I know that doesn’t happen often) and I thought it would be good to let some of our new members see just what some of our older members got up to when they were young enthusiastic pilots. In this issue, I have included an article by Ansgar Sambale, written when he was much younger. I am glad to report that another regular contributor has raised his (or her) head again – namely, one Slarty Bartfast (see Cats’ Tales). There are opportunities to fly in foreign skies, and a timely reminder of the responsibilities of the weekend Duty Pilots. As we go to press I am hearing some excellent feedback from the Walking on Air expedition to Switzerland and I hope to have an update in the next issue.

On the subject of articles and stories, I am still struggling to gather material for the book (History of the SGU) for the 1980s. I have written the chapters up to the end of the seventies and I have some items from the nineties onwards but

there is a definite shortage around the eighties. I am on the look-out for stories (funny or serious) from club members, or visitors, who were active during that period, so please dig out your logbooks and recall those epic flights – remember, the book is the history and your stories could form part of that history. Although photos are useful, the real interest comes from the stories but if you are uncomfortable writing articles send me the facts and I’ll draft the words around those.

One last plea to all members, new or old, experienced or ab initio, regular contributors or not, to consider submitting material for *Portmoak Press*. Details of how to do this can be found below.

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](mailto:ian.easson@btinternet.com)

***In this issue:***

Editorial – Ian Easson .....	1
Club News.....	2
International Opportunities .....	2
New Briefing Documents.....	2
Booked Flying is Changing.....	2
Insurance .....	3
Turnpoints Update .....	3
Craig’s Silver Distance .....	4
Cats’ Tales .....	6
Alain Chainey Award.....	9
Two Up, Both Away .....	10
Silver Distance & Cross Country Week .....	12
Duty Pilot Responsibilities .....	12
Duty Pilot Rota .....	13



## Board Members.

Chairman	John Williams
Vice-Chairman & Winch	Douglas Tait
Treasurer	Kevin Hook
Technical & W.O.A.	Joe Fisher
Publicity & P.R.	John Guy
Membership Communications	Kate Byrne
Club Secretary	John Munro

## Club News

Volunteers have been very busy with various maintenance activities over the previous weeks: Thanks to Charlie Guthrie, Craig Chatburn, Graham Smith, Brian Scougall and others, the tug engine was removed, sent for major overhaul (zero hours) and replaced.

Again with much hard work from Neil, Steve, Dave Clempson, Craig Chatburn, Vic Blaxill and others, the winch was completely overhauled, bearings renewed, the gearbox opened up and the fuel pump overhauled.

Although we didn't get the best weather experienced at Portmoak, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary took place on 23<sup>rd</sup> June. Val Alexander took the lead for all activities and co-ordinated the whole day. As usual, a band of volunteers queued up to help with everything from flying to feeding.

Mike Cartney led a band of volunteers to lay the "Terra-Grid" ground reinforcement system in front of the hangar – task finished in just two days!

Due to a tightening of insurance procedures for Walking on Air, would all instructors planning to fly the WA1 K21, please remember to complete the WA1 pro-forma. Any problems or questions should be directed to Bob Petrie.

## International Opportunities

I will be returning to Blomfontain in South Africa in Jan - Feb 2008. I will probably arrange an evening on Fridays early winter to explain in more detail but info on the club and Dick Bradley's operation can be found at [www.soaringsafaris.com](http://www.soaringsafaris.com)

Everyone need not come at the same time, I believe the experience would



add to your skills and understanding of gliding and would make a good holiday at an otherwise dismal time of year.

All welcome from Bronze + c/c endorsement to World Champion's

Anyone interested in attending who may like to find out more is welcome to make

contact with me at [georgeross@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:georgeross@ukonline.co.uk)

*George Ross*

and there's more....

I have a one week booking for the European Soaring Club (Ontur) in the South of Spain in the week beginning 2 September - cross country training with a mixture of Duo Discus and LS4. Work may prevent me getting there. Anyone interested?

*Donald Carmichael*

## New Briefing Documents

This is particularly for those who have recently taken up gliding at Portmoak. Two new briefing documents have been added to the website, under Members' Area... Briefings... Download Area. They are:

### 1. New member's handbook

<http://www.scottishglidingcentre.co.uk/downloads/sgcJoiners.pdf>

this is an introduction to the SGC with information about learning to glide. It will be sent out as a printed booklet to new joiners from now on, but is available as a PDF file to anyone interested.

### 2. Ground Rules

<http://www.scottishglidingcentre.co.uk/downloads/GroundRules.pdf>

this is also aimed at new members, and describes the basics of ground handling, running the line, and setting up and closing down flying operations. It's based on an article that appeared in Portmoak Press a few years ago.

*Kate Byrne*

## Booked Flying is Changing

Now that we have several years experience of booked flying at Portmoak, we have reviewed the product and the costs with a view to improving the service. Feedback from users has been

overwhelmingly positive; there are also potential improvements. Our previous

arrangements were made to maximise flying. It is clear to us that extra time spent on briefings can often result in a significant reduction in the overall time and cost of making progress. Whilst addressing this issue, several changes are to be introduced with a view to ensuring fairness of costs for both users and non-users, and to minimise susceptibility to fickle weather.

Under the new system, which will take effect from Monday 10th September, the arrangements for this service (which is available to club members only) will be:

Booked Flying will be for the whole of the day from 08:30 to 17:00. This helps to make the best of a day which is partly flyable and provides a team to help with the launching etc.

- a) Three bookings will be taken for each day (2 during Nov - Feb) giving a 1/3 increase in the student/instructor ratio.
- b) If the weather proves uncooperative, briefings will be provided until lunch-time or until it becomes flyable (if sooner).
- c) If the weather remains unflyable, the instructor will revert to non-instructional duties for the afternoon (these make significant savings in maintenance costs etc when there is no flying income).
- d) To take account of the increased instructor/student ratio and the commitment to ground briefing time, the booking fee will increase to £20 for the whole day and will only be refundable if, following a cancellation, the space can be filled by another student.
- e) Students are expected to attend for the whole day in order to allow them to work together as a team and achieve the maximum flying from the day.
- f) When a booking is made for motor glider exercises, the booking fee will be £30. This is necessary because the club is unable to cover any costs from flying fees which are paid directly to the Falke syndicate.

We will continue to do what we can to help everyone



achieve their flying goals in the best and most cost effective way possible. The booked flying arrangements will be under continuous review and customer feedback is always welcome.

*SGU Board*

### Insurance

Once again, the club's fleet insurance is due for renewal. At last, we are seeing a slight softening of the ageist attitude taken by the underwriters over the last two years. For the octogenarians, the good news is that you may now resume flying solo in club gliders. With effect from 22nd June, the restrictions applied to pilots aged 70 or over will be as follows: All pilots whose details have already been submitted to the insurers need take no further action. Any pilot crossing the 70-year threshold during the year must ensure that the necessary form is completed and returned to the SGU office before flying as P1 after their 70th Birthday.

Restrictions from 22/6/07:

- Pilots aged 80 and above may only fly solo or as P2. Safety pilots must either be qualified instructors, or must hold a DVLA2 medical (i.e. be allowed to carry passengers) and be aged 69 or less.
- Pilots aged 70 and above may only fly as P1 (solo or with a P2 aged less than 80) after completing the insurer's form and being approved by the underwriters.
- Instructors aged 70 to 79 must hold a CAA class II medical.

Fly safely,

*Kevin Hook*

### Turnpoints Update

There are a lot of turnpoints listed on the National Ladder site that are not official BGA TPs. When these are used for Badge Claims, I tend to get notes from the O/O saying that they couldn't check the flight as GLY12 was not in Seeyou/Tasknav etc. Just to reiterate the rules:

If you are using a logger then you can use any point as a turnpoint but if it isn't on the BGA list then you **MUST** include

the Lat and Long in the declatarion.  
However, I'd prefer BGA tps as it makes the claim MUCH quicker to check.

*Basil the badges officer*

### Craig's Silver Distance

Well it's been a long time coming, 2 1/2 years to be exact since my Silver height and duration.

I arrived at Portmoak on a day when the Blipmaps (<http://weather.scorer.homelinux.org/RASPviewer.html>) promised a good thermal day in the middle of Scotland. A cold front had just gone through and a new airmass was upon us, there was a threat of sea breeze fronts on both coasts later.

I was down as second pilot to have a flight in the ASH with Sant, but as he said there was only a window for one good training flight that day, would I like a hand to rig my own glider?

I thought about it, I had only had a few flights this year between the K8, T21, K21 and Falke so not very current, and thought it would be good to get a bit of soaring / thermal and landing practice in my shared Std Jantar 3 so we set about rigging HUB.

Then I thought I should set a task and after some advice from Sant, John D, John W and of course Kevin, the task was set so that either way if I reached any of my chosen turning points I should have Silver in the bag.

The task set was PCS-LOM-CAD-DRU-PCS, giving me quite a few options to get a silver leg, on hindsight Lake of Menteith and Callander are both too close, if in sector for CAD I was also in sector for LOM. The reason in my mind was that if I struggled to reach Stirling then I had the choice of two valleys to attempt the best path.

So, plans made, logger and GPS checked and wired - off to the launch point with the sky still not looking promising, took a launch around 11:30 with small thermals starting. Off we went, great start, due to poor launch technique and it being my first flight in the Glider for 6 months, 750ft at the top of the wire, got to the hill at 600ft only to be met by the ASH coming my way also at 600ft, chicken - me - yes, turned and after an abbreviated circuit came in too fast at 65 kts. Although current

to fly, not very current if you see from that circuit, long float, long walk back to the launch point. Now in a queue at the launch point, Hang Gliders were launching about 400ft below the top of the Bishop and gain height just about 200 ft above the tops, thermals were kicking off and we stopped for lunch! So, now I'm 6<sup>th</sup> in the queue, I help to launch other gliders, watching where they go. A K21 goes up the wire and straight into thermal over the Loch Edge. A Ventus and a pair of Cirrus turn left for a thermal, Then a Cirrus and the Ventus land again. Now it's my turn, I head for the Bishop bowl as no other gliders are on the hill, and the Hang Gliders have stopped for a rest on the top. I had a better launch this time 1200 feet (I later hear that the weak link went at the top of the launch) so I arrive at Bishop around 1000 feet. After a couple of S turns, I'm climbing in a thermal from the bowl up to 4400ft still QFE. This is easy I thought, so I set off on track for LOM, along a broken cloud street, stopping too often to get back up close to cloudbase. All the way to Dollar on that street then a big blue gap to Stirling. I tried a few times to go further west but realised I was on the wrong side off the Ochills and got caught in the curlover, I only got to within a mile of Alva so I headed back to Dollar, climbed as far as I could around 3400ft. I saw that a nice into-wind street had formed right over the Ochills from Dollar. I thought long and hard about using it but with terrain clearance and nowhere to go if it all went wrong so I turned back for Balado. At Balado my next thought was to climb and cross Glenfarg and head up the north side of the Ochills. Each time I tried after climbing to around 4000ft, I was washed out in the lee of the Ochills. Hmm...plan B - get a good climb head for Perth and try up the middle of the Earn valley. Perth was good, a nice climb to 5300ft, I was watching the traffic from Scone, very busy, so rather than go that way I headed for Callander, a few km down track and was again faced with a big blue gap. I dialed CAD into the GPS, 50ish km to go into wind, tried Drumshade 40ish km, so I turned round and thought

downwind would now be the best option. On track for DRU there was



just blue sky, but further south a nice cloud street, so I followed this, again taking too many climbs. This ran out around 8km from DRU, at 2900ft, I was well within final glide so for the first time in 3 hours I felt good.

Have you ever tried to spot Drumshade from the air? Without the GPS I don't think I would have. All around is a great valley full of fields though. I turned DRU and headed home, now around 1600ft over Glamis Castle. A nice thermal to 2400ft, headed for masts 5km south of Glamis and took a climb but only back to 2200ft. What to do now? What if the logger wasn't working? What if....., so I turned round and headed back to Drumshade where nice thermals were working to around 2000ft, I had a great time playing in the sky for 30 minutes then it was time to land. No windsock at Dru when they are not operating (weekdays) but a nice field to land in. Circuit and landing were fine but needed to be careful when taxi-ing off line as there are a few rabbit holes.

Now, with no retrieve crew organised in advance, I called the clubhouse. Thanks to Irene once again, as she organised a retrieve. While I was waiting taking the wing-tape off etc., Rodger, a member of Angus and SGU turned up, we had a chat then off to his place for a cuppa – a fine cuppa it was too. Just as I left his house, Gary arrived to retrieve me back to Portmoak. We loaded the glider into the trailer in around 40 minutes - not bad when disorganised like me. We were about to drive off when I thought I'd have a last walk round as something was niggling me. I found the tailplane propped against the side of the trailer – oops! So, with many thanks to Gary for the retrieve we got back and parked the trailer around 9pm. Was I really in the air for nearly 4 hours to do a 50k silver distance? Wow!

So what have I learned from the two and a bit years since my first attempt at silver up at Feshie in a K8, flying 140k but missing the turning point?

1. Attend a cross-country course on site, to learn more about task planning. If not, on a non-flying day ask one of the XC pilots to cover XC task



setting. If it had been down to my thought process on the day then I'd just have declared one turning point for a 100k out and return, it was Kevin who suggested selecting 3 each 50k away and if any single point was reached off a winch launch, that should result in a silver distance claim.

2. Put every thing in the trailer ready to be towed, not just at the back door, Gary said the trailer was a pig to tow, well it would be with all that weight at the back door wouldn't it! Try to organise a retrieve crew BEFORE flying. Use the board near the payphone to indicate if you are available for retrieves, makes Irene's job a bit easier if we use the board.
3. You don't have to wait for that utopian wave day, watch the weather and blipmaps for a nice thermal day.
4. Have everything in one place, I did after the XC course last September but over the last few months, everything had migrated into several boxes, under seats etc. Keep your XC gear in one bag /box ready to go.
5. When task setting, pick one with multiple chances of success for a 50k.
6. I learned a lot about thermal flying in my 4 hour flight. Most of the theory was in there but I struggled to put it into practice turning far too often. The Jantar, if flown slightly faster thermalled better.
7. Try to remain current in your chosen glider throughout the winter months.

What next? Well a 300k of course. After quite a few months of Cs of A activity in the workshop watching others having good days, I'll now fly more often to remain a lot more current, rather than just keeping "current" there is a big difference.

Go on, give it a try.

*Craig Chatburn*

## Cats' Tales

### Day 1

Once upon a time, there was a Full Cat who was a good cat and stayed by his own fireside during the week, and at his adopted one at the weekend in Perthshire. He purred and frolicked with his mates who came to see him, and others of his kind, at the weekends. However, as the spring, and then the summer, came round he had a mind to wander, although he remained close to his adopted fireside at the weekends. He wandered into deepest Ayrshire to have a bit of fun with some long established pals who stayed in the area and some say he nearly strayed into recently revised forbidden territory close to Maybole. Happily, he managed to avoid trouble but decided to move his midweek dalliances to a different part of the world, Krinkly Bottom, where the milk was said to be creamier. He licked his paws and set off late one Wednesday afternoon for the destination of his heart's desire. On arrival, he was given a truly feline welcome by the local kindred cats, but wisely declined a saucer of milk until after the evening's fun. What shall we do tonight purred his pals and the Full Cat pushed his head up and felt the force of the wind on his whiskers. 'Goodness me' he declared, or words to that effect, 'that appears to be a noticeable cross wind'. As an impartial observer on the occasion, the wind didn't seem to be in the least angry, but it was definitely strong.

It had been a long hard day and poor old Slarty had been working with Kindred Spirit that day at his Ice Cream factory and had persuaded him to come along for the evening frolics at Krinkly Bottom. Kindred Spirit hadn't been too keen to come along as he had had a heavy sales date that day and was wearing a posh new pair of trousers accompanied by a swanky pair of shoes that he declared had 'cost a bloody fortune'. However, Slarty managed to prevail on the basis that it would relax him. Bad mistake. Never listen to Slarty.

The Full Cat found a paper aeroplane in a big shed and decided to have a go on the basis that a wee flight in it might just be the Cat's

pyjamas. Looking around for a fellow conspirator, he persuaded the farmer's sheepdog 'Collie' to get in along with him. The non-participating felines gathered round and wound up the elastic band, good and tight. Off the two aviators went. The elastic band worked wondrously well with a good take off that indicated that the wind wasn't totally across the path of departure.

What fun it all was whizzing hither and thither in the bright blue yonder, or more accurately the steel grey yonder. But, 'nae man can tether time nor tide' the time to come home had arrived and the Full Cat pointed the paper aeroplane back towards the point of departure. Things didn't quite go according to plan. The origami, after coming round into wind(ish) to get back on the ground at an appropriate point didn't quite gel as intended so, 'if at first you don't succeed' etc. The tap was opened up to perform a go around but sadly the elastic band spluttered and stopped. Potential energy at this point was of the order of 100 to 150 feet and the kinetic energy appeared to be enough to keep it flying, but not an awful lot more. By a nice bit of flying the Full Cat gained as much height as he could, swung the paper aeroplane downwind in a path parallel to the runway although now sadly over the farmer's adjacent fields and certainly not the airfield. The soil in the area is gooey and deep and the fields in the area are fairly small and fenced. Add that to now proceeding downwind into a setting sun and you will see that neither the Full Cat nor 'Collie' was at ease. After some anxiety the dynamic duo arrived back on terra not so firma and managed to avoid the fences running at right angles to the flight path. On arrival and the cessation of all movement, they disembarked without further conversation, examined the paper aeroplane and congratulated each other.

Due to lie of the land, the spectator cats did not see the arrival of the paper aeroplane and feared for the worst and although they knew that at least one of dynamic duo had nine lives they didn't know how many he had already used up. They dashed out to

see how things had faired for their pals and the CFI (Chief Feline



Inspector), being of substantial build and not too quick on his paws jumped into his 4 X 4 and proceeded across Krinkly Bottom airfield towards the landing spot. Sadly, halfway there it got a bit bogged down in their own wet soil and had to be abandoned. Kindred Spirit having viewed the fun standing on a nice dry piece of ground sprung into action and ran across to the estimated point of arrival quickly finding that he was ploughing through the mud regardless of posh breeks and the swanky shoes. At one point, he was observed to be hopping about on one foot then he knelt down with one knee of the posh breeks in the mud and stuck his arm down about 6 inches into the mud to pull out one of the swanky shoes. He then scooped out as much mud as he could quickly manage, put the shoe back on his foot and started running again. In the meantime P3 had rushed out to help but having foreknowledge of the airfield (his dad having been the CFI at one point) wasn't so rash and managed to avoid running into the worst of the mud (no sense of fun). Others ran across and arrived breathing heavily to look down to see that both of the aviators were alive and well with the aircraft the right way up and not standing on its nose. The aircraft was examined, within the confines of its predicament and no significant damage observed. The problem now facing the assembly was to get the aircraft back to its nice, comfortable hangar that night without inflicting further damage.

The cats pushed and pulled, and managed to release the aeroplane from the mud then pointed it at the fence where they had established the best crossing point was. Sadly best available was far from ideal in that although it was fairly easy to remove sufficient fence posts, flatten the barbed wire and push the aeroplane across the drop in level immediately beyond the fence and into the airfield was daunting. Necessity is the mother of invention and old pallets, planks, and any other filling materials to hand were brought into play. With Herculean effort, the aircraft was finally back in the airfield and the fence visually returned to its original condition. Sadly, the airfield's own bog now lay between the aircraft and the hangar. Nae

bother to us said the local cats we'll just get our wee tractor down, tie a rope to the aeroplane and have it out of here in no time. Time had slipped by and it was now starting to get dark. The tractor was started up without any difficulty, driven part way down the runway and then turned off into the boggy area. It ploughed through the reeds and mud without significant difficulty and everyone sighed with relief when it was roped up to the aeroplane and started off slowly and steadily towards the higher firmer ground. At first, all went well until about halfway to solid ground the tractor's engine began to cough and splutter until the inevitable happened and it stopped. A diagnosis of the problem was quickly reached in that the tractor had run out of diesel. The local cats quickly confirmed that the only fuel station in the area was now closed for the night but they might have a wee drop of diesel to hand. The diesel was located and brought down to the tractor, poured into the tank, the fuel system bled and the tractor eventually restarted, although it wasn't running too well. The by now inevitable happened and in pitch darkness the tractor gave up with the aircraft still some distance from firm ground, where the tired helpers might just be able to start pushing it back to the hangar. Slarty's (t)rusty old Peugeot 106 was now brought into play in an atmosphere of desperation. With over 190,000 miles on the clock it was an experienced vehicle that knew what it was about. It was driven across the solid ground and pointed towards the stranded aircraft. A substantial rope was attached and the wee car requested to do its best. The smell of the clutch was pretty powerful but the Peugeot did its duty that night and pulled the aircraft back to the hangar. Everyone had had more than enough so we wrapped up and went home. Now, Kindred Spirit lives in block of modern flats with written rules like 'don't hang your washing over the balconies' and unwritten rules like 'don't enter the building with dirty shoes' and 'remain well dressed at all times'. Kindred Spirit failed to meet any of these criteria as he stepped out of his car under cover of darkness. Only one thing for it, off with the shoes and trousers and make a dash for the lift hoping







### Alain Chainey Award

Peter Williams, the longest-standing member of Edinburgh University Gliding Club (EUGC), has received the 2007 Alain Chainey award for outstanding contributions to university sports in recognition of his service to the club spanning several decades.

Next year, the EUGC is celebrating its 50th anniversary. For most of this time, Pete Williams has been member, supporter, valedictorian, instructor, maintenance expert, fundraiser, string-puller and honorary president of the club.

It was in the mid 1960's when Pete came up from London to work as deputy director and later director of the department that is now called Computing Services. Their offices were located in KB and behind Buccleuch Place, where there is now nothing but sheds and a Beetle garage, where Edinburgh's very first computer was housed. EUGC members still joke about whether the first computer really predated Pete, or the other way round.

In the early years 1970, Pete took a hiking trip up to the Cairngorms, where he stayed at a youth hostel in Kingussie. Another chap staying there was Ken Stewart. Ken was the national coach of the British Gliding Association and he invited Pete to come along for his first glider flight. Much better than hillwalking, said Ken, and Pete agreed. Pete learned to glide at Feshiebridge, the same Highland gliding site that the Gliding Club goes to every now and then.

Pete soon became a gliding instructor. Instructors are accomplished pilots with many hundreds of hours of flying experience. For about two decades, Pete passed on his skills and taught new students to fly. In the genealogy of the club, Pete is basically the great-grandfather of the current generation - it goes like this: Pete taught JP. JP eventually became an instructor and taught Andy, and for a couple of years now, Andy has been teaching the current members. So, in flying terms, there's a little bit of Pete in every one of us. Among Pete's other students was Kate Byrne. Having met in 1979

in the Gliding Club, they eventually got married.

After a hiatus of a few years in the 80's, both came back to the club and now, Kate instructs for the club just like Pete used to.

Pete has always been a practical person. Most people outside the world of aviation would never think of taking an aircraft apart or inspecting its mechanics. Pete loves aircraft and has been at the centre of our glider maintenance for decades now. He is a sought-after source of knowledge at the 300-odd member club at Portmoak and at the university's Gliding Club.

It takes a lot to keep an aircraft flying over the course of 30 years. Gliders are elegant machines; they're rugged and can take hard landings. When they fall out of the sky and recover, they take enormous G-forces in various directions. But gliders are also delicate: handle it in the wrong places when you push one across the airfield, and you'll damage it. Once a year, gliders are thoroughly inspected for wear. Small punctures in the wings and fuselage need to be fixed, various hinges greased and instruments calibrated. It's a science, and know-how is key. We trust our lives in the technical expertise, and in this case, in Pete's expertise. And in a way, every time we fly our aircraft, there's a little bit of Pete keeping us in the air.

It is about three years ago when what was then our main training aircraft showed deterioration in the wooden structure that forms the wings. We had to take it out of service. Former university offices behind Buccleuch place, now turned into a shed, became the operating theatre for the glider's wings. In what we think was about 140 hours of work, Pete and some other club members took the wings apart and refurbished them. The big yellow glider flew again and has been used to train many new pilots since. Pete's friendship and long-standing support of his club are invaluable to the other members. The concrete help we have been getting in keeping the aircraft flying is worth gold to us: we could simply not afford to keep the aircraft if it wasn't for Pete.

University clubs are always in flux. Members



come and go. Some of our oldest members have managed to fly with the club since their undergrad years and now drag on their PhD's, but their service pales compared to the time Pete has been with the club. When membership figures went down in the late nineties, Pete and Kate stuck around and kept the club alive. Members like Pete and Kate are those that you would wish every club.

When summer comes around, Pete and Kate can be seen at the national competition for pilots in university gliding clubs, the Inter-Uni Task Week, and of course their car happily tows one of the several gliders we take to the "comp", all the way around the country. When a pilot has to put down the glider in some farmer's field, an hour later he can be sure that his crew will turn up to pick him up. Invariably, that was Pete at so many occasions. They'd take off the wings and carefully stow them in a trailer. As it happens, one of our trailers was designed and built by Pete.

The Alain Chainey award is aimed at those people external to the University and its Sports Clubs, who selflessly give up their time to help the Clubs within the Sports Union, Clubs which without their contributions would not be able to function in the way that they do.

The Award is given in honour of Alan Chainey, who, whilst a member of the University infrastructure has always been happy to give up his time and work outside his remit, assisting individual Clubs, primarily the Men's Football and Golf Clubs, in numerous ways and with no extra reward for over 30 years.

I, supported by the current committee and certainly by dozens of active and former members of Edinburgh University Gliding Club, would like to congratulate our member, mentor and friend Peter Williams for the 2007 Alain Chainey Award.

*David Reitter*  
*President of Edinburgh University Gliding Club*

## Two Up, Both Away

Before I start, I should like to advise you to take your camera with you when you intend to embark on a similar venture. It's always good to have some sort of support for your stories, especially when you tell them to your grandchildren.

Since I am not a good story-teller, I should like you to understand that my only reason for telling this one at all is the excessive pressure I was subjected to, not by my grandchildren, but by a certain moustachioed gentleman from Kirkcaldy who is desperately short of repeatable stories for Portmoak Press.

Anyway, it was a day like any other day. It was just as windy and blustery as it was almost the whole week before and a certain gentleman from Dunblane – who had waited throughout that week for just such a day – lost his patience just when there were signs of improvement to be seen. He left in the morning with my humble consolation (poor Tom).

At lunchtime, it was obvious that conditions were very good. On the ground the wind was still very strong and from the west. Just after lunch, John Paterson and I had a quick look at the map, discussed the situation and decided that down-wind was the only chance to cover those elusive 32 miles that are known in glider circles as the "Silver Distance".

The upper wind appeared to be very much from the North, which meant crossing the Firth of Forth at a particularly wide part. The wind was decidedly too strong to explore the regions further north which looked so very much more promising. One layer of lenticular after another, as far as the eye could see! Yet, down-wind was for us as I found out for myself a little later.

Thanks to the help, which was given abundantly, the Oly and I took off at 15:09. John had taken off in his Swallow five minutes before me. He had a good launch and the lift at Bishop Hill seemed as expected. I also had a good launch, though it was turbulent. A glance at the surface of the loch

(Leven) revealed a great deal about the air in the neighbourhood. In the region of St. Serfs Island



there were violent gusts hitting the water and spreading out in all directions. Towards Kinross the water was definitely calmer, and further north indicating strong winds slightly north of west. As I turned towards Bishop the turbulence increased. It was rather useless to try to read the variometer. Close to the hill I lost 200 ft. very rapidly. On reaching the face of the hill, I found no lift at 800 ft. Only after rounding the second knoll did I encounter any lift. This lift was very turbulent but at least the variometers were in agreement. Both were stuck at their respective “up” stops! Two figures of eight in this lift made the hills fall away like some soiled sheet of paper from an office desk. John, still 2,000 ft. above me headed west, and I soon followed. The altimeter worked like a clock that had lost its wheel, winding its way in a friendly clockwise direction. At St. Serfs, only a couple of miles west of Bishop, I was above cloudbase at 4,700 ft. in silk-smooth lift. Soon I progressed over the tops of the lenticulars – still progressing towards the west. What scenery!! But I was here with some purpose in mind, so after a quick look around – checking my instruments and position – I found both variometers reading three-up. Yes, only three metres up, and falling off. I saw John at a lower altitude and returning from his westerly sojourn. A careful look at my good-natured lenticular, which now stretched from the Doller area, over Portmoak and out towards Leuchars and far into the North Sea, revealed a considerable “hump” just east of Portmoak. I headed eastwards and on reaching that area was rewarded by the variometers creeping back to a more positive indication.

With this increase of height, the wind became stronger and veered further north. Lift appeared to be lost right above the cloud rather than in front of it as I had expected.

With such lift, a cloud cover of about four eighths, a joy ride like that was very enjoyable. What a view to behold! 9,000 ft. and still going up faster than the lift in the Eiffel Tower. All the while, the horizon widened. There was that layer of cloud just below me with such a brilliant whiteness that it made my eyes water. Then ahead of me, an even bigger cloud. No doubt that

it had some help from the Ochills. In front of that were another, and another, and another. It was like a sea of gigantic waves in the sky. The further north I looked, the bigger they seemed to be. The sun helped to accentuate the appearance by throwing long shadows into the cloud valleys. Most of the ground, which I could see through the holes in the cloud, appeared to be completely black except for the silvery lochs and rivers. However, right below, Loch Leven and the surrounding countryside was bathed in brilliant sunshine. The coastline between Montrose and Berwick was clearly to be seen well within gliding distance – or so I thought.

As I reached 14,500 ft. I was tempted to explore those regions to the north of me. I was just aware of the first signs of anoxia so I increased my speed to 100 mph, still in lift. As far as I could judge, my penetration was not good enough to reach the wave ahead of me. So I headed south. To my amazement, the next cloud – some eight miles downwind – offered no lift at all. 12,000 ft. and heading for the next one right over the River Forth. At that moment, and only for a few seconds, I saw John above the Forth heading north east. Although I was still at a reasonable height, and flying at 80 mph, my flight path was such that I would touch down in the middle of the river! Have you ever swallowed butterflies? No, neither have I although I now know what it feels like! However, John was already half way over, and I was a little higher, so on I went. At 11,500 ft. and six miles from either shore I swung around again to soar another wave. At 14,000 ft., I inspected both bridges and found that my retrieve would not be over the road bridge as there was still a large gap between the two main construction sites at the north and south shores of the river.

Downwind again for another wave bar. It pushed me up to 15,000 ft. but, as I had no oxygen, I broke off at 2 metres up, going westward. No good this way, the wind was too strong. I next spotted a wave bar above the Lammermuir Hills to the south west of Edinburgh, and well beyond the Forth. On reaching this wave, I was rewarded with steady lift again.

Seeing those enormous waves to the south west, I was sorely tempted



again. High above what I took to be Carlisle, were two crisp lenticulars, perhaps more than 30,000 ft. up. Since I was sure that I had covered 32 miles, I set course west. It meant travelling over a large hole in the cloud which stretched from the Moorfoot Hills to the Cheviots. It soon proved to be impossible for the Oly to cross. After covering only about one third of the way across the hole, I turned back towards the Cheviots again. There I managed to gain no more than 500 ft. So I crossed the highest point at 6,500 ft. making for the next smooth lenticular just to the east of Alnwick. Behind this were another three bars stretching out over the North Sea. Southwest of Alnwick airfield, I climbed from 4,000 ft. to 4,700 ft. already looking for suitable landing places. Within easy reach were three aerodromes. Even Newcastle was within reach. However, there was no indication of promising lift anywhere downwind except for a lenticular way out over the sea. There was no sign of any flying activities anywhere around me and I decided to head for Acklington. From 4,500 ft., I completed a wide circuit all the time expecting to see some sort of signal from the airfield. Nothing was forthcoming, not even red, so I started my final approach. I landed and rolled out to the very end of the runway. After a few minutes, I was welcomed by Sgt. Wilkinson who took all the worries off my hands. Indeed, the end of this flight turned out to be as pleasant as the flight itself. Everything was organised for me, even my lodgings for the night. Thanks to all those who offered me their hospitality. I can surely say that this was a day to remember. I'm sure John Paterson will agree with me. He landed somewhere near Berwick-Upon-Tweed to claim his Silver distance too.

*Ansgar Sambale*

### Silver Distance & Cross Country Week

10<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> September 2007

- 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?

These weeks aim to help all of the above. Starting with a



briefing at 18:00 on Sunday 9th, 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, Kevin Hook and Colin Hamilton, there will be limited 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, FUS

Junior, FFY

Discus 388

DG505, 5GC when appropriate

Barographs for all club aircraft

Tug with pilot on standby for the week

Met, NOTAM and task briefings each day

Please make your booking with Irene during office hours.

### Duty Pilot Responsibilities

Please check the attached the Duty Pilot rota to see whether you have a duty. I have tried to take account of known preferences for Saturdays or Sundays.

The feedback from Duty Instructors is that Duty Pilots are sometimes not

turning up. This leads to slower launch rates and slower retrieves, and everybody loses out. Please, please, if you find that you are not available, arrange a swap with someone else. Phone numbers and email addresses are available in the Members' Directory.

For ease of reference, I have included a copy of the CFI's briefing notes for duty pilots after the Duty Pilot Rota.

**Duty Pilot Rota (cont.)**

	Sun 9 <sup>th</sup>	Vic Leitch
	Sat 15 <sup>th</sup>	David Gardiner
	Sun 16 <sup>th</sup>	Scott Hardie
	Sat 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Colin Hagerty
	Sun 23 <sup>rd</sup>	David Hyde
	Sat 29 <sup>th</sup>	Christian Maclean
	Sun 30 <sup>th</sup>	Ron Mackie

*Alec Stevenson*

**SGU DUTY PILOT BRIEFING NOTES**

*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.*

**Duty Pilot Rota**

September	Sat 1 <sup>st</sup>	Val Alexander
	Sun 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Bruce Brebner
	Sat 8 <sup>th</sup>	Alec Stevenson
	Sun 9 <sup>th</sup>	Neil Brown
	Sat 15 <sup>th</sup>	Alastair Mutch
	Sun 16 <sup>th</sup>	Hamish Eagleton
	Sat 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Amy Barsby
	Sun 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Gary Scott
	Sat 29 <sup>th</sup>	Bruce Duncan
	Sun 30 <sup>th</sup>	Ben Golding
October	Sat 6 <sup>th</sup>	Martin Ling
	Sun 7 <sup>th</sup>	Donald Carmichael
	Sat 13 <sup>th</sup>	Gareth Francis
	Sun 14 <sup>th</sup>	Lee Mitchell
	Sat 20 <sup>th</sup>	Donald Caldwell
	Sun 21 <sup>st</sup>	Ally Doig
	Sat 27 <sup>th</sup>	Adrian Milne
	Sun 28 <sup>th</sup>	Gordon Hunter
November	Sat 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Jim Miller
	Sun 4 <sup>th</sup>	Alastair Dodds
	Sat 10 <sup>th</sup>	Scott Kennedy
	Sun 11 <sup>th</sup>	Donald Cowan
	Sat 17 <sup>th</sup>	Gary Donachie
	Sun 18 <sup>th</sup>	George McKay
	Sat 24 <sup>th</sup>	Jeff King
	Sun 25 <sup>th</sup>	John Galloway
December	Sat 1 <sup>st</sup>	Garry Simpson
	Sun 2 <sup>nd</sup>	David Coats
	Sat 8 <sup>th</sup>	Peter Williams

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 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 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*

