

# THE GRID

London Gliding Club Magazine / MAR-APR 2020



## Celebrating 90 years of our club

- ✦ BREAKING RECORDS IN SOUTH AFRICA
- ✦ WAVE IN DENBIGH
- ✦ 10<sup>TH</sup> FAI WWGC IN LAKE KEEPIT BY CLOUDY HILL
- ✦ AND MUCH MORE



LONDON GLIDING CLUB



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The last flying day of the decade.  
*Photo by David A White*



▲ The busy grid ready for another day of the Dunstable Regionals 2019. Photo by Tony Hutchings.

# Welcome to THE GRID

Firstly I would like to express my appreciation for the work done by Véronique and Peter as Editors of the LGC Newsletter. It is definitely a labour of love to bring you the latest news and stories from around the club. Of course, this would never happen if you, club members and staff, didn't submit incredible and relevant content for all of us to read. Thank you!

## NEW LOOK AND NAME

When I volunteered to look after the newsletter, I shared with the committee my vision of refreshing its look-and-feel and adopting a name for our club magazine to celebrate the beginning of a new decade. After doing some research, I discovered that the newsletters of other clubs have names such as 'Take up slack', 'Final glide' and 'Rising air'. That triggered me to search for a unique name, one that would not only be recognisable but also representative of the essence of our gliding club.

I consulted and brainstormed with as many members as possible (I'm sorry if you were not included), testing different names and receiving feedback. After shortlisting a few options, we agreed that THE GRID was the winner.

THE GRID is about the excitement of gliding at LGC. It's something that everyone relates to as a great flying day. Experienced pilots will fly cross-country, a pupil may learn thermaling techniques and enjoy longer flights, and even aerobatics pilots may find a higher cloud base (or large gaps) allowing for a 4,000' aerotow. It represents the competitive and social aspect of the sport, including the banter on the ground. A 'grid day' is by far the most active and social day at our club.

## 90<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY AND A NEW DECADE

In the first issue of the 2020s, our Chairman, Andrew Sampson, tells the story of how our club was created and opens the archive of incredible photos to mark the celebration of LGC's 90th anniversary (p7). Also, Andrew Cunningham shares a curious fact about our contribution to the zoo (p9).

On the competitive side, Mark Newland-Smith and Stefan Astley invite us to take part in the Dunstable Regionals and the Inter-Club League (p10).

Ed Downham describes in details his two flights in South Africa that brought him two new records (p13). Guy Corbett tells us about his wave flights in Denbigh (p16), and Mark Newland-Smith shares the incredible views while flying along the Cotswolds Edge from Nymphsfield (p18).

Then our guest writer (almost LGC member), Cloudy Hill, tells all about her experience with the British Gliding Team at the 10th Women's World Gliding Championship in Lake Keepit, Australia (p22).

Fiona Guest shares some words of encouragement for those feeling stuck in their training (p26) and Alan Garfield returns with his article first published in April 2001 (p27).

I hope you enjoy reading the first issue of THE GRID and look forward to receiving more content for May-June.

Have a great 2020 season!

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Rafael Schouchana - Editor

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## Cover photograph

Emily is captured by the lenses of David A White while flying the K23 in the last flyable day of the decade.

# CLUB ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Welcome to new club members

- › Adrian Neacsu
- › Benjamin Hudson
- › Geoff Boswell
- › John Barrow
- › Siqi Ding
- › Stuart Carruthers
- › Stuart Gooch
- › Yihan Xu

## Events

Date	Event
20-22 Mar	Pilot development course
21 Mar	LGC Quiz Night
28 Mar - 4 Apr	Shobdon Expedition
4-5 Apr	Dan Smith's Memorial Trophy
10-13 Apr	Easter Competition (to be confirmed)
18-19 Apr	BGA Instructor A Module
25 Apr	LGC Safety Evening
2 May - 6:30pm	Club Forum
13 Jun - 7:00pm	Annual General Meeting

## Weekend duty roster

The weekend duty roster used to be published at the end of the newsletter. However, swaps became more frequent since it moved to DutyMan (the online tool).

To avoid having outdated roster information, from now on, it will only be available online. Visit:

<http://www.dutyman.biz/dmmain.aspx?id=L0001617>

## Achievements

Name	Achievement	Date
Jared Thomas	PA1	4/1/2020

### Note on Achievements Notice:

Achievements beyond Silver Badge are not detailed above as they are acknowledged in S&G. Make sure your name is on the list on the notice board so that we do not miss you out.



## Free bottle of champagne

For the first LGC pilot to fly **his/her first solo 300km** in a private or club glider.

Nigel Perren

## Get involved

The **Club Forum** is the opportunity for members to raise those questions they have been wondering about, or discussing on the field, with members of the Committee.

## Next deadline

Submit your story to THE GRID by

**17th April 2020**

Fill in the form at <http://bit.ly/thegridmagazine>

## Congratulations to the 2019 winners of the LGC trophies



Photo by David A White

Trophy	Awarded for	2019 winner
Cellon Tankard	Best ab initio	Peter Farrimond
John Bentley Shield	Best silver distance	Gilad Myerson
Adrian Heath Trophy	Most promising young pilot	Max Kopacz
Dudley Hiscock Trophy	Winner of club ladder	Tim Jenkinson
Frank Foster Boomerang	Best out and return	Ed Downham UK 750 o/r record
Dunstable Regionals Trophy	Winner Regionals Red Class	Mark Newland-Smith
Squire Furneaux Challenge	Winner Regionals Blue Class	Malcolm Birch
Stafford Allen Trophy	Best flight in a 2-seater	Ed Downham UK FAI + Free Triangle records
Derry Trophy	Help around the club	Peter Milligan based on his battery work
Dented Cup	Most amusing "cock up"	Hans Schurlicht K23 trailer incident
Harry Middleton Cup	Best photograph	David White
Ray Stoward Trophy	RS nomination	Sally Walker
Algek Cup	Winner Algek aerobatic comp	Not awarded this year
Pete O'Donovan Trophy	Early x-country pilot "getting on with it"	Hugo Ribeira
Dunstable Trophy	Best flight in a club glider	Hugo Ribeira - K23 in Regionals, ASW24 29Jul 318km (best on ladder)
Dent Trophy	Most meritorious flight from the club	Ed Downham UK FAI + Free Triangle records
Dessouter Cup	Most meritorious rebuild project	Not awarded this year
Bryan Middleton Trophy	Best flight in a vintage glider	Andrew Sampson Ka6e o/r Saltby 210km 8Sep
John Hands Trophy	Most Promising Instructor	Not awarded this year
JJ Trophy	Most meritorious achievement in a pure glider	Pete Hurd, 519km ASW27 12May (best on ladder)

# SAMPSON'S SCRIPT

Reflections from the Chairman

**W**elcome to a new decade and to our new style newsletter. I'd like to express our thanks to Peter Hardman, who stepped into the role of editor following in the footsteps of Veronique Russell who did the job for 20 years. Peter has kept the newsletter going for the last year or so, but sadly ill health has meant he has had to step down. As I write, he is in hospital awaiting a significant operation, and I'm sure you all join me in wishing him a speedy recovery and return to gliding.

I have a personal interest in his recovery, as he has offered to come to the Mynd in July to help as crew at the Gliding Competition at the Wenlock Olympian Games! There are two entries from Dunstable (so far) - myself with Ka6e '6E' kindly loaned by Dave 'Corny' Cornelius, and Corny himself in his Ka6cr 'HJP'. It should be great fun, and more support would be much appreciated. See [www.olympiangliding.com](http://www.olympiangliding.com) for information.

Meanwhile, we have a new editor, Rafael 'Rafa' Schouchana, and as you can see, a completely new style of magazine. Rafa is a relatively new member and clearly one of the next generations of key people in our club. Please support him by supplying him with lots of articles and photographs. It is your magazine, and we want it to really reflect the diversity of gliding activities and interests around the club. Every contribution, however small, will be much appreciated.

## 90<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

This year we celebrate our 90th anniversary. Prompted by the 'Aeroplane' magazine, on December 4th 1929 there was a lunch organised in London for people interested in forming a gliding club, and 57 people turned up. They resolved to establish a national gliding association, the BGA, and at the meeting, 37 of those present put their hands up to indicate

## 'The inaugural General Meeting of our club took place on February 20th, and thus I think we can claim to pre-date the BGA.'

a willingness to join a new London club. Other regional clubs also appeared as a result of this event.

Our first ever newsletter states we were formed on January 3rd 1930 when a group met and formed themselves into a provisional committee. The inaugural General Meeting of our club took place on February 20th, and thus I think we can claim to pre-date the BGA, whose own inaugural General Meeting took place on March 27th. Arguably we could claim to be the oldest gliding club in the country, as Kent started on January 4th, the day after us. However, after building their own Primary glider, Kent first flew on February 23rd 1930, so they were the first into the air.

Our own first flights were made on March 16th, at Stoke Park Farm, in Guildford. I know it well as the land (much of it still a park) was used in the 1960s and 70s as playing fields by my school. The slopes are much less daunting than our hangar ridge!

Initially, the club looked for a permanent site south of London, but by April we had started flying

just north of Aldbury, near Tring - the steep slopes were just right for achieving the 'A' certificate. The gliders were housed, and tea provided, at nearby Down Farm. However, we were accused of disturbing the birds in the neighbouring Ashridge Park, so we had to move, and in May we secured the use of Ivinghoe Beacon.

We stayed there for several months, during which we had our first 'Instruction Camp', for which the fee was £2-10s-0d including tent accommodation. Apprentices from Halton built one of the gliders, but they were forbidden to fly! So the club quietly arranged that if any of them were hurt, it would be explained away as a 'cycling accident'. Special trains were laid on for the 'Gliding at Ivinghoe', and in July 1930 the Prince of Wales visited. Large crowds of spectators came to watch.

Once again the club was asked to move, as the land was National Trust property, and we were deemed to be 'spoiling its peaceful enjoyment by the public'. In fact, as 'Doc' Slater wrote; 'actually, until the public turned up



Photo from the archive



Photo by De Wouter

in force to see us glide, hardly a soul had ever been near the place!

Thus, in August 1930, we moved again, at first to a field with a gentle slope into Church End, Totternhoe. Soon negotiations were underway for a permanent site at 'Pascombe Pit'. This was initially rented and later purchased from farmer Pratt. (Pascombe Pit is now known to club members as the "Bowl"). This was our last move, in late

### **‘Our club was a leading pioneer of British gliding, and many “firsts” and records were achieved at Dunstable.’**

1930, and of course, we have been flying here ever since. I think our airfield must be the oldest gliding site in continuous use (apart from the war) in the country.

Our club was a leading pioneer of British gliding, and many 'firsts' and records were achieved at Dunstable, and of course, LGC pilots are still pushing at the leading edge (forgive the pun) of soaring endeavour. We have a rich and varied history, and if you would like to discover more I would thoroughly recommend the two books, 'History of the London Gliding Club - The First twenty Years' by Dudley Hiscox, and 'Take Up Slack' by Ted Hull.

### **NEW DECADE AND OUTLOOK**

Now we face a new decade with a very different outlook. Whereas our predecessors were learning at the very start of aviation and were free to fly almost anywhere, we have the luxury of modern high-performance sailplanes, but face increasingly limited airspace and a restrictive regulatory environment. Back in 1932, the famous Kinder Scout mass trespass took place, the first significant protest that

established the concept of the 'Right to Roam' our countryside. In contrast, our freedom to 'roam the sky' is still being steadily eroded by the increase of controlled airspace. Although Airspace Change Proposals often cite a safety case, it is transparently obvious that there is often an underlying commercial incentive - by acquiring controlled airspace, the ACP sponsor increases the capital value of their operation - as evidenced by the sale of Farnborough within months of being granted their highly controversial airspace grab.

On the positive side, there does seem to be some sign that the government is responding to

the needs of general aviation, and has prompted the CAA to conduct a regular review of airspace classifications including consultation with airspace users. The CAA has launched a new consultation process, and by the time this newsletter is published, the BGA will have issued guidance to members.

### **THE 2020 SEASON HAS STARTED**

Of course, the really positive story is that we have a whole season of soaring ahead of us! At LGC, we have a calendar packed with events to suit every member. Please do make the most of it, and if you can think of anything else to add to the schedule, don't hesitate to get in touch. I'd put in a special plea for our Regionals (August 22-30): it really is open to everyone. There will be seats available in the Duo (& possibly K21), and even relatively inexperienced solo cross-country pilots are most welcome. Treat it as a 'gliding holiday' with lots of support, even a 'mutual retrieve' team to help you out when needed.

Meanwhile, despite the generally dull weather, there have been one or two good days and the 'season' has already started for Pete Hurd. On February 12th in '218' (pure glider of course), he went down the ridges to Lewknor and then up to Oxford

before returning. Now strictly speaking it wouldn't qualify for the Chairman's pint as it wasn't recorded on the ladder. Still, nevertheless, as the Chairman is known for his boundless enthusiasm and generosity, he will buy Pete a pint anyway!

As Pete was somewhere near Chinnor, I was doing my own Monty with our CFI in the front seat. We escaped to the ridge from an awkward simulated cable break and using the ridge lift and then thermals we got to around 3000' and celebrated with a loop at Mentmore before returning for lunch. Strictly speaking, it was not a textbook recovery from a simulated emergency, but the CFI didn't complain (not yet anyway).

So now we are at the very start of the soaring season, with fingers crossed for good weather, which we deserve after all the rain. Please do make the most of what the club has to offer, help out where you can, and above all, stay safe and have fun!

---

Andrew Sampson



The old winch ready to take up slack.

Carring the primary back to the top of the hill.



Photos by Andrew Cunningham

**DID YOU KNOW?**

# ELEPHANTS ARE EATING OUR BUSHES!

No, you haven't been spending too long in the bar, and not the pink variety, but the real pachyderms from Whipsnade Zoo.

You may have noticed that the trees and hedges at the top of the drive are looking a lot tidier lately. In a very nice win-win arrangement, the trimming is being done for us by a couple of friendly keepers who come down with a nice big ZSL pick-

up truck and cart the brush back to feed the elephants.

Apparently, they love hawthorn, but will munch through almost anything fresh up to a surprisingly big thickness... they have huge molars!

Rumour has it they are asking for some of Trevor's Jumbo sausages to go with it.

---

Andrew Cunningham

COMPETITION

# DUNSTABLE REGIONALS 2020



Photo by Tony Hutchings.

**H**eld at the end of August, when most of the fields have been cut, the Dunstable Regionals is an excellent competition for pilots of all levels.

At the time of writing, we have 23 entries, so we are just over halfway to the minimum that I would like us to have, so thanks to those who have registered so far.

I know that some people like to leave it until that last minute, but it makes it more difficult for those of us planning if we don't know how many people are likely to enter, so can I ask you please to get your entry in as soon as possible, let's try and make it a full competition.

If you have any questions or concerns about entering, please feel free to contact me via the office.

---

**Mark Newland-Smith**  
Competition Director

**WHEN**

22<sup>nd</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> August

**HOW TO ENTER**

Entry fee: **£180** (Juniors £90)  
Deposit: £50 due 20<sup>th</sup> April.  
Balance: due 20<sup>th</sup> July.

**ENTRY FORM AND MORE INFO**

[https://www.soaringspot.com/en\\_gb/dunstable-regionals-2020-dunstable-lgc-2020/](https://www.soaringspot.com/en_gb/dunstable-regionals-2020-dunstable-lgc-2020/)

COMPETITION

# INTER-CLUB LEAGUE

**D**unstable is well-known for its cross country pilots. Anyone who attended the great "Illustrated History of LGC" evening presented by Andy Sampson and Paul Candler as part of our Winter Wednesday series would've seen the number of ground-breaking (sometimes literally) back-to-back distance and duration records set by a rapidly expanding LGC throughout the 30's and tail end of the 40's (after a short political disagreement)... However - The best record I can

find of LGC making it to an ICL final was in 2004... Practice days are over, and it's time to up our game!

The BGA has been re-vamping a somewhat muted ICL presence in our gliding clubs over the past couple of years, and with a few fresh faces making up the key roles there's never been a better opportunity to progress your cross country experience. The ICL is geared towards beginners and is primarily put onto encourage cross country roots, but also participation

at all levels for continued development. The definition as per the BGA's dedicated ICL webpage is:

"The Inter-Club League (ICL) is intended to encourage competitive cross-country flying on a less formal basis than National and Regional competitions, involving pilots at all levels of cross-country competence. In particular, it is an opportunity for novice pilots to experience competition flying before they are eligible to fly a regional competition."



## ‘The Inter-Club League (ICL) is an opportunity for novice pilots to experience competition flying before they are eligible to fly a regional competition.’

### WHAT IS IT?

It's an informal gathering of up to 9 pilots from each club of three distinct skill levels (Novice, Intermediate and Pundit up to 27 total) in our region, in a social setting. Participation in as many rounds and contest days as you can manage is encouraged, but even one day flown is an adequate contribution. The team that accrues most points across the three rounds (one at each local club in our region) goes to a final to compete against the winners of various other leagues in the UK – New ones of which are being formed every season.

The scoring is somewhat more relaxed than at regionals or nationals, and even non-competitive participation is encouraged. Ground support is plentiful, and captains get a fair say in the running of each round to suit the best interests of the participants and promote a safe and enjoyable weekend.

Did I also mention fees – or rather the lack of? **ICL is free to enter**, reciprocal membership is waived, and LGC offers the use of the ASW-24, and/or an ASK-23 for those suitably qualified to fly them. We also like to take the Duo Discus as much as we can, for P2's perhaps just below the threshold of competing themselves.

### CATEGORIES

The three qualifying categories are:

**Novice:** (You must have at least Bronze + XC Endorsement)

- You must NOT have flown a 300km in the UK as P1 that qualifies for FAI Gold Distance in previous years (if you have flown one after April of this year you can still enter as a novice, but not next year);
- You must NOT have finished above the bottom 10% overall in any rated competition.
- For novices specifically, only Standard Class gliders or those with lesser performance than these may be flown.

**Intermediate:**

- You must NOT have flown a 500km qualifying for FAI Diamond Distance (if you have flown one after April of this year you can still enter as an intermediate, but not next year); and
- You must NOT have achieved a top 40% overall position in any rated competition.

**Pundit:**

Anyone can fly as Pundit (any glider).

### WHY JOIN?

The ICL is hosted between clubs for their members' enjoyment. Participation by LGC members is encouraged by the generous availability of our fleet: with an ASK-23 and the ASW-24 made accessible for our use, and P2 opportunities in the Duo Discus where possible.

Many people fear cross country because of that dreaded question "What if I land out?"... Well, sorry to break it to you but it's a GLIDER, and these things can and will happen! ICL guarantees ground support, either mutually between participants or the generosity of host-club volunteers. Another ground support such as help with rigging, gridding, and organising your navigation kit is easy to find.

ICL also offers excellent prospects for suitably recommended bronze pilots to gain elements of the silver qualification. And if you're not interested in flying, there are always ground-based admin roles to give a flavour of what goes into a gliding competition in a much more relaxed setting.

### WHERE IS IT?

We typically travel en-masse to the rounds, occasionally staying at the away clubs who quite often put on social events if Barn Dancing is your thing. Regardless, bars are usually well-stocked enough to allow most to turn a blind-eye or develop selective hearing.

Having the capability to tow a trailer is, of course, useful but not essential, with other members often very

willing to contribute that assistance. Some experience can be arranged beforehand (and also regularly features during scrub days of the Development Course or perhaps Task week). As would rigging/de-rigging practice (sometimes part of the aforementioned activities).

The other clubs in our region are no more than a 90-minute leisurely drive away.

**HOW TO JOIN?**

Simple: Sign-up sheets are now available in the clubhouse opposite the bar, or come and speak to me for further info. Alternatively, direct contact details can be found at the end of the magazine.

The usual method of communication for each round's organisation is via email. If you'd like to be placed on the mailing list, even just out of curiosity, please do add your details.

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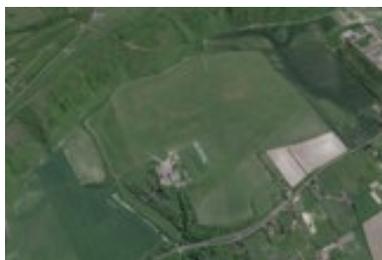
**Stefan Astley**  
ICL Captain



**Husbands Bosworth**  
8<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> May



**Gransden Lodge**  
6<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> June



**Dunstable**  
27<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> June



BLOEMFONTEIN

# BREAKING RECORDS IN SOUTH AFRICA

I was in Bloemfontein, South Africa for the last week of November and the first week of December last year and was sharing an 18m JS1 and 15m ASW-27 with Chris Fox, on the basis that we'd decide on the day who flew which one. We'd had a run of five hot, deep-blue days with sheared lift, achieving 400-600km+ including some interesting low points and a lot of sweating. With the thermal structure showing signs of improvement and a hint of cumulus in the forecast for the 27th, Chris generously suggested I take the ASW.

## FAI 1,000KM

Having flown quite a few seasons in SA, I've seen the weather improve ahead of the predictions on many occasions, so even though TopMeteo and Skysight weren't saying record-breaking conditions, I felt it was worth an ambitious declaration, just in case. It appeared to be best out to the far NW later in the afternoon,

with decent Cu over quite a large area but the possibility of storms as well. To make an FAI 1,000km triangle, I set the first TP at Coligny, 150km W of Jo'burg, pretty much due north to get to the cumulus area as quickly as feasible, as most of the first leg was going to be blue and likely not very fast. Then would follow a long run WSW into the Kalahari Desert

*'I probably could have gone a bit faster, but the lure of landing back where I started from was too much!'*

turning at Hotazel, literally "hot as hell", and after that, another long run SE back towards Bloem, bending around the Kimberley airspace on the way home.

It was blue pulling off tow at 10:30am into a reasonable climb that went to ~8,500'ASL (4,000'AGL), but some haze caps

and flat Cu were appearing around the track, which was better than the forecast blue.

I started straight away and had a decent run initially, with good climbs to 11,000' crossing the barren area between Soutpan and Bultfontein. Thermals were stronger and rounder than on the previous day, and there were larger Cu visible after about 80km.

Despite the bigger clouds, arriving there conditions were not as good with a fair amount of shear and short-lived thermals under rather ragged-based Cu streets across the track; I was rejecting broken climb after broken climb and as a consequence getting lower and frustrated. I gritted my teeth and worked a gusty but 4-5kt core to 11,500', which gave me enough range to contact clouds north of the Vaal River, where there was a step-change in the base allowing me to operate between 10,000' and 13,000' and up the inter-thermal speed to 100kts.

There was less cloud on the way into Coligny, but the lift was still good although tight. The next leg was weaker, with sheared cores again plus lower bases, so I kept the speed up with a ruthless rejection policy. Things improved once west of Vryburg and into the scrubland: base went over 15,000' but the cores, although strong, were difficult to locate under large clouds; I was trying to keep high due to the reduced landing options and at one point backtracked having missed a connecting climb.

I was relieved to turn Hotazel and be on the way home with a tailwind component as shower lines had formed, clearing cumulus out from large areas. The plan was to deviate slightly

and getting disconnected, so as I was on target to break the record as long as I finished before dark, I dialled in a little more caution.

There was an active shower just west of Kimberley that gave me a climb to 17,000', which was enough to glide around the corner of the airspace but it was a substantial deviation that must have added >30km to the task. By then, there was only one group of clouds left within reach, north of Hertzogville and I had to backtrack again for a fresh core having been shot down the first time around by the surrounding sink. Creeping under the FL145 TMA, I routed back via salt pans at MC zero to try and stretch the glide as the shadow from a cumulonimbus anvil had

15kph faster than the existing record, with 1,056km on OLC.

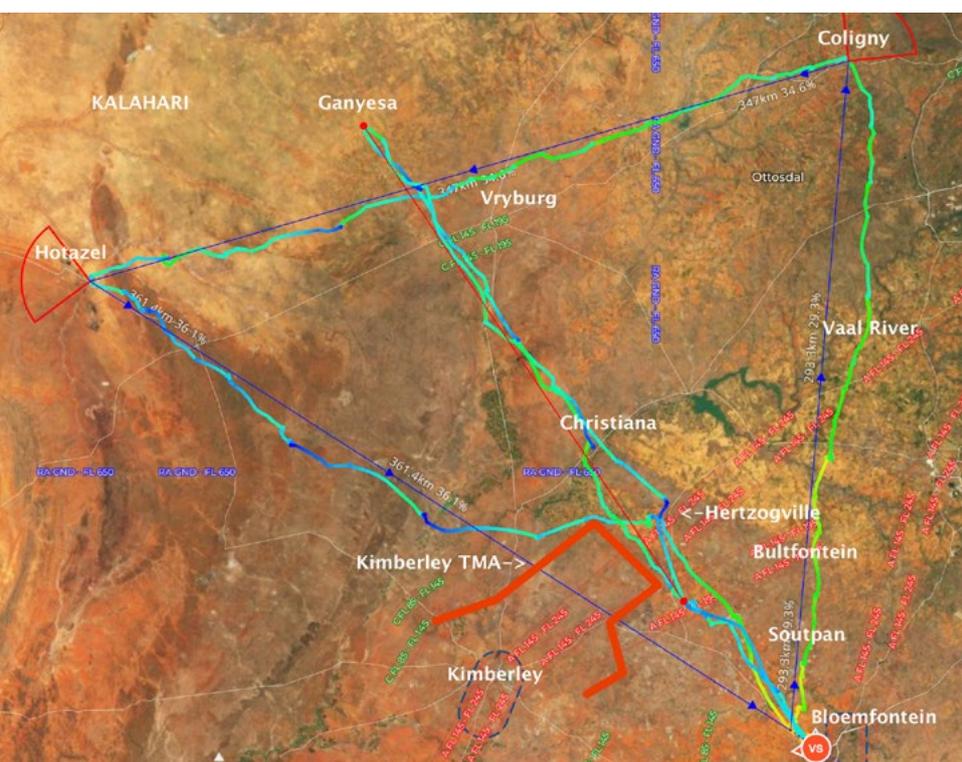


### 500K OUT & RETURN

A few days later on the 30th, there was a possible window for a crack at the 500km O/R as the forecast for the day showed a narrow band of good conditions to the NNW with a weak trough sliding slowly in from the west. The wind was going to be >20kts at times, so a chance of some energy lines. Given the forecast bases of 18k+, I set a remote start/finish about 80km away to allow as much of the task as possible to be under the FL195 limit.

Conditions were strong getting out to the start point, which was not far off an energy line, so I went as soon as possible. I was somewhat annoyed as my ASI had packed up during the tow, which also affected the LX, meaning no compensation, averager, netto, wind information or speed command. Luckily, the TE bit of the probe still seemed to be attached to the mechanical vario, so at least that was working. I had been in the '27 for the last few days and had got used to the noises it made at various speeds, so had a rough idea what I was flying at. I considered going back to fix it, but by the time I got airborne again, the record wouldn't have been on, so I stuck with it.

I pushed as hard as I could into wind, with the first two thermals sticking the mechanical vario hard



left of the track due to needing to go round the Kimberley TMA, but I was forced to the right instead as I couldn't see a realistic way through what looked like a dead area. The sky had become "big", with ever-increasing gaps between clouds, more vertical development, mid-layer spread out and harder-to-find cores. It was now a fine balance between making progress

killed off any visible convection. This tactic seemed to work as, at first, I would have only made the finish point then had to land out, but eventually, the airfield came into glide range. I probably could have gone a bit faster, but the lure of landing back where I started from was too much! I was very happy to have completed the task at 128.5kph, at least



**11kt average climb.**  
Photo by Ed Downham



**Storm cell.**  
Photo by Ed Downham

against the stops for the entire climb, which offset the lack of an averager. There were the odd Cu and haze caps but not any classic streeting, so it was a question of hunting out any short energy lines and making maximum use of them. I could see the edge of the mid/high cloud associated with the trough to the west, but I managed by what felt like pure willpower to get to the turn at the same time as the cloud cover, having averaged ~145kph into what felt like at least 20kts of wind. It also wasn't working anywhere near as high as forecast, with bases in the 14-15,000' range, so the remote start hadn't really been necessary.

After the relief of making the turn at Ganyesa having dived in there from about 40km out, the high cover appeared to accelerate and cover the leg south, causing question marks to form around the anticipated romp home. It was still working, but the clouds were disappearing, and the thermals were weakening and becoming trickier to use; just what you need 350km from home! I managed to survive the weak patch with lots of short climbs and went back into stronger sunshine near Christiana for the first decent thermal in a while. I acquired a representative wind vector from someone else and forced the LX into using that instead of the random stuff it was generating. There had been

the option for a while of heading further west and possibly getting a good run under the approaching trough line, but something about the look of it put me off.

By now I could see (and hear reports of) a wide, long mid-layer storm that had evolved from the trough line. It was black above, dust-laden below and had virga falling from various parts of it. I took a climb just outside the FL145 boundary, then dived underneath the airspace on a slow glide to the finish. I had quite a decent margin, but as I was now under evil-looking overcast with the possibility of bad air, I flew quite slowly to conserve what I had in case I needed it.

It got darker and darker, and I ended up sandwiched between a gust front below and virga trailing above; just when I thought it couldn't get any worse, several bolts of lightning came down on my right. I considered turning back and running for the airfield at Bultfontein, but as the strikes weren't in front of me, I carried on.

The air was neutral, sometimes positive, so I finished with most of my margin intact. Shortly after, I ran into a climb on the edge of the front and was able to run that back to New Tempe (the airfield at Bloemfontein), where the gust front had already gone through leaving 30kts of wind in blowing dust. I'd calculated a minimum

ground speed for the approach as the ASI was still reading zero, which worked out quite well but the landing roll was definitely on the short side. Later investigation showed that the multi-probe on the back had crept out by ~5mm but was still just held on by the tape. Anyway, all that effort was enough to set a new 15m record at a little over 157kph; considering the conditions were less than ideal, there's definitely room for improvement - roll on next season! Chris had broken the Irish record in the JS1 on a similar task so we celebrated in the usual way with a steak dinner washed down with the best that South Africa could offer...

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**Ed Downham**



EXPEDITION REPORT

# WAVE IN DENBIGH

I like to do a lot of flying. I go on several regular expeditions but usually look for some interesting flying for 2 or 3 days in late October or November. The South Downs can be good, but it is always very cold because it requires a Northerly wind. The Cotswolds can be interesting, but the small hills usually make it too exciting for me. Talgarth can provide wave and hill-soaring but is part-time and often waterlogged during the winter.

I have thought about going to Denbigh for several years but have never managed it. Since the current full-time CFI, Chris Gill, was appointed they tend to fly whenever it is soarable, where previously they were often closed, and that always seemed to coincide with my choice of dates. This winter, I decided to try harder to find a couple of days to go. In October and November, we

had a series of depressions over England, giving a few soarable windows. Still, they were difficult to forecast with enough certainty to make the journey worthwhile.

Lleweni Parc airfield is a 4-hour drive from Dunstable around 10 miles from the North Wales coast, about 20 miles East of Snowdon

**‘I flew in wave for 4 ½ hours on Thursday, cloud cover prevented me from going far, but I climbed to 14,000’**

and 2 miles West of the Clwydian Range. The Clwydian Range gives a ridge facing WSW about 25km long between 500’ and 1500’ above the airfield. There is a single 600m long tarmac runway 27/09.

I had heard that they usually winch launch so had been looking for a couple of consecutive days where the wind would be on

the hill. Chris Gill has posted several pioneering flights on the National ladder flying in other wind directions, but they had all been in a self-launching DG1000.

On 21st November he posted a 300km double out and return to the West coast at 113kph in a South-Easterly wind which was

also completed by an LS8. This made me realise that they now had a tug and wave soaring could be achieved in many wind directions. At the start of December, the jet-stream finally shifted to give a few days of high pressure. As the high began to decline, I thought there was a possibility of a couple of days of South-Westerly winds without rain. The forecast was

not ideal, but after the previous two months, I decided to chance to go for a couple of days. I emailed and was told to come to a 9:30 Thursday briefing. I booked into a local pub and drove up to arrive on a deserted airfield at 17:00 on Wednesday.

I flew in wave for 4 ½ hours on Thursday, cloud cover prevented me from going far, but I climbed to 14,000'. I was able to put my glider in a brand new hangar overnight. The forecast for Friday suggested it might be wet in the afternoon and, as I was travelling home after flying, I asked for an

early launch. Chris met me at 8:15 to get my glider out of the hangar and launch me at 9:00. There was even more cloud, so I stayed local and climbed to 12,000'. On the way down, I went to investigate the ridge. The wind was 20-25kts WSW, but there was a strong rotor. A short beat to the Northern end and back made me decide to leave it until a day with less turbulence. The record for the local club task of 140km up and down the ridge is 161kph. I found the 800' high radio mast on the most upper part a little intimidating.

While I was there, all launching was by aerotow. The tug is a very smart turbocharged EuroFox with a retracting tow-rope. The acceleration and climb rate were similar to what we are used to with the Robins, and they charged £30 to 2000'.

On both days most of Wales was covered in cloud with a base of less than 2000', but it was clear to the

North over the coast. Chris told me that this is what they usually get because the mountains dry the airstream. At one point I was climbing just above clouds with only one hole to the North of me. I knew that it was only a couple of miles away from the airfield, but all I could see through it were the offshore wind farms.

In spite of going at a difficult time of the year in less than ideal weather conditions, I enjoyed my visit very much and could not have been made more welcome. I would strongly recommend a visit to anyone else. Chris provides instruction to make the most of the conditions in the DG1000, and they have an LS4 for suitably qualified pilots.

**More information about gliding in Denbigh is available at <https://denbighgliding.co.uk/>**

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**Guy Corbett**



## CROSS-COUNTRY

# FLYING THE COTSWOLD EDGE FROM NYMPSFIELD

Flying into a west/north westerly wind, particular if it is streeting, can make for some very enjoyable flights from Dunstable. Early in the season, we often get good days with quite strong westerlies and something like Ledbury or Hereford O/R can be great fun, typically involving a long slog into wind and hopefully an easy ride home.

But heading in that direction, especially if the wind is brisk, often involves a sticky patch as one comes to the far Cotswold edge.

On a flight to say Ledbury, one will cross this escarpment somewhere near Winchcombe where the top of the Cotswolds is roughly 1,000ft and the valley floor something like 200ft. As we know from flying at Dunstable, flying behind a ridge runs the risk of getting caught in the curl-over. Try pushing forward from our ridge in a westerly toward Ivinghoe Beacon. All goes well for a while, but then the curl-over from the Beacon starts to have an effect, and we quickly scurry back.

It is this effect that one experiences approaching the Cotswold edge. It is surprising, even on a good day with perhaps a 4,000ft cloud base, how significant

‘If the wind is perfect, it is possible to fly southwest along the ridges to Bath and Northwest to Lower Clopton, the distance between the two being about 90km.’

this effect can be even at altitude. On some occasions, I have flown effortlessly in a street over the top of it. On others, I have been shot down and ended up scratching about on the ridges between Winchcombe and Broadway until I was able to get a thermal back to cloud base or land out on the top of the Cotswolds.

What always goes through my mind when I have ended up scraping along the ridges is “I wish I knew these hills better”. Ridges are best explored gently, gradually working your way along them in varying conditions until you understand their quirks. Finding yourself on a previously unknown ridge, while perhaps better than the alternative of landing out, is not really the best introduction.

Further south along this ridge is the gliding site at Nympsfield, a ridge site like ours but situated at the top of the hill. I have flown from Nympsfield several times and explored the local ridge, but had never really joined up the bits between there and the

Winchcombe area, except at a comfortable height in thermals.

However, I have a friend, Trevor Stuart, who knows these ridges intimately. Some years ago we hatched a plan to fly them together, but the weather did not play ball. However, this winter, I decided that I would give it another go if the weather allowed it.





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**Nympsfield.**  
*Photo by Mark Newland-Smith*



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Looking North from Bath, there's a ridge here somewhere!  
*Photo by Mark Newland-Smith*



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The Bath Racecourse.  
*Photo by Mark Newland-Smith*



1

Trevor does a round-robin e-mail, flagging up any good day he sees coming and on December 6th his e-mail said “Friday - Fresh NW wind, sunshine and thermals”. After a phone call to discuss, I arranged to take my 29 down to follow his 29 along the ridges. If the wind is perfect, it is possible to fly southwest along the ridges to Bath and Northwest to Lower Clopton, the distance between the two being about 90km (see map).

On Friday morning however the wind was not absolutely optimal, so we plumped for Lower Clopton double O/R for 227km. I say “we”, but I was just doing what I was told.

I won't bore you with a blow-by-blow account of the flight, but it was a great way to spend a bright December day, and I hope the

pictures give some flavour of it.

After we landed, there was a suggestion that the end of the week might provide another good day, and I briefly considered leaving the trailer there. But decided against it and trailed home, hedging my bets by parking it outside my house.

On Thursday Trevor's e-mail arrived for Friday stating “Fresh westerly wind with low (but not too low) cloud cover, good when running into sun. More importantly . . . it's a Friday 13th, what could possibly go wrong? Small risk of showers”.

So off I went again. This time the wind was a pure westerly allowing us to go in the opposite direction down to Bath for another double O/R of 144km. The main difference between the hills that

we had flown on Monday and the Bath Run, as they call it, is that it takes a leap of faith to believe that the hills are there at all. Leaving Nympsfield there is a small jump toward Dursley, but from there is it quite difficult to appreciate that there are hills that will take you another 30km down to Bath.

As I hope the photos show, as you turn Bath and head north again crossing the M4 it's hard to believe that the roughly 200ft high hills are going to carry you home. Still, they do and with some surprisingly good lift (30+kts of wind helps). The showers never materialised, and it was another great flight, allowing me to sample the whole run of available ridges within the two flights.

Nympsfield is a great site to fly from and a very friendly club to visit, and thanks go to them and Trevor for a great couple of days flying. If you want any further information about flying there, please feel free to ask me.

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**Mark Newland-Smith**

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1. Crossing Gloucester.
2. The Somerset Monument, Cotswold, Hawkesbury.
3. Trevor Leading off to the North.



2



3



BRITISH GLIDING TEAM

# 10<sup>TH</sup> FAI WWGC IN LAKE KEEPIT

In the background, the Split Rock Dam.

Photo by Cloudy Hill



What an opportunity – to fly our own gliders, in Australia, to represent the British Team in the Women’s Worlds. And what a massive undertaking, from a logistics, cost and time point of view.

SuperCrew™ Nick and I arrived in Australia as soon as work and budget would allow us to so I could get some much needed practice in, as disappointing weather as well as time constraints had limited my ability to practice in the UK beforehand. We flew into Melbourne to pick up a rental car and an LS4 trailer we had kindly been lent, and we started our adventure with a quick 11-hour drive from Benalla to Lake Keepit.

Liz (18m Class) and Ayala (Standard Class) were already at Lake Keepit, and unfortunately so was the smoke from the bushfires. The fires were far enough away not to threaten us directly, but close enough for the smoke to affect us. So instead of two weeks of solid

practice I only managed a couple of cross-countries and some local-ish soaring. On several days before the comp we couldn’t fly at all because the visibility was too poor.

At least I had the chance to explore the area and conditions a little bit before the comp started. And for the comp itself the conditions improved enough for us to have 10 flying days, 9 of which were contest days, plus three official practice days.

New South Wales has been experiencing a draught for the last three years, so there was not much left of the lake that gives Lake Keepit Soaring Club its name, and what apparently used to be a lush, fertile landscape was a stark but beautiful patchwork of different shades of red, brown and terracotta. Any wind would whip up massive dust storms on the airfield, and of course every single thermal was very visible as it crossed the field in the shape of a large dust devil.

Lake Keepit apparently is different from places like Narromine and Benalla in that it doesn’t provide uniform conditions over a large area. The days got going reasonably late (1-2pm), so we didn’t do massive tasks (usually around 300 to 500km depending on class – have a look on Soaringspot.com if interested), and the conditions were varied: often starting out blue, which I initially found quite difficult (where do you find the triggers when everything just looks brown? Farms, lines



Photo by Cloudy Hill



Kelvin Range.

*Photo by Cloudy Hill*

of trees, little hills seemed to work.), some cu later on, and often good convergence lines on the ridges. There are several different ridges and mountain ranges to consider – it never got boring!

**‘Overall I came 6th in this, my third, Women’s Worlds, which I’m very happy with, especially considering the stress, cost and anguish of getting there. ‘**

On one day we all set off and during course of the flight visibility got worse and worse. Unfortunately right over unlandable hilly terrain. Eventually the organisers cancelled the day remotely as per the local rules – this had been agreed to allow for worsening smoke problems –, but now we all had to get back to Lake Keepit, either the long way round or back through the hills and the smoke. Not a pleasant experience when you can’t really see landing

options and know there aren’t a lot of them, but we all made it.

Being on final glide from 100km away was also a new experience, as was a sustained 11kt climb to 10,000ft. My perception of scale

got very distorted, too – when you do most of the flight between 5000 and 10,000ft it’s easy to underestimate distances – Mount Kaputar, which felt like it was about 30km to the north, was actually 70km away, and the Pilliga Scrub, a vast expanse of forest west of Keepit, was also rather further away than I’d thought. And of course the sun was in the wrong place, who’d put it up north?!

In 42 degrees heat I was glad to have several damp cooling

scarves and headgear, I made sure I stayed hydrated (1.5 l of home-made sugar/salt hydration solution beforehand, 3 l while flying, another 1.5 l before bedtime seemed to work), and I tried to hide from the sun by wearing long-sleeved shirts and trousers and a hat and factor 50 at all times.

Another, non-flying, highlight was the wildlife. It was like a veritable zoo around the club: kangaroos on the airfield (I had to modify my landing area on more than one occasion), a koala which spent the whole duration of the comp sitting in a gum tree and watching us with mild disdain, pelicans and wedge-tailed eagles to share thermals with, parakeets and all sorts of other colourful birds, a local echidna, iguanas, lizards, and even a couple of snakes.

I rarely look at the daily results because I find that if I did well the day before it just puts me under unnecessary pressure, and if I did badly the day before it just





Photo by Cloudy Hill

**MY HIGHLIGHTS**

- Thermalling with a whole gaggle of pelicans
- Gold Height in thermals below cloudbase
- 356km at 123kph in a dry LS4
- 11kts average to 10,000ft
- Lots of interesting wildlife in addition to our own comp koala
- The “international school exchange” atmosphere – it’s always great to reconnect with friends from the other teams and to make new ones

**THANKS MUST GO TO**

Max Kirschner for taking charge of the biggest logistical challenge, namely to get our gliders to Australia and back – it would all have been even more stressful if he hadn’t organised the container shipping for us.

Claire Scutter and Andy Maddocks, John the LS4 owner from Tocumwal, and the other kind people who lent us cars, trailers, hangar space, tools and a hand.

Kerry, Michelle, the Harrys, Wendy, Val and all the other members of

depresses me. There’s nothing I can do about yesterday’s flight so I’m better off focussing on today. Having said that, I ask Nick to download traces of certain flights and certain competitors to compare decisions people made at specific points on a day or see what they did differently.

Overall I came 6th in this, my third, Women’s Worlds, which I’m very happy with, especially considering the stress, cost and anguish of getting there. We got the Silver medal in the Team cup, Ayala came 3rd in Standard Class and Liz 4th in the 18m Class.

Lake Keepit Soaring Club – what an exceptional bunch of helpful people, they bent over backwards to help us.

Our crews Nick, Charlie, Ian, and our team captain Jeremy – we couldn’t have done it without you!

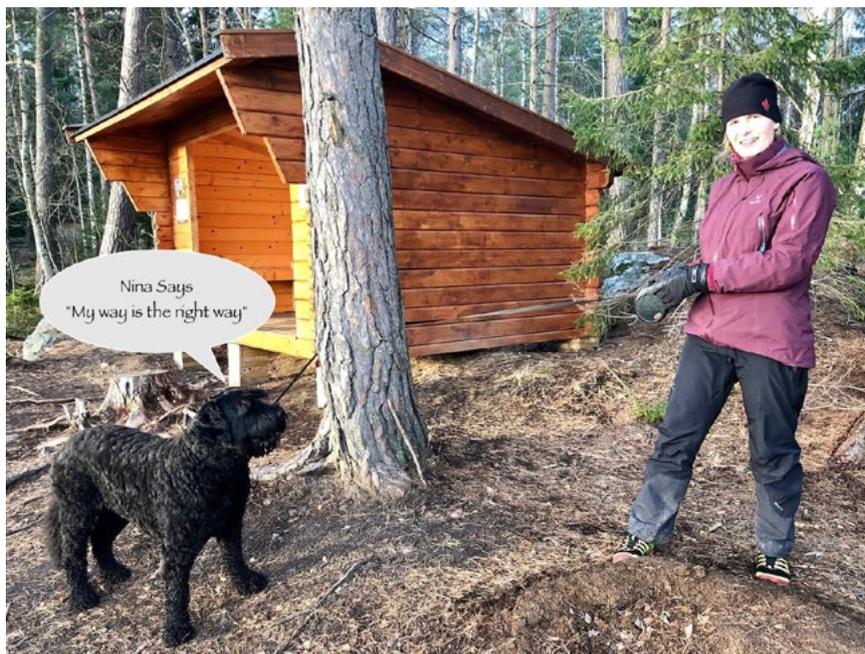
And of course the comp organisers, and everyone at home who supported us behind the scenes and cheered us on.

**WHO WAS MISSING?**

My original team mate and Dunstable member Mel (Club Class) + top masseur and chef Conny unfortunately could not be there with us, but Mel sent me regular motivational “Ninagrams” and supported us remotely from Sweden, which was very much appreciated!

**Cloudy Hill**

Below, the ‘Ninagrams’ sent by Mel



## BGA CONFERENCE

# BGA DIPLOMA

On the 29th February 2020, Andrew Roch and Mark Burton received their BGA Diplomas at the BGA Sporting Conference, in Nottingham.

The BGA Diploma is awarded to individuals serving a BGA club or interests of gliding who have been nominated by a club or by the BGA executive committee.

READ THE FULL TRANSCRIPT:

## ANDREW ROCH

Andrew Roch recently completed 20 years as CFI and Manager at the London Gliding Club at Dunstable. He took on the role in 1999 after the club had been through a difficult period, and his leadership, empathetic style and immense skills as instructor and coach have helped to transform the club.

The roles of CFI and Club Manager are difficult to combine. Certainly, it makes for a highly varied working life. Andrew is able to switch seamlessly between 'CFI' activities such as advanced instructing, or mentoring new pilots, and 'Manager' tasks ranging from the supervision of administrative and technical staff to more mundane activities such as purchasing or payroll. He works closely with the Committee to ensure delivery of the club 'Mission' of providing members with a first-class facility for the sport of gliding within a friendly and welcoming club.

As CFI (and CAA Senior Examiner) Andrew leads a team of over 60 instructors, and through the tug-master, more than 20 tug pilots, and he approaches the task of assuring safety, standardisation and compliance with relevant BGA, CAA and latterly EASA regulations with characteristic enthusiasm and professionalism.

LGC operates within Luton Class D airspace under the terms of a Letter of Agreement with NATS, without which the club would simply cease to operate. Andrew is at the centre of the relationship between the club, NATS, the CAA and Luton. It is largely down to his personal emphasis on compliance that the arrangement has proven that effective and flexible sharing of airspace is possible even in the most active areas. His efforts in this area were recognised in the citation for the Bill Scull Safety award, awarded to the club in 2018.

As well as his work at LGC, Andrew contributes at the highest level at the BGA, particularly on instructing and airspace matters and he has represented the interests of gliding at numerous consultations with NATS, the CAA and other organisations concerning the future design of airspace in the region.

## MARK BURTON

Mark has recently completed 20 years as Treasurer at the London Gliding Club at Dunstable. He is a chartered accountant with extensive experience

in the profession and industry, but he might argue that his role at LGC has been the most challenging!

He has brought new systems, tight cost control and a pragmatic approach to the difficult task of balancing the club's resources with often competing needs of members and visitors, whilst generating a modest annual surplus to fund much-needed investment in the club.

These include the refurbishment of the Grade 2 listed clubhouse and hangar and the expansion and improvement of the fleet of gliders and tugs.

In addition, the club replaced their winch and control tower, and have completed several other important projects around the club.

Under Mark's stewardship the club's finances have recovered and now has the security of a satisfactory level of reserves to face the uncertainties of the future. The club has an excellent fleet, modern support equipment, and club facilities of which they are rightly proud.

Mark has played a central role in the LGC committee, guiding the club through some difficult decisions and helping to avoid tempting pitfalls.

LEARNING TO GLIDE

# HANG ON IN THERE!

**Y**ou may be *ab initio* and have reached a sticking point in your training, or you may be a qualified glider pilot trying to master a new skill that, try as you might, you can't nail. Either way, hang on in there! Don't give up, either on gliding or on what you're trying to crack.

The most important thing to remember is that gliding is a hobby, a sport, a form of recreation and should be enjoyed. If you enjoy it, gliding is for you regardless of how good or otherwise you are at it.

If you are a trainee, you will have to master all the skills required to go solo then get your Bronze and XC endorsement to become a qualified glider pilot. But on the journey, don't let overcoming obstacles stop your enjoyment of the sport. To overcome your obstacle, you will have to work on it, but don't do so at the expense of having fun in the air.

Over the last year, I've had difficulties mastering landing, and I turned down many opportunities to go thermalling in order to take three short flights for landing practice. That was a mistake! This year, when the hill's been working, I've taken full advantage of it. In doing so, I experienced the sheer pleasure of lift so strong, I didn't just observe it on the ASI and altimeter or even feel it, but actually saw it. I got landing practice at the end of the flight, and turning down that experience just to practice another landing or two would have been criminal.

Two people said two very wise things, which are helpful and encouraging in conquering a sticking point. One was 'You have to land anyway so, while you're working on it, learn other things'. So I started to learn to aerotow and mastered speed control on the hill and approach. The same thing would apply while overcoming any difficulty.

The other pearl of wisdom was 'It's not a race to solo (or whatever you're trying to achieve). People learn at their own rate'. Whatever you're learning, remember that you're not anyone else who's learning the same skill. You're you. If it does take you longer to master a skill than it takes some others, you're practising your general flying skills while you're working on it. So when you do nail it, you'll be a more experienced pilot than those who mastered it quickly.

## 'It's not a race to solo (or whatever you're trying to achieve). People learn at their own rate'

Our instructors at LGC are a great bunch of people. They all have different emphases and different ways of teaching so you will learn different things by flying with different ones. However, flying with too many different instructors can be confusing, as some may tell you opposing things. It can be useful to limit the number of different instructors you fly with to avoid this sort of confusion.

In overcoming that difficulty, it can be tempting to come to the club with a shopping



list of things that you want to practice. However, I've found that I've made more progress by working on what the instructor has suggested. As well as being experienced pilots, instructors know how to address your areas for development and how to make complicated things seem simple. Listen to what the instructor thinks you ought to work on!

If you don't have a GoPro to stick to the canopy, taking photos on a flight would be a waste of an instructional opportunity. However, if someone offers to take you on a flight as a passenger/ballast, take it! Even though you won't be practising flying and tackling that issue that's holding

you back, take the opportunity, relax, enjoy the view and take photos. The world really does look so much better from the air!

If you're being plagued, annoyed, and frustrated by a sticking point in your training or in trying to acquire a new skill that's eluded you, you will get there in your own time. Enjoy the journey and make the most of every opportunity on the way.

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Fiona Guest

Photos by Fiona Guest. Aerial photograph taken while flying with Phil Warner.

## HISTORY CORNER

## I SHALL RETURN

Alan Garfield makes a promise.

**M**ay I beg the indulgence of fellow members and share with you a landing out experience, the memory of which frequently returns to me. 'I shall return' does not refer to the completion of a task, heaven forbid, but a promise that I have made to myself, and yet to be fulfilled, to return to the village of Swaffham Prior, located nine miles to the NE of Cambridge. Bear with me, my reason for wanting to return will soon be told.

29th August 1999: the last day of the Dunstable Regionals. Landed out with Corny in ESB after three hours and forty minutes airborne, having turned Northampton South, Oundle and Newmarket.

We landed in a large stubble field, several hundred yards from a long straight narrow road. We were in the Fens. First, contact Mission Control: the eagle has landed. Mobile phones are marvellous. Where would we have found a phone in the middle of nowhere? Next, phone our crew. We didn't have one, but Goldie offered to come to our aid. Next, visit Piddle-in-the Hedges. Next, establish our exact location. Finally, find a pub.

We strolled to the narrow road, me with my roadmap book under my arm. It's so much easier to ask a local to point a finger to 'we-rere', than try to follow his well-meant but sometimes difficult-to-understand explanation. Experience Precedes Learning. But not today.

We waited at the roadside. White van man soon approached. ESB was clearly visible from the road and, having taken van man's attention, he stopped with no effort on our part. He was a linesman, a maintainer and servicer of electricity installations in the area.

Having conceded the shortcomings of motorless flight (always agree upfront. Power Negotiating - Perry Winklehoffer, 1971), I asked him to be kind enough to indicate in my road map our exact location.

In the manner of 'my one's bigger than yours', he dismissed my road map book with: 'that's no good, you need one of these', and with a proud flourish, opened up the world's largest map. The scale was so large that electricity pylons were depicted four inches apart. 'You're about here', he said.

The information was useless. 'Thanks very much. A great help.' Always be nice to strangers. Plan B. 'Can you tell me the nearest village?' 'Swaffham Prior, three miles in this direction.' We should have asked for a lift but decided to return to ESB to collect the loose valuables.

Then it happened. Strolling back through the stubble, Corny, several steps ahead of me, screamed. Yes, actually screamed and leapt into the air.

My first thought was that he had been bitten by a venomous snake. My next thought was: 'would this make for difficulties derigging?' All heart, I can't help it.

The cause of Corny's liftoff was a large hare jumping up in front of him. I laughed tears and still laugh at the memory of it. He explained that the hare had startled him. I pointed out to him that he had startled the hare first. Later that day, in the same field, we saw a hare moving at high speed along the field's edge. It was a marvellous and unforgettable sight.

Loaded with my carrier bag of valuables, we trudged the three miles to Swaffham Prior. A number of cars passed us, but none would stop to give us a lift. Approached from behind, we must have looked like Laurel and Hardy, carrying all their worldlyies in a plastic carrier bag. The fact that the bag said Waitrose should have indicated to all that we were quality. In one car, two little faces were pressed to the rear window. They looked like they were smiling, so we smiled back and gave them a little wave. They replied with a victory sign. Children are wonderful.

The long slow walk finally ended,

and we entered Swaffham Prior where, just to our right and facing us, was a pub. Guinness within reach. The pub was locked. Corny ran frantically round to the back of the pub, banging on all the doors he could find. Opening time: six o'clock. Corny looked as if he had climbed Mount Everest, only to find that someone had removed the summit. Could he hold out? We sat on a bench in front of the pub, watching the clock and waiting for Goldie.

Two young ladies were staring at us from an open upstairs window in a house, one of a long terrace of houses facing the pub. My mother used to say that the shortest distance between two people is a smile (Reader's Digest, Aug 1951). With no wickedness aforethought, I blew them a kiss.

Two minutes later, after a short exchange of courtesies, they brought us two large glasses of orange juice. Corny, of course, got excited - he's all appetite that lad. I could read the lechery on his face. Mine didn't show because I'm sophisticated. Also, their father was with them.

Next door to the pub was a church or, to be exact, two churches in one churchyard, the result of a parish amalgamation in 1667. St Cyriac's is derelict and St Mary's has been restored (AA Guide to Britain). However, it was closed at the time.

At last, the pub opened, I helped Corny to the bar, his strength was ebbing fast. It was now eighteen hours without the opaque nectar. Bravely reaching the bar, he had insufficient strength left to reach for his wallet. After the first pint, the colour quickly returned to his face. Goldie turned up; one more round and off we went to derig.

Pinned beside the bar was a postcard. It showed a stained-glass window in St Mary's church. It contained a WWI aeroplane. I want to see that, and that's why one day I shall return.

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**Alan Garfield**

First published in April 2001



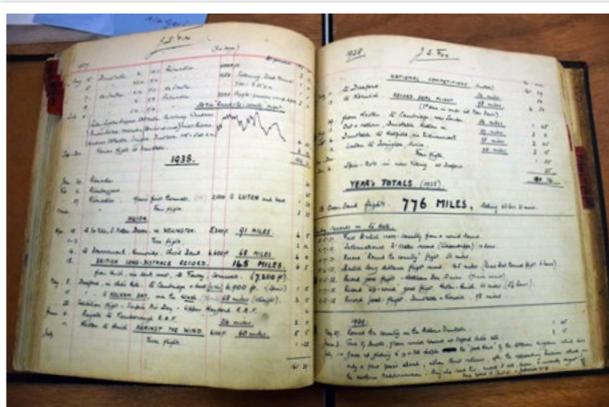
# LGC'S HISTORY NIGHT

As part of our winter activities, the club hosted a History Night on 19th February, one day before the 90th anniversary of LGC.

The evening, which attracted an excellent turnout, started with a presentation by Andrew Sampson called 'An Illustrated History of LGC', created from an extensive archive of photos taken by our members over the decades.

Paul Candler shared some beautiful cine films from the 1960s, followed by Carr Withall, who shared anecdotes and family gliding memorabilia.

After the presentations, members got to examine logbooks and gliding certificates from the 1930s.



Photos by David A White

# THE VERY FIRST CLUB REPORT

## CLUB REPORTS

Chairman: J. R. ASHWELL-COOKE.

Hon. Treasurer: S. O. BRADSHAW.

Hon. Secretary: L. HOWARD-FLANDERS.

Committee: MESSRS. R. F. DAGNALL, T. JAMES, E. K. BLYTH, D. E. CULVER, E. J. STAMMERS, N. MELVILLE and W. GROVER.

Although the decision to form this club was only made during January, considerable progress has already been made. The British Gliding Association has generously loaned a Zogling type glider to the club for six months, and Mr. R. F. Dagnall has presented a glider of a similar type to the club; this is being constructed in this country and is rapidly nearing completion. In view of the superiority of the communications on the south side of London, it was originally decided to commence operations there, but although several sites have been found, the Committee have been unable to come to a satisfactory agreement with the landowners concerned, and in view of the exceptionally favourable report by Dr. Georgii and Herr Stamer on the Dunstable Downs district as a suitable gliding ground, it has now been decided to commence operations there to avoid further delay. A full announcement as to the exact situation decided upon will be made shortly.

(Continued on page 25.)

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I have been writing the 'Club News' article for the Sailplane and Gliding Magazine for the last decade. Given it's our 90th anniversary year here is the very first such article written for the BGA Journal, edition no.1, March 1930.

Andrew Sampson

## CLUB REPORTS—continued from page 4.

The first general meeting of the club was held in London on February 20th and the provisional Committee was unanimously confirmed in office, and at the request of the Chairman two additional members were appointed. The Chairman (Mr. J. R. Ashwell-Cooke) then gave a brief account of the Committee's activities to date, and outlined the proposed policy of the club as drawn up by the provisional Committee. This was unanimously approved and a number of additional suggestions were made, which are at present under consideration. The meeting was then adjourned.

The subscription to the club is one guinea, with half a guinea entrance fee, and intending members should apply without delay to the Hon. Sec., L. Howard-Flanders, 44a, Dover Street, W.1. It is hoped to commence gliding before April.

## SECRET DIARY OF AB INITIO, AGE 47<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>

(apologies to Sue Townsend)

### Chapter 1

Ohmygod! Just look at the instructor. Handsome. Close cropped sliver hair. Suntan. Those Roy-Bon sunglasses. Straight back. Confident smile. I know it, he's a jetfighter pilot on his day off. Ohmygod it's my turn. Stay calm. Don't let them see you shake. Ohmygod! Parachute. Pull the red handle. No not now. Canopy down. Ohmygod! I wanna get out. He has control. I should bloody well hope so! Ohmygod! The cable's moving! Ohmygod!

Oh shiiiiii.....t

Oooh!

Oooh!

Oh wow!

Wow!

Oh wow!

Why didn't I do this years ago! Just see that view. Ohmygod we're leaning over. How thick is this glass fibre, I'm going to fall through the seat. Ohmygod! Can I have a

go? Do we have to go down now? Can't we stay up longer? Ohmygod we're pointing down. We're going to hit the ground. Ohmygod! Oh. That was easy. Piece of cake really, anyone can do it. What was that you were saying about membership?

To be continued...

First published in July 2009



The mini burger photo, taken by Graham Nixon, was quickly debunked by Trevor Mill's picture of his oversized lunch. Notice how pleased Trevor Carey looks with his creation...

## DOWNSIZING?

Following several weeks of bad weather and low attendance to the club restaurant during January and February, rumours started spreading quickly on Facebook that our chef Trevor Carey was downsizing his famous portions.

‘We can have a shortage of hand sanitisers, dust masks and even make smaller Toblerone bars, but we can’t fly without enough ballast!’, said a member who asked to remain anonymous.

Shocked members were quickly relieved when the #fakenews was debunked by this photo of Trevor’s ham and cheese toastie with a tower made of chips as a ‘side’.

Rafael Schouchana



## GROUND CREW



Steve Hardy taking another set of cables to the launch point. Photo by David A White

# London Gliding Club Officials

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## Newsletter

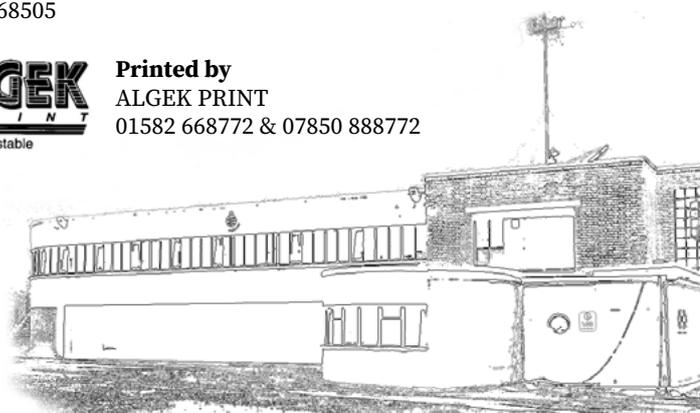
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LONDON GLIDING CLUB

90<sup>th</sup>

ANNIVERSARY

