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Newsletter of the Vintage Glider Association of Australia  
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## Eight aircraft at Regatta

Adverse weather detracted from the 4th annual VGA Regatta, held at Mildura gliderport over the weekend of October 11-12. Despite this, the event was reasonably successful.

An estimated 80 people came to Mildura from many parts of South Australia, Victoria and southern N.S.W.

Seven sailplanes and one primary glider were trailered to the gliderport, arriving on the Friday evening or early on the Saturday.

The aircraft comprised two Olympias, two Nymphs and one each Kookaburra, Kingfisher, Grunau Baby 3A and Rhon Ranger primary.

Launching was provided by the Sunraysia Gliding Club and comprised a double-drum winch and a Tiger Moth.

As a result of a dry winter, Victoria was suffering

from drought conditions and in the week prior to the regatta bushfires were raging in the east of the State.

Long-range forecasters gave warnings of heatwaves over the weekend of October 11-12, so, with sympathy for the farmers and fire-fighters, VGA members looked forward to good soaring at the regatta.

But there were disappointments in store. Steady rain fell in Mildura, and in many other parts of the State on Saturday morning. As visitors arrived, they gathered in the clubhouse to exchange greetings and news.

The rain stopped about 11

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### GLIDERS AT THE VINTAGE REGATTA AT MILDURA 1980

Aircraft	Owner
Olympia GFW	Keith Nolan, Melbourne, Vic.
Olympia GLY	Kevin Sedgman, Adelaide, S.A.
Kingfisher GLQ	Campbell Curtis, Melbourne, Vic.
Nymph GDY	Geoff Young, Gisborne, Vic.
Nymph GHG	Graham Thorpe, Whyalla, S.A.
Grunau Baby 3A GHV	Garth Hudson, Melbourne, Vic.
Kookaburra GHN	Kimba Soaring Club, Kimba, S.A.
Rhon Ranger (not reg.)	Cleve Gandy, Adelaide, S.A.

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o'clock and rigging began on the muddy, puddled airfield. A light wind blew from the north and the heavy clouds slowly drifted away or broke up to leave a cool, calm afternoon.

Garth Hudson had the first launch at about 2 o'clock. He was towed to 2000 feet and had a smooth ride down.

Throughout the afternoon the vintage gliders and those owned by the Sunraysia club were launched off to seek the elusive lift. The only success was by the club's Cirrus, which stayed up for about an hour, and the Blanik, which managed about half an hour.

The vintage machines took part in a spot-landing contest and various owners invited others to fly their machines.

Over about five hours, 10 winch launches and 15 aerotows were carried out.

The calm evening and clear, starry night promised a good day to follow but the pilots were disappointed to wake up to rain and strong winds on Sunday morning.

Because of the lack of hangar space at the gliderport, most of the visiting aircraft had been derigged and put into their trailers for the night and, as the rain continued, most people decided it wasn't worth rigging again.

One of the exceptions was Cleve Gandy who put his Rhon Ranger together in the winch shed, watched by dozens of fascinated onlookers. There is no doubt that the primary was the most popular aircraft with

most of the visitors and local pilots.

By noon, the rain ceased and the wind, though strong, was steady and Cleve gave in to the many requests of the visitors and agreed to make a flight in the primary.

Neville Wynne of Perth was the pilot. The Ranger took off almost as soon as the towcar began to roll and Neville took it gently to about 100 feet before releasing, making a smooth S-turn and landing it straight ahead. The onlookers cheered the performance.

Several other brief flights were made in the primary later in the day by Cleve Gandy and Neville Wynne but conditions were not suitable for circuits so flights were limited to straight hops and S-turns.

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## IT'S A COOL WIND THAT WON'T LET SOMEBODY SOAR

It was around noon on the Saturday. The rain had stopped and the sky was clearing. In little groups, the visitors gathered to rig their sailplanes and talk.

Someone suddenly pointed at the sky. "There's a hawk, and it's soaring!"

and there it was, a small brown bird, circling slowly and winning some height. The apparent source of the lift? A group of pilots spinning yarns about their exploits!

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# Awards at Mildura Regatta

The general standard of maintenance, cleanliness and finish on the gliders at the Mildura Regatta are considered to be very high, reflecting credit on the care taken by their owners.

The award for the best-maintained aircraft at the regatta was divided between Garth Hudson's Grunau Baby 3A and the Kimba Soaring Club's Kookaburra, both of which were immaculate.

The award for the oldest glider at the regatta went to Keith Nolan's Olympia, "Yellow witch", which was built in Melbourne and first flew at the end of 1948.

Since conditions did not enable the vintage machines to soar at the regatta, no award was made for the longest flight.

Garth Hudson took off the spot-landing prize by landing exactly on the spot on two successive flights in the GB.

Honorable mention must be made of Peter O'Donnell who landed on the spot in the "Yellow Witch" on his first ever flight in an Olympia.

A special award was made to Cleve Gandy for the most interesting aircraft at the regatta -- the Rhon Ranger.

Among the many visitors to Mildura was Harold Bradley, aged 82, and the association's oldest member.

When it was suggested that he be given an award for the oldest pilot at the regatta, someone quipped "Yes, and one also for the best-maintained pilot!"

Among other vintage pilots were such notables as Ken Davies, Norm Hyde, Neville Wynne and Alan Delaine.

Col Churches, president of the GFA, and Martin Simons, editor of "Australian Gliding" also attended.

## OUR VINTAGE RALLIES AS GOOD AS OVERSEAS

After attending the International Vintage Rally in England this year, Ray Ash of Sydney said the vintage glider movement in Australia is at a satisfactory level.

"I think the average vintage glider in Australia is maintained at a higher standard than the average I saw at the International Rally," Ray said.

"Some of the gliders -- from Britain, France, Switzerland, Holland and Germany -- were in first-class condition but some were in a condition that is not as high as the standard usually seen in Australia.

Ray commented also on the organisation of the International Rally.

"It was quite well planned and run but, though it was bigger than Australian rallies, I wouldn't say it was better. I decided that the organisation of Australian rallies is at a very high standard," He said.

SECRETARY REPORTS  
1980 AS A GOOD YEAR

At the annual meeting of the Vintage Glider Association of Australia at Mildura on the evening of October 11, Alan Patching was re-elected as president and Allan Ash was re-elected as secretary and treasurer.

In his report, the secretary said that 1980 could be considered as a good year for the association.

Membership had fallen to 66 but it was felt that this had left the association with a core of keen enthusiasts who would strengthen the vintage glider movement.

A number of vintage gliders had been returned to service during the year and several more should be flying again in the near future.

Interest in vintage gliders is increasing throughout the world.

The secretary said he had begun compiling a register of vintage gliders in Australia. The work of tracing gliders and getting information about their history is slow and time consuming and was not helped by the lack of a definition of a vintage glider.

The meeting discussed the possibility and value of holding a second vintage regatta each year. Some members said that October had not proved a good month, as the last three rallies had been marred by bad weather.

Several alternative times

and sites were discussed and the secretary was asked to find out the likely support for a regatta in the autumn.

There was some support for the idea of having occasional "regional regattas" at sites near State capital cities but no decision was made.

TROPHY FOR BEST  
SCHNEIDER AIRCRAFT

As a means of encouraging interest in the preservation of aircraft built by the company, Edmund Schneider Limited is offering an attractive trophy.

Announcing the award, Harry Schneider said it would be presented annually at the VGA regatta to the best-maintained aircraft in attendance which had been built by the company.

The trophy is in the form of a wall plaque made from polished moulded plywood on which is mounted the outlines of aerofoil sections engraved in brass.

It measures 16 in. by 10 in. (40 cm by 25 cm).

The first recipient of the new Schneider trophy is the Kimba Soaring Club, of South Australia, for their ES-52 Kookaburra which attended the regatta at Mildura this year.

Each year, the trophy-holder will be required to pass it on to the next winner.

Silver plates on the plaque will record details of past recipients.

# FAI award to Geoff Richardson

At the annual conference of the Federation Aeronautique Internationale in Auckland, New Zealand, during November, the Paul Tissandier Diploma for 1979 was awarded to H.G. (Geoff) Richardson of Melbourne, one of the foundation members of the Vintage Glider Association of Australia.

The diploma is to reward those who have served aviation in general and sporting aviation in particular by their work, initiative or devotion.

It was awarded to Geoff Richardson in recognition of his work over 50 years in the development of gliding in Australia.

Geoff began gliding in 1929 and was active in establishing the Gliding Club of Victoria and, later, the Victorian Motorless Flight Group.

He built a Zogling in 1932 then designed and built the Golden Eagle sailplane which first flew in 1937.

He helped establish the Victorian Soaring Association and the Gliding Federation of Australia and held executive positions in both for many years.

As an engineer, he spent most of his working life with Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation, finally holding the position of sales manager for the company's Ceres agricultural aircraft.

After retiring from the company in 1977 he became the second full-time secretary of the GFA, a post he held for two years.

Geoff and his wife Betty attended the FAI meeting in

Auckland to receive the Paul Tissandier Diploma.

This is the second time an Australian glider pilot has received this international honour. The 1977 diploma was awarded to Bob Muller, who is also a member of the VGA.

## AIRWORTHINESS FEE CLAIM NOT PRESSED

Although a lot of time was spent at the recent meeting of the GFA in discussing various aspects of the annual airworthiness fee, it did not include consideration of the VGA proposal that the fee should be waived for certain vintage gliders.

The VGA proposal was based on the claim that there is little airworthiness administration involved in most of the one-off vintage designs still operating in Australia.

VGA president Alan Patching said he did not raise the matter at the GFA meeting because a number of clubs are of the opinion that the fee should not apply to any sailplanes.

Alan felt that, until this primary issue is resolved, it is not appropriate to press the VGA proposal.

# Visit to the Wasserkuppe by Alan Patching

The choice of Rodholz as the venue for the OSTIV jubilee meeting was influenced by the fact that it is close to the Wasserkuppe where 60 years of competition soaring flight were being celebrated during the weekend of 6-7 September 1980.

On arrival, after traveling non-stop from Melbourne, I found myself being regarded as the Australian representative. Unfortunately, I arrived just too late to take part in the official luncheon.

However, I did attend a commemorative service at the monument which bears a plaque naming some of the very first glider pilots who lost their lives during the first world war.

We then visited the Lilienthal chapel for a short service. The chapel now forms a part of an early warning radar complex as does Ursinus House, which has been extensively renovated.

That evening I became a victim of jet lag and was unable to attend a lecture given by Dr Joachim Keuttner who now works in Colorado, USA, and is head of the meteorological section of OSTIV.

Next day was one of the three fine days during my stay and I was fortunate to fly in a K13 with Hans Zacher, by courtesy of the Poppenhausen Gliding Club.

The Wasserkuppe is a small peak in the Rhon Mountains, very close to the East German border.

Both winch and aero-tow

launching proceed simultaneously but from adjacent parts of the mountain top.

Take-off and landing directions on the aero-tow strip are opposite to each other and displaced by a wingspan. The take-off direction was downhill and landing uphill.

Unfortunately, it was not soarable but later I flew with Rudy Kaiser in the K16 powered sailplane and had a good look at the countryside, including the hang gliding.

In the afternoon I visited the museum that is being established, with exhibits that include a primary glider and a Grunau Baby.

There were pieces of other gliders, including a Horton flying win, on display. Each year there is a competition for the best flying model of a vintage glider and the winner is then kept in the museum.

The museum contains quite a collection of photographs and trophies, together with exhibits of various constructional details showing how designers have used the materials and manufacturing techniques available to them.

Part of the museum was being prepared for a display in the main hall of the Frankfurt air terminal where a Grunau

Baby and Hutter H17 are permanently housed.

Even during afternoon tea at the Wasserkuppe it is possible to learn of the history of gliding in Germany, as the restaurant walls are decorated with photos and small items of interest.

I hope we will soon be able to give some attention to preserving Australian gliders and find a suitable building to display them, together with other historical material.

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## INTERNATIONAL RALLY IN GERMANY IN 1981

The proposed site for the 9th International Vintage Glider Rally is at the gliding school at Burgfeuerstein, near Nuremberg, Germany.

The site is already well-known for having held several international motor-glider rallies.

It is reputed to be good for thermals and situated in an area of beautiful scenery.

The period of the rally is from August 9-15.

The 10th International Vintage Rally may be held in France during 1982.

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# Skylarking at the top end

After an active and successful life in the south-east corner of Australia, Slingsby Skylark 2, VH-GFG, is still providing a lot of pleasure to its present owner in Darwin.

The Skylark 2 was designed in England in 1950 and was a development of the Skylark 1.

GFG was imported into Australia in November 1955 by a syndicate of members of the Victorian Motorless Flight Group. It was the first Skylark to come to Australia.

It took part in the South Australian state Championships at Waikerie at the end of 1955 and the following year it was flown to first place in the first Australian nationals at Tocumwal by Derek Reid. At the same contest it came 2nd in the team event.

Among Derek's contest flights was a cross-country of 147 miles.

For about 13 years it flew in and around Victoria, being used to achieve many Silver C and several Gold C legs.

In January 1968 it was sold to a syndicate of members of the Sydney Technical College Gliding Club and was based at Bathurst where it was used by its various owners to win several Silver C legs and a Gold C distance.

During 1972, GFG underwent some modifications which included the fitting of a retractable undercarriage and a new, longer canopy, rather like that of the Hornet.

The modifications may not have done a lot to improve the

performance but they improved the appearance and also the visibility from the cockpit.

Peter Briton-Jones bought the Skylark in November 1978 and has been very pleased with the flying he has done in it since then.

"I've found it a delight to fly," he said. "The controls are perfectly co-ordinated and balanced and it will soar off the proverbial hot pasty.

"The airbrakes are extremely powerful.

"Cross-country flights are best done at about 55 knots. The rate of sink increases rapidly with speed which soon rises to the VNE of 112 knots.

"All in all, though, the Skylark is a lovely old aircraft. I'd be interested to hear from any pilot who flew it in earlier years."

Peter took the Skylark with him when his job took him to Darwin but he expects to be transferred to Adelaide during 1981, so GFG will once again be soaring in old, familiar territory.

Peter says the Skylark will be seen at vintage rallies in the future. It will certainly be a welcome addition.

In its 25 years in Australia, GFG has accumulated a total of 1620 hours from 2280 launches. A worthy record for any glider.



## OTHER PUBLICATIONS ON VINTAGE AVIATION

Members of the VGA may be interested in reading about vintage aircraft activities in other spheres.

Here are details of some of the other publications that cover vintage flying and the preservation of old aircraft.

RAG AND TUBE is the newsletter of the Antique Aeroplane Association of Australia and is published bi-monthly.

It carries news and photos of vintage aircraft activities including gliding.

The annual subscription of \$10 should be sent to PO Box 57, Melbourne Airport, Tullamarine, Victoria 3045.

The Vintage Glider Club of

Great Britain publishes its NEWSLETTER four times a year.

It includes an excellent coverage of news from Britain and Europe including technical and historical features.

Annual subscription is £5 sterling and should be sent to the secretary, Frances Furlong, 60 Well Road, Otford, Kent, UK.

BUNGEE CORD is published by the Vintage Sailplane Association in the USA.

The editor is Bob Storck, 3103 Tudor Road, Waldorf, MD 20601, USA.

Published bi-monthly, it is full of features and news on the vintage glider scene in America. The annual sub. is \$4 US currency. A bank draft is the best way to send money out of Australia.

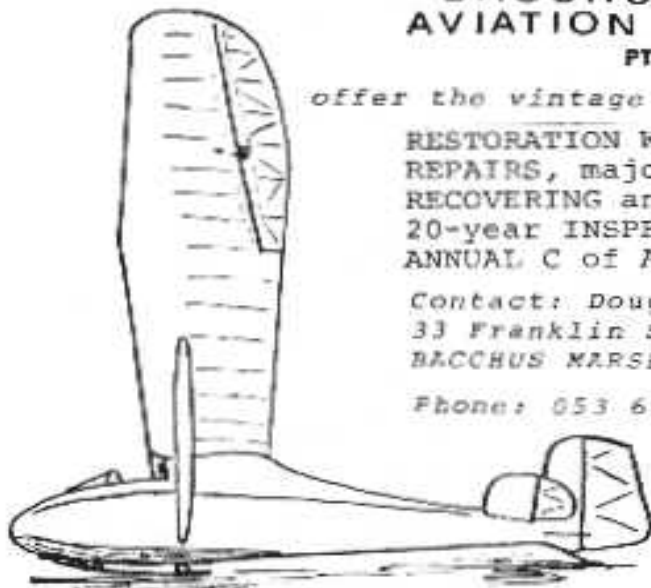
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## PROBLEMS FACE FRENCH VINTAGE ENTHUSIASTS

Vintage glider enthusiasts in France wage a constant battle to preserve old aircraft.

The official view of the French aviation authorities is that old aircraft should not be preserved because some of the glue used in their construction is suspect.

This outlook has already resulted in many fine sailplanes being burned or deliberately destroyed.

Some vintage French gliders have been saved by being sold to enthusiasts in Britain for prices around \$100-\$500 (not airworthy, of course).

As a means of saving the gliders, an association was

formed in France this year. It is called Dedale for short, or Association Amateur de Planeurs Anciens for long. Dedale is the French translation of Daedalus, the father of the legendary Icarus.

The latest crisis facing the association is an order from the French authorities to destroy all remaining Breguet 904 two-seaters, of which 15 still exist.

They are not strictly vintage gliders as they were built in 1956 but Dedale is seeking to save them. In their day, the sleek 20-metre machines were the highest performance two-seaters in the world.

The reason given for the order is that the sailplanes are "too complicated" to be given to modern gliding clubs.

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## PROPOSAL FOR PURCHASE OF ASSOCIATION GLIDER

A suggestion has been made that the VGA should buy a two-seater glider to operate as an association aircraft to help promote its objectives.

It is proposed that finance for the purchase of the glider could be provided through a loan or debentures and its operating costs covered by leasing it out when it is not required for association use.

To promote interest in the preservation and flying of vintage gliders, the association's machine could visit gliding sites to give demonstrations and passenger flying.

Opportunity could be taken to give lectures and show film or slide presentations of vintage gliders in action.

It could also be useful for lecturing or demonstrating on the maintenance and repair of vintage gliders with wood and fabric structures.

At VGA regattas, the glider could give passenger flights or be rented to members of the VGA who don't own their own vintage aircraft.

At regattas, some owners of vintage gliders might wish to offer a flight in their aircraft to another pilot but the owner often has no two-seater available in which to check out the prospective pilot. An Association two-seater would fill this need and so help to get more pilots flying vintage gliders.

No particular sailplane has

been proposed but there are a number of two-seaters which could be considered, such as a Blanik, Bocian, Kookaburra, Ka7 or Es49.

The proposal obviously will call for close investigation of many matters such as who is eligible to fly the glider and who carries out or pays for maintenance and overhauls but as a means of promoting the interests of the VGA it is worth serious consideration.

If members have any views on the matter, they should be sent to the VGA secretary.

## NEW CLUB TO FLY SHORTWING KOOKA

A recently-formed gliding club in Victoria has chosen a shortwing Kookaburra as its first aircraft.

The glider, VH-GHN, is being leased by the Sun Centre Gliding Club at Swan Hill from one of its members, Dr Lloyd Stewart.

Lloyd bought the Kookaburra from the Kimba Soaring Club after its participation in the recent vintage regatta at Mildura.

He already owns a Mark 3 Schneider Kingfisher, VH-GLS, which he bought from the Kimba Soaring Club in 1979.

The 20-year C of A on this aircraft is now almost complete.

The Sun Centre Gliding Club expects these two vintage sailplanes to do a lot of good soaring during the summer.

## Next Regatta in March

The Association will hold another Vintage Glider Regatta in March 1981. The venue will be Tocumwal aerodrome. Preliminary surveys indicate that at least 10 vintage gliders will attend.

Planning for the regatta followed suggestions at the annual meeting at Mildura that the association should hold a second rally during the year, preferably in the autumn.

The date chosen is the weekend of March 7-9 because the Monday is a public holiday in Victoria -- Labour Day.

The proprietor of Sportavia Soaring Centre at Tocumwal, Bill Riley, enthusiastically welcomed the proposed regatta.

He said the aerodrome offered many facilities to make it successful. In addition to 10,000-ft runways, the field has plenty of hangarage and on-site accommodation for 40 people. As well, the nearby town has four hotels, three motels and two large caravan parks. Intending visitors should make their own bookings for accommodation.

All launches will normally be by aero-tow and tugs suitable for towing vintage sailplanes will be available. The usual charge for tows at Tocumwal is \$8 to 1500 feet.

Many vintage glider owners in Melbourne have already said they would attend and it is expected that some gliders will also attend from Sydney and Adelaide as well as from places along the Murray River such as Swan Hill, Corowa and Albury/Wodonga.

To help the organisers, it will be helpful if people who intend being there will notify the VGA secretary of the likely number in their party and what aircraft, if any, they will bring.

Tocumwal has already proved to be a good soaring centre. It has been the site of two national soaring contests and is the base of a successful commercial gliding operation.

To book accommodation at the aerodrome, intending visitors should ring the Sportavia Soaring Centre by dialling 058 74 1211 and asking for 63.

## ARMY PILOTS TO FLY KINGFISHER

Members of the Army Apprentices Gliding Club in Victoria expect to do some flying in the Kingfisher owned by Campbell Curtis as part of a Christmas camp at Mildura this year.

Members of the club plan to take their Blanik, which is usually flown at Moorooduc on the Mornington Peninsula near Melbourne, to Mildura so that pilots can get experience in winch launching and soaring.

The Kingfisher will also be there for the use of the more experienced pilots.