

Newsletter of the Vintage Glider Association of Australia
Editor: Alan Ash, 38 Murray Drive, Burwood, Victoria 3125

BIG PLANS FOR BLANCHETOWN

A lot of thought and work is going into the preparations for the annual regatta that is to be held this year at Blanchetown in South Australia. Most of the work is being done by Kevin Sedgman and members of the host club, the Scout Flying Club, the gliding wing of the Scout Association of South Australia.

The regatta will be held over the weekend of October 31 and November 1 but if any pilots want to stay on for another day or two, launching will be available.

It is possible that some Victorian members will stay on, because Tuesday, November 3 is a public holiday in Melbourne (Cup Day).

Much of the work has still to be finalised but a lot of preliminary work has been done already.

Kevin Sedgman says there has been a lot of interest shown in the regatta, especially in South Australia.

At this early stage it is likely that at least 10 vintage sailplanes will attend from South Australia and several more are likely to come from Victoria and NSW.

If conditions are suitable, it is expected that activities during the regatta will include modest soaring tasks and spot-landing contests.

Kevin Sedgman said that invitations to the regatta are being sent to all members and

other gliding people who are likely to attend and, in addition, many owners of vintage aeroplanes will be invited.

Among the vintage aeroplanes will be several fitted with towing hooks. This will ensure aero-towing facilities for the gliders.

In addition, winch launching will be available and, if required, also car-towing.

It is expected that a big crowd of visitors will come to see the vintage gliders in action.

The organisers are arranging for a number of caravans to be brought to the airfield to accommodate VGA members and other participants. Information on costs and booking arrangements will be sent to interested people as soon as they are available.

Sandwiches and other food will be available to pilots and visitors during each day and a sit-down dinner will be provided for participants on the Saturday evening.

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ENJOYABLE REGIONAL RALLY

by Jenne Goldsmith



The first Victorian regional regatta took place at the home of the Midlands Soaring Club, Clive and Mary Hokin's property near Bridgewater, 15 miles west of Bendigo, on the weekend of June 13 and 14. It was a most enjoyable get-together.

In arranging a winter rally we knew we would have to take a big chance with the weather.

Nevertheless, on waking on Saturday morning at Bridgewater (we had towed the caravan up in glorious sunny weather the previous afternoon) we were dismayed to find that the sky was heavily overcast with cloudbase around 2000 ft.

Fortunately there was no wind or rain but we were concerned about what was happening south of the ranges. The picture could be much worse and could prevent some people from coming at all, especially in view of the weather report.

We shouldn't have doubted the enthusiasm of VGA members! Kay and Noel Webb soon arrived with the Kingfisher GLQ owned by Campbell Curtis.

Keith Nolan and Graham Frederickson then arrived with Keith's Olympia "Yellow Witch" in tow. They confirmed our fears that the weather was indeed worse towards Melbourne. They had passed through rain at Woodend.

Doug Vanstan arrived later with the news that rain at Bacchus Marsh had prevented him bringing the Altair on its open trailer, but he had come anyway, without it.

Garth Hudson then arrived with his Grunau Baby 3 to make up our complement of four vintage aircraft, including our diminutive Hutter H17, VH-GDM.

Lloyd Stewart came down to join us from Swan Hill but the uncertain weather had made him leave his Kookaburra and Kingfisher in the comfort of their dry shed.

Cloudbase rose during the day but the overcast remained. The best lift available was slightly less than "no sink". We needed something more than Keith's can of "Ezi-Glide" to stay up!

Keith had the best flight of the day, 20 minutes in the Yellow Witch. He also won the keenly-contested spot-landing competition -- the beaut prize kindly donated by our hosts, the Midland Soaring Club.

Light showers at dusk heralded the forecast front and sent vintage owners scurrying for their trailers. The two on open trailers (H17 and Olympia) found space in the MSC hangar, which is just as well because the front brought some heavy rain during the night.

Saturday evening's barbecue was enjoyed by all, then Doug Vanstan screened some interes-

ting slides of early gliding activities in Victoria with an enlightening commentary.

One thing these slides made evident was that gliders in those days were much more colourful. The lineup at comps was a veritable rainbow of colours and designs. Aircraft you could tell the difference between!

Some slides of the 1977 Blanchetown and 1978 Bacchus Marsh VGA rallies were also well received.

Sunday morning was again 8/8ths strato-cu but this broke up during the morning to give us a pleasant, sunny day with the same calm conditions we had enjoyed on Saturday.

Crews ground-handling the vintage aircraft with their low wing loadings appreciated the safety offered by the calm conditions.

Soaring was a little better and half a knot was about the best lift obtained, and there wasn't much of it. Dave Goldsmith put up a marathon struggle in Garth's Grunau in weak conditions for the best flight of the day - 50 minutes.

Worthy of mention also is that Tom Hinton of MSC really earned his C certificate this day with a meritorious flight of 47 minutes in the M200.

In a close competition that provoked much excitement, Noel Webb in the Kingfisher just nudged out Garth Hudson in the Grunau Baby to take out the spot-landing competition on Sunday.

Although the soaring conditions were not up to the usual Bridgewater standard, the hospitality certainly was.

The MSC members showed lots of interest and provided help wherever possible.

Some club members had flights in the vintage gliders and VGA members swapped aircraft amongst themselves. All flights were short so there was plenty of time for that.

Towing was appropriately provided by the MSC Auster, with Dr John Findlow providing tows for the MSC newer birds with his Cessna when required.

All VGA members who attended agreed they had a great time and would like to do it more often, perhaps every three or four months.

The Midlands Soaring Club has already indicated willingness to host another regional regatta in the summer when we should be able to enjoy some leisurely, vintage-style, cross country flying.

The Bridgewater site would be ideal for this as, being situated in the wheatbelt, the paddocks for miles around are big, flat and free from rocks, particularly to the north, so providing a good margin of safety for these irreplaceable old birds.

VGA members would like to express their appreciation to Midland Soaring Club members, especially to Ian and Nancy Duncan and Clive and Mary Hokin, for making a great weekend possible.

PELICAN IS POPULAR WITH OVERSEAS VISITORS

Jock Barrett of Waikerie reports that his Pelican flies regularly and he often has the opportunity to take local and overseas visitors for flights in it.

Jock has expressed regrets that he has been unable to get to any of the VGA regattas for several years but says this does not mean he is inactive.

"I fly the Pelican most weekends when soaring is possible," he says.

"With the cost of aero-tows these days, I usually fly only when there is a chance of at least an hour's soaring.

"During March I hosted a group of 15 local Scouts and gave each a passenger flight in the Pelican. To keep costs down, I was taking tows to only 1000 feet, at a cost of \$4 each, but on most flights I was able to soar to 2000 feet and sometimes got to 3000 feet.

"I don't fly across country now unless I'm sure of getting back. When I was younger and more able, I did quite a lot of cross country flying in the Pelican.

"In those days, turning points had to be photographed from not more than 1000 m. On an attempted out-and-return to Parafield once, this cost me the completion of a flight.

"I arrived over Para field at 9000 feet and had to come down to 3000 feet to take the photograph. This put me in the

sea-breeze effect and by the time I got back to cloudbase a large storm had built up on my return track. I climbed to 8500 feet then made a straight glide back to earth, landing between Blanchetown and the hills.

"I completed 149 of the 180 mile task at an average of 49 mph, which was not a bad speed for those days. If I could have turned over Para field at 9000 feet I could have got back to Waikerie easily."

JOSEF BRABEC STILL ACTIVE IN GLIDING

Many members will remember Josef Brabec who lived in Adelaide during the 1950s and was a member of the Adelaide Soaring Club.

Perhaps Josef's most notable achievement was the construction of a Grunau 4 whose workmanship was immaculate. This Grunau is still airworthy and is now based at Tocumwal.

A recent issue of the US magazine "Soaring" mentions that Josef is still involved in gliding.

After moving to America, he built a Briegleb BG12 and in more recent years he has built a HP18.

His daughter Janice, 19, was recently selected as one of 50,000 aspirants for pilot training in the US Air Force. She is already an experienced glider pilot.

The Brabec family currently lives in California.

GLIDERS INVITED TO SAAA ANNUAL FLY-IN

The Sport Aviation Association will welcome sailplanes at its next annual fly-in, to be held at Mangalore, Victoria, next Easter (April 9-12).

The association promotes the amateur construction of aircraft and the restoration and preservation of vintage aircraft.

At least 1000 people are expected to attend the fly-in over the Easter weekend.

Well-known vintage glider pilot Keith Nolan is a member of SAAA and is part of the committee organising the next annual fly-in.

He said soaring conditions at Mangalore at Easter should

be quite good. There are no height or area restrictions in the vicinity of the airfield.

Glider towing will be done by suitable vintage aircraft.

Appropriate airfield control should enable powered and unpowered aircraft to operate safely together.

Sunday April 11 will be a Public Day when several thousand more visitors are expected to attend.

Keith Nolan said the organisers have allocated about 15 minutes for a display of glider flying. This could comprise an aerobatic display by one or more sailplanes.

Further information can be obtained from Keith Nolan, 32 Woorite Place, East Keilor, Vic. 3033. Phone 03 336 2563.

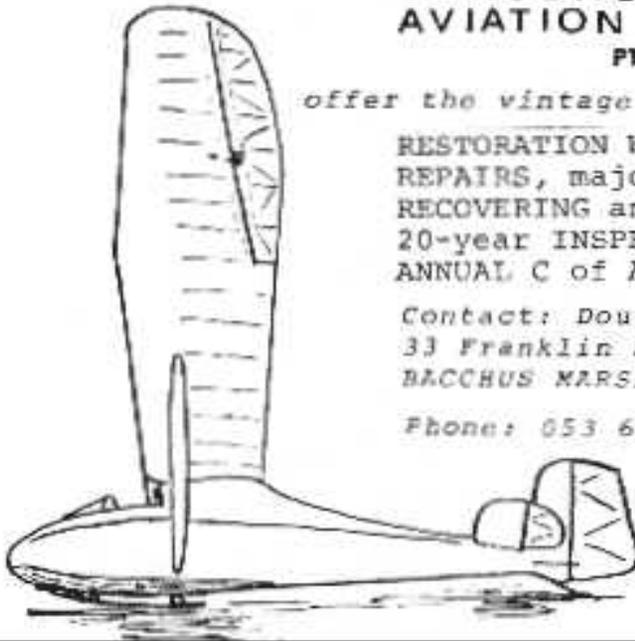
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INTERNATIONAL RALLY TO BE HELD IN FRANCE

The French Vintage Glider Club (Dedale) has offered to arrange the 10th International Vintage Glider Rally in 1982.

The site has yet to be decided but will most likely be either a military airfield in the east of France, the airfield at Chateauroux in the centre of France or the La Montaigne Noire Gliding Centre near the Piranees in southern France.

Further information will be published as it comes to hand.

NOLAN'S 514 KM MAY BE BEST EVER IN OLYMPIA

Reporting the 514 km triangle flown last December by Keith Nolan of Melbourne in his Olympia, Yellow Witch, the Vintage Glider Club of Great Britain comments that it is probably the longest distance ever flown in the world in an Olympia.

We will be interested to see if this claim is challenged by anybody.

WINTER SOARING IN SKYLARK 4

Ralph Crompton of Melbourne took his Skylark 4 with him when family affairs required him to spend most of the winter in Queensland.

On his return, he reported some enjoyable soaring at the

Jondaryan airfield where he logged 17 hours in five soaring flights - the best being five hours.

"I found the Skylark flew well in the mild conditions," Ralph said.

During the next few months Ralph and the Skylark will be in South Australia. Ralph said he would be attending the Blanchetown regatta and had also entered the Skylark in the South Australian State Championships at Renmark in mid-November.

He added that it was quite likely he would take the Skylark to Queensland again next winter, perhaps with an oxygen system fitted to allow him to soar the Bunya wave.

NOEL WEBB MOVES TO QUEENSLAND

The Army is moving Noel Webb from Melbourne to Brisbane at the end of September but this won't stop him from gliding or from continuing his association with the vintage glider fraternity.

Noel has been a keen member of the Army Apprentices Gliding Club at Balcombe and often flies Campbell Curtis' Kingfisher.

He has already applied for membership with the RAAF Gliding Club at Amberley and will make a point of contacting VGA members around Brisbane.

Noel's wife, Kay, is also a keen pilot and has flown the Kingfisher at VGA regattas.

NEW RHONADLER BEING
BUILT IN GERMANY

Vintage enthusiast Klaus Heyn of Eislingen/Fils, West Germany, is well advanced in the construction of a new Rhonadler sailplane.

Work on the fuselage is now almost completed, with a high standard of workmanship.

The 17.4 m Rhonadler, the first design of Hans Jacobs, appeared in 1932. It had a glide ratio of 20 and limited speed range but was a successful performer in pre-WW2 days.

As far as is known, there is no airworthy Rhonadler in the world today so the Klaus Heyn project will be a valuable addition to the fleet of historic gliders in the world.

YELLOW WITCH TO FLY AT VIC.
WAVE CAMP

Keith Nolan of Melbourne is attending a gliding camp at Dadswell Bridge, between Horsham and Ararat, during the last week of August in the hope of doing some wave flying in his Olympia, "Yellow Witch".

Keith won the distance and goal diamonds last summer with a triangle of 514 km in the Witch.

All he needs now is a gain in height of 5000 metres. The standing wave off the Grampians in Victoria has already given a number of pilots their diamond height.

Keith has had the Olympia equipped for high flying.

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PREPARATIONS FOR
BLANCHETOWN

(Continued from page 1)

An evening meal will also be available on the Sunday for those staying on.

The annual meeting of the Vintage Glider Association is scheduled for early on Sunday morning. This is expected to take no more than an hour and will provide opportunity for members to discuss matters of interest and concern.

Blanchetown was the site of the first VGA regatta in 1977. Those who attended will recall the fantastic soaring conditions of that weekend and the hospitality of the host club.

This year's event should be

just as enjoyable.

The Scout's airfield is located about a mile north of the township of Blanchetown, on the western banks of the Murray River.

The site offers showers and toilets and has a clubhouse with the usual facilities.

Unfortunately, there will be no spare hangarage for the visiting sailplanes, but the weather at that time of the year should be fine and warm.

As there will not be another issue of Vintage Times before the regatta, further information will be sent to interested people by post.

To help the organisers and officials, those intending to attend the regatta are urged to notify their intentions.

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