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Newsletter of the Vintage Glider Association of Australia  
Editor: Allan Ash, 2 Heath Avenue Frankston, Victoria 3199

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## CHRISTMAS REGATTA PLANS

If the weather co-operates, the week-long vintage glider regatta at Bridgewater, Victoria, should be the most pleasant yet run by the Vintage Glider Association.

The regatta will be held from Monday 26 December to Sunday 1 January, but members can feel free to arrive and depart at any time they like.

No scheduled program is being arranged but it is hoped that the weather will allow at least some pilots to make a few cross country flights.

It is expected that members and sailplanes will come from various parts of Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales to attend the rally.

It had been expected that Gilbert Simpkins might be able to bring his Slingsby T31 from Brisbane but the latest news is that Gil has come down with measles and is bed-ridden at present.

Among sailplanes likely to be at Bridgewater are Keith Nolan's Olympia, Garth Hudson's Grunau Baby 3A, David and Jenne Goldsmith's Hutter H17. Ian Patching's Altair, Ralph Crompton's Skylark 4, Bob McDicken's Grunau 4, Dave Newman's Cherokee 2 and Tom Hinton's Kingfisher.

It is possible that some

others may come along, at least for part of the time.

All launching will be by Auster, at a cost of \$10 per tow to 2000 feet.

In addition to the visiting vintage sailplanes, the Midlands Soaring Club, whose site it is, will be operating their M200 two-seater and Boomerang during the week. The Boomerang has just had its 20-yearly inspection.

The Midlands club has kindly offered us the use of their clubhouse and other facilities during the week. They plan to put on a barbecue each night and other entertainment, such as films, slides and other activities have been planned.

If you have films or slides of gliding activities (they needn't necessarily be of vintage gliding), don't forget to bring them along. Bring a projector and screen also if you have one, or check with the secretary to find out if someone else is bringing them. Photo albums are also of great interest.

(continued next page)

## BRIDGEWATER REGATTA

(from page one)

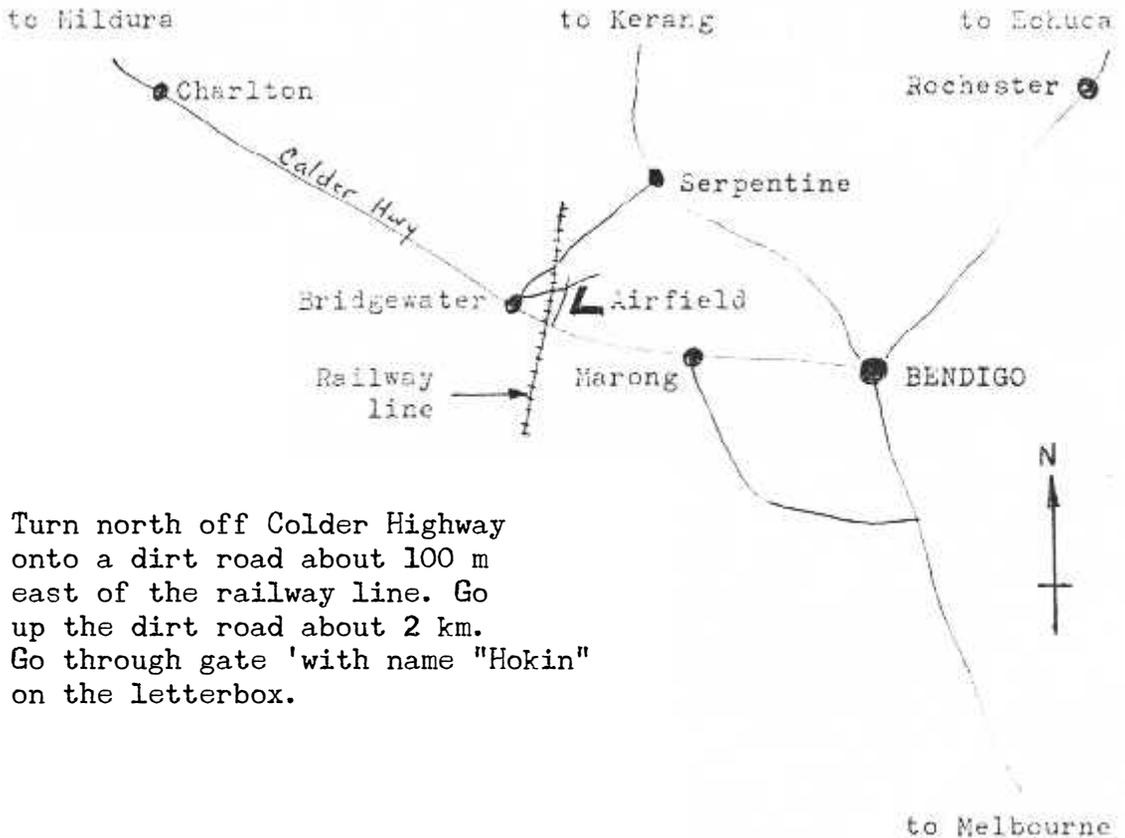
The Midlands club has said that members can camp or park their own caravans at the airfield, though you will have to be fairly self-contained as the field doesn't have a lot of facilities. There is only one toilet and no showers, though it is hoped that something suitable can be arranged in time.

A motel is available in nearby Bridgewater and both Bridgewater and Marong offer a

caravan park with on-site vans for hire, but you will need to book ahead.

Phone Riverside Motel at Bridgewater (054) 373 200, or Bridgewater-on-Lodden Caravan Park (054) 373 143 or Marong Caravan Park (054) 352 329.

For those who don't know, the airfield is on a property owned by a Mr Hokin. It is just off the Calder Highway, about 190 km from Melbourne and 25 km NW of Bendigo. The map on this page will help you locate it.



## OFFER TO HOLD 1984 REGATTA AT BLANCHETOWN

The Scout Gliding Club has offered to hold a vintage regatta at its airfield at Blanchetown, South Australia, during October 1984.

Members will recall that this was the site of the first regatta held by the Vintage Glider Association. That was in October 1977, and in the opinion of many members this first one was the best rally we have yet held.

Kevin Sedgman writes that the club will do its best to ensure that the 1984 meeting is as good as possible.

He says that the facilities at the airfield have been improved since the last time the

VGA met there, in 1980. This would make it an ideal site for a vintage rally.

The club normally offers a winch for launching but some aero-tow could probably be laid on if required.

Soaring conditions at the Blanchetown site have already proved to be superb and good flights are virtually assured.

Any members interested in attending a regatta at Blanchetown should notify the VGA secretary so that planning and preparation can begin.

If past practices are followed, it can be expected that a number of vintage aeroplanes and a balloon or two will also be at the regatta to add to the entertainment. It could be a memorable weekend.

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## VGA MEMBERS ATTEND 25th ANNIVERSARY AT M. BRIDGE

Three members of the Vintage Glider Association were among those who gathered at Pallamana airfield in South Australia over the weekend of 5-6 November to help celebrate the 25th anniversary of the formation of the Murray Bridge Gliding Club.

The VGA members were Kevin Sedgman with his Olympia, Ralph Crompton with his Ka6 and Nigel Baker with his Cherokee 2.

Many of the foundation members of the club were at the celebrations, including Ray Killmier, Ralph Farquhar, Ron Keough, Bob Mills, Bill Lawson and Arch Thomas.

(It should be mentioned in passing that this was actually the second Murray Bridge Gliding Club to be formed. A club of this name started during the early 1930s after operating for several years as a branch of the Adelaide Gliding Club. It ceased operations in the late 1930s.)

Commenting on the weekend, Kevin Sedgman says, "We all had a wonderful dinner in the clubhouse on the Saturday evening. The place was full of past and present members and visitors.

"The club has made much progress since the early days and is now an active group.

"On Saturday afternoon the soaring conditions were good and long flights were made in the three vintage sailplanes

and a Bocian. Ralph Crompton made the best flight (doesn't he always?) by staying up well over 5 hours.

"Ralph says his Skylark 4 is still undergoing a 20-year inspection but should be flying again soon.

"The Murray Bridge Blanik flew a lot of passengers, in company with our Motor Falke, piloted by Ian Brock or myself.

"Sunday produced a 40-50 knot wind at 2000 feet, though it gradually moderated during the day. This severely limited the day's activities but the Pitts Special, flown by Chris Spiro, gave a wonderful display of aerobatics.

"Two glass sailplanes did beat-ups, dropping water in the process, and a parachute team put on a good show by dropping from 8000 feet.

"Thus the show for the day was brief but the quality was good. A lot of visitors came from the surrounding district to watch."

It seems that a number of Australian gliding clubs will be celebrating anniversaries during the coming year or two. For example, the Adelaide Soaring Club notches up its 40th birthday during 1984 and plans to put on some sort of celebration.

VGA members can probably expect to be invited to some of the forthcoming events. It would be good promotion for our branch of the sport if our members were prepared to cooperate with organisers.

## RESPONSE TO APPEAL FOR NEWS OF VINTAGE GLIDERS

In the last issue of this magazine we made an appeal for news of vintage gliders that might be lying neglected in forgotten corners of Australia.

We mentioned several aircraft which clubs had begun to build years ago and which have not been reported as finished.

In response, we have had a letter from VGA member Paul Lawless of Murgon, Queensland, who owns a Grunau Baby.

Paul writes: "I remember seeing the partly-built H17 started by the Townsville club when I attended an engineer's school at Kingaroy about 12 years ago.

"The fuselage was almost

complete, mainspars and ribs also. However, the glue used was suspect and I'm not sure what was the eventual fate of this glider."

Perhaps other members can add to this information so that the H17 can be located and finished, if it is in a condition to be finished.

As last issue's article emphasised, there must be a lot of old gliders hidden away and part of our task as an association of vintage glider enthusiasts is to locate them and restore them.

It would also be helpful if the association could hear from people who want to get hold of a restoration project. Perhaps something can be done to point them to a project.

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THINGS THAT GO BONK IN THE FLIGHT ... or ...  
KEEP A LOOKOUT FOR STRANGE STOWAWAYS

by Allan Ash

The following story was in a recent (Summer 1983) issue of the Newsletter of the Vintage Glider Club of Great Britain.

It relates to a Mr Hatcher, a member of the Yorkshire Gliding Club who kept his Pruffling glider fully rigged in a farmer's barn. One day he took out the Pruffling and launched off to do some slope soaring.

The story goes on: "Soaring in the strong wind and being tossed about a bit, Hatcher became aware of strange sounds coming from the wing. He landed at once on the crest of the ridge, cross wind, and the glider blew over.

"He was uninjured but the machine was damaged. You can guess how he felt when a mother cat and four kittens emerged from the wing and ran off!

The farmyard cat had thought that the interior of the wing was a fine place to have her family. The strange sounds were their claws on the fabric as the Pruffling was banked."

Reading this story reminded me of a somewhat similar incident that happened at Fluers airstrip, west of Sydney, about 1947 or 48.

At that time the Southern Cross Gliding Club kept its Zogling nacelled primary derigged in a shed at the strip.

The members arrived one day and, in taking down the wings from the rafters, noticed that

there was a bulge in the lower fabric of one wing. When poked with a finger, the bulge moved along the wing.

Peering inside the wing from the open end, members saw a wide-eyed possum crouching between the ribs. An eventful hour followed, with members trying vainly to remove the intruder.

The possum couldn't be dislodged by frightening, nor by poking with a stick. Upending the wing in an effort to shake it out resulted only in ripped fabric as the furry animal dug in its claws and slid about its confined space.

In the end, members had to slit open the wing and remove the intruder by hand, but not without receiving a few nips and scratches.

In addition to repairing the torn fabric in the wing covering, members closed in the open end rib, which in obviously how the possum got into its cosy resting place.

There is also a story about a snake that got into the fuselage of a sailplane in Queensland and wasn't discovered by the pilot until he landed after a long flight.

Another pilot received a nasty fright when a large spider scuttled across the canopy in front of him during a thermal flight.

It all goes to show that you need to be careful where you store your glider.

## INVITATION TO DISPLAY AIRCRAFT AT AUSTRAGLIDE

Members of the VGA have been invited to provide a static display of aircraft at the big air show to be held during the Nationals/Austraglide contest at Benalla during January.

The show will be staged on Sunday 8 January and will include flying displays by sailplanes, light aircraft, sport aircraft, ultra-lights and a host of other participants.

Unfortunately, it does not seem possible to include a flying display by vintage sailplanes. The show organiser Charles Lambeth says one of the reasons is the packed program already arranged and another is the lack of a tug

suitable for towing at low speeds.

Any member willing to take an aircraft to Benalla for static display should contact Charlie Lambeth as soon as possible on (03) 667 2254 (BH) or (03) 546 2062 (home).

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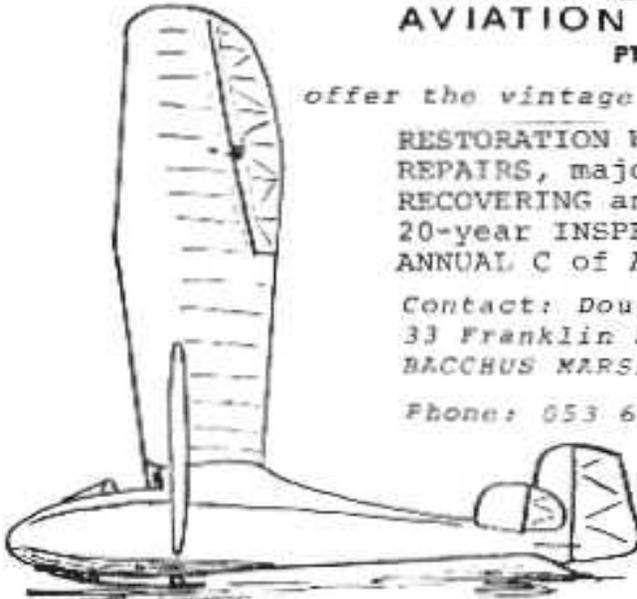
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## LO150 OWNER MOVES TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA

VGA member Peter Rigby has written to say that he moved to Western Australia during this year, where he will be working with the Woodside company which is searching for natural gas on the North West Shelf.

Peter says, "I left the LO150 at Wollongong as the weather in this area is a bit rough on wooden sailplanes. I sold a half share in the sailplane to another member of the Wollongong club so it will still get some use.

"It hasn't done much flying this year but I will be back flying it in January and will probably take it to the Sports Class Nationals at Ararat.

"I would like to have taken it to the vintage regatta but can't get my holidays then.

"There is a gliding club at Karratha, so I will still be able to get some flying."

## JACK IGGULDEN IS BACK INTO GLIDING

After many years out of the gliding movement, one of Australia's pioneer pilots, Jack Iggulden, has resumed his involvement in the sport.

Jack and his brother Bill began gliding in the early 1930s, while still at school. After an involvement of more than 30 years, Jack dropped out of the sport when he moved his engineering business from

Melbourne to Bellingen, on the north coast of NSW.

During the past year or so, Jack has become involved with the Lake Keepit Soaring Club. After a brief refresher course he soloed a Blanik and also flew other club sailplanes.

He is now the proud owner, with his nephew Brett, of a K14 motor-glider which he has based at Lake Keepit.

According to a report from VGA member Ian McPhee, "Jack is in his second childhood in gliding. There is no doubt about it, if there is something different to do in gliding, an Iggulden will do it."

## CHEROKEE 2 PASSES 20-YEAR INSPECTION

Dave Newman of Canberra is looking forward to bringing his Cherokee 2, VH-GNR, to the vintage regatta at Bridgewater in December.

He says, "The 20-year major inspection of the Cherokee was completed last April by Jack Dewhurst. It didn't need any major work. Its condition is a credit to the construction by Fletcher Smith and the care given by previous owners.

"I wasn't able to fly the sailplane for some time after its big inspection as I began my helicopter conversion course about that time and did not complete it until October.

"I am looking forward to flying it during the summer."

(Dave is a Flying Officer in The RAAF, based in Canberra.)