
Newsletter of the Vintage Glider Association of Australia
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HOLIDAY VISIT BY ARTHUR HARDINGE

Arthur Hardinge, formerly of Melbourne but now living in Toronto, Canada, returned to Australia during July and August to visit old friends.

Arthur will be remembered as the builder, with Ken Davies, of Australia's first Olympia, the now-famous "Yellow Witch", in 1946-48.

After a short visit to New Zealand, Arthur arrived in Australia accompanied by his charming wife, Dorothy-Mary, and their youngest son, Doug.

In Melbourne, they spent some time with Geoff Richardson and Keith Nolan, who is the present owner of the "Yellow Witch".

On Saturday, 13 July, Keith and Geoff took Arthur and his family to Bacchus Marsh airfield where Arthur spent an interesting time inspecting his old sailplane.

As he is no longer in flying practice, Arthur wasn't able to have a flight in the Olympia but he watched as Keith turned on a spectacular display of aerobatics in it.

During the day, the Olympia was also flown by Allan Ash and several other pilots.

NEW OWNERS FOR SEVERAL SAILPLANES

From the official GFA register of sailplanes we note changes in the ownership of several vintage sailplanes.

The Grunau 4 VH-GHK owned by R. Jamieson of Cobram has been bought by Walter Wolf of Wangaratta. This aircraft was built in Adelaide by Josef Brabec about 1958.

The ES49 VH-GLL which the Bunn brothers of Albury have owned for many years has been bought by Maurie Hargans of Bathurst. It is probable that this is one of two ES49 built in Adelaide by the A.S.C.

The Stawell Soaring Club's ES52 Kookaburra VH-GLF is now owned by the Temora Gliding Club, NSW.

REPORT OF CHEROKEE FOR SALE AT TUMUT

Bob McDicken reports that at a recent meeting of the Southern Cross Gliding Club he was told about a Cherokee 2 for sale at Tumut.

The Cherokee has been modified and needs recovering. Bob says the price quoted was \$2000.

ANOTHER GRUNAU BABY LOCATED IN SYDNEY

Bob McDicken reports his recent discovery of a Grunau Baby 2 in Sydney. It is one which began life there but which flew in Queensland for many years.

Bob writes: Recently I have been trying to track down a Grunau Baby which I had heard about. Eventually I located it accidentally when the owner rang me to ask if I was interested in buying it.

Ron Mears and I went to have a look at it. It has been stored at Kellyville, near Windsor, together with other vintage and historic aircraft.

The owner said he had bought it from someone in Queensland. Unfortunately, whoever shipped it sawed the wings in half to make them fit into the container.

About three feet of one wing tip is missing, a lot of ply is missing from the fuselage, there are very few fittings and no instruments.

I offered the owner \$500 but he said it had cost him \$1200, so it was no sale.

He has since advertised it for \$2000 but that was the last I've heard of it.

The owner told me the Grunau had once been based in Mount Isa and that if nobody bought it from him he would "have a carpenter repair it and then sell it".

Editor's Note: This is the Grunau Baby that was built

about 1947 by Bob Letson in Sydney. It flew at Fluers airstrip for a while and was then bought by the Hinkler Soaring Club who flew it at Camden and Fluers.

About 1950 it was sold to The Toowoomba Soaring Club and was aero-towed from Camden to Toowoomba behind Fred Hoinville's Tiger Moth, the sailplane being flown alternately by Bob Muller and Bob Krick.

At that time, it was the longest aero-tow ever made in Australia, some 500 or so air miles.

Later, it was bought by Jan Matiosaitis who took it to Mount Isa about 1956. Nothing is known of its movements during the past 25 years.

TOM HINTON IS NOW ON THE GFA STAFF

The Executive of the GFA selected well-known VGA member Tom Hinton from a number of candidates to fill the post of assistant to the Chief Technical Officer, Airworthiness, Mike Burns.

As a result of the appointment, Tom and his family have moved from Boort to Riddells Creek, near Gisborne.

He was able to find nearby storage space for his Super Goose and Kingfisher and expects also to soon locate a suitable workshop for his Fournier motor-glider which is being restored to airworthy condition.

SCHNEIDER GNOME REDISCOVERED FOLLOWING DEATH OF JACK WATT

by Ray Ash

During June, one of Australia's pioneer glider pilots, Jack Watt, died at his home in the Sydney suburb of Beecroft.

Jack began gliding as one of the foundation members of the Sydney Technical College Gliding Club in the mid-1930s.

He flew the club's Dickson primary glider at a number of sites, including Camden airfield, and later fitted the glider with a Henderson motorcycle engine and propeller. It made a number of flights at Camden.

During the 1940s, Jack flew the Dickson, converted to a two-seater side-by-side trainer with a large red nacelle, at Doonside and Fluers airstrips.

He also did some soaring in Sydney Soaring Club's Kite 2 sailplane during the 1940s. He dropped out of gliding about 1950.

Soon after his death, at the age of about 75, I was contacted by the chap who was clearing up his backyard, which held the most incredible collection of odds and ends, pieces of machinery, bits of old aircraft and other things. At one time Jack had an old army tank stored in the yard.

Amongst all the junk, it seems, was the remains of an old glider.

It turned out to be the ES58 Gnome, designed and built by Schneiders about 1957. The

remarkable thing about the Gnome was that it had a span of only 25 feet.

It flew successfully but had no performance to speak of so did not go into production. Only the prototype was built, though the fuselage, originally a pod and boom type, was modified to a conventional shape after a few months.

The Gnome was flown for a few years in South Australia and then went to Alice Springs where it did some soaring.

It seems that for some reason it was abandoned and allowed to deteriorate. Jack Watt came into possession of the remains and had them moved to his home in Sydney.

When I went over to look at it, I found the fuselage frame lying forlornly under a tree, though fortunately wrapped in a plastic sheet.

The steel tube framework is rusted but I think it would be restored, not for flying but as a museum exhibit.

We could not locate the tailplane which was reported to have been stored indoors and be in good condition.

The wing was found under a house but, having been exposed to the weather in the tropics for a year or so, every glue joint had disintegrated.

Judging from its appearance, I would guess that it had been in fairly good condition when it was abandoned to the elements. It has only been sheer neglect that has destroyed this old sailplane.

THE TERN REDISCOVERED

by "Feathers"

Some time ago, while flying during a regatta at the airfield of the Murray Bridge Gliding Club in South Australia, I noticed in one of the hangars an interesting wooden aircraft.

On inspection, two things were evident. First, it was not only fully rigged but it has been for some considerable time. Second, it was in a sad state of repair.

The wings were complete, except for the tips and the leading edges. This latter has proved a haven for birds and possibly other vermin.

This to me was very sad as the aircraft looked to be about 80-85 percent complete and would not have taken much work to finish it.

The aircraft intrigued me so much that I decided to do some research into it. This turned out to be more difficult than I thought.

I still have not been able to get the full performance figures for it and it has been only through the kind help of two very good friends of mine, Emilis Prelgauskas (Adelaide Hills Gliding Club) and Jim Brenton (Barossa Valley G.C.) that this article has been possible.

This homebuilt aircraft, of simple construction, was designed by Tony Miller of USA, and is called the Tern.

The prototype flew in September 1965 after taking 1180

hours to build. An improved version, the Tern 2, made its first flight in August 1968.

The one at Murray Bridge has the wingspan increased by 4 ft 6 ins to 55 ft 6 ins, increasing the aspect ratio to 22 and improving the glide ratio and minimum sink rate.

By May 1970, nearly 100 Terns and 12 Tern 2s were under construction, not only in the USA but also in Africa, Australia, South America and Canada.

In the prototype Tern, a brake parachute was fitted in the base of the rudder. A modified parachute arrangement was fitted to the Tern 2.

There were two types: a 6 ft diameter cross parachute and a 5 ft diameter guide surface parachute.

The Tern is of conventional all-wood construction and has unswept cantilever shoulder wings, built of two spruce spars with plywood covering.

There are no flaps and the plain ailerons are also all wood. Wooden spoilers are only on the under-surface of the wings and to quote a comment by the builder Bob Ward in the March 1972 issue of "Australian Gliding", "The most disappointing feature of the whole aircraft is the dive brakes. They are not worthy of the name."

The wing spars are of 3/4 inch centre with one-inch laminations each side. No fabric is used on any part of the

sailplane as the primary skin.

Fuselage construction is very simple, having four 3/4 inch square spruce longerons full length and a 1/16 inch plywood skin.

The rudder has three pounds of lead for mass balance.

The two flat sides of the fuselage are made first on a wooden bench, after which the bulkheads were put in. The shaped nose of the fuselage is made with epoxy fibre glass over foam.

The Tern was designed with a span of 15 metres (51 ft) and aspect ratio 20.

To quote another passage from Bob Ward's article in AG, "Early performance estimates

are gratifying. The Tern seems to be able to climb with the best and in a glide we estimate it falls between the Boomerang and Foka 5. The L/D is computed as 34 but I think the designer's claim of 32.5 is more realistic."

I feel that the Tern at Murray Bridge is worthy of restoration, with some patience and loving care. All building notes and plans are available with the aircraft and all can be bought for a nominal amount.

If anyone wants more information concerning this aircraft, please contact me through the Vintage Glider Association.

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SEDGMANS ENJOYING VISIT TO BRITAIN AND EUROPE

A letter from Kevin Sedgman indicates that he and Helen are enjoying their holiday in Britain and Europe.

Kevin says they bought an old Bedford van converted to a caravan and use it for transport and accommodation.

They visited several gliding sites in Britain and then went to a gliding club at Blumberg in Germany before going to Amlikon, Switzerland, to attend the International Vintage Glider Rally there.

Writing from Amlikon, Kevin reports there are 47 vintage sailplanes attending. "I have never seen so many gull-winged sailplanes together," he said.

"Europe's only ES49 is here from the Wasserkuppe. It really is in mint condition. I am very impressed by the craftsmanship of all the sailplanes here."

Kevin says he has photographed most of the sailplanes at the rally and will provide a report and photographs for publication. We look forward to including them in the next issue of "Vintage Times".

"The weather during the rally has been perfect," Kevin reports. "I have made many new friends, especially among the Dutch vintage glider people."

After leaving Amlikon, the Sedgmans planned to return to Britain for a few weeks before returning to Australia about the end of August.

T31 FLIES AGAIN AFTER 12 YEARS

The veteran Slingsby T31 two-seater, VH-GZN, is back in the air again after being in storage for about 12 years.

The T31, originally owned by the Victorian Motorless Flight Group, took to the air again at its new home base at Whitwarta, South Australia, in early June.

A number of members of the Balaklava club had flights in the veteran two-seater and are reported to have been overjoyed with the unusual experience after the Twin Astir.

GZN is currently owned by Don Nottle, Brian Underwood and Peter Butler.

Whitwarta is already the home base of Leigh Bunting's Grunau Baby 2, VH-GDN.

MAJOR INSPECTION FOR GOLDSMITH'S Ka6

David and Jenne Goldsmith of Gisborne are busy carrying out a 20-year inspection on their Ka6.

The inspection is actually being done by Doug Vanstan but Dave and Jenne are doing all the work involved.

This includes replacing all the fabric and repainting the whole aircraft.

Hopefully it will be back in the air by Christmas. In the meantime, Dave and Jenne are still flying their faithful litele Hutter H17.

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR WASSERKUPPE MUSEUM

The proposed gliding museum at the Wasserkuppe, in West Germany, has received official support from the district government.

The Minister for Economy for Hesse in Wiesbaden has informed the museum organisers that the State Government is prepared to pay up to 70% of the approximately DM2.8 million needed for the museum.

Already the museum has 24 original old sailplanes, countless models, replicas and a large archive of photographic and written material.

The Minister said that the museum would not only be of interest to the people of Hesse, but to all Germans.

It will emphasise the influence of German gliding on the worldwide development of the sport and on aviation in general.

Also, the museum would make the Rhon to be of special interest to foreign tourists.

The Wasserkuppe, in the Rhon district of central Germany, was the site of the first gathering of German gliding enthusiasts in 1920. During the remainder of that decade it became the hub of the new sport of gliding and the location of most of the early soaring flights.

Its proximity to the border with East Germany limits its present use as a site for the sport.

HUTTER PROJECT AND TRAILER FOR SALE

Garth Hudson has decided to sell the partly-built Hutter H17 which he bought some years ago.

He says his current task of doing a C of A on his Grunau 3 plus work on a new house he has bought do not allow him time to work on the Hutter.

The project was begun about 20 years ago but was halted for many years.

The fuselage is about 80% complete and the tail unit is finished except for fabric.

Wing fittings are made but the woodwork has not yet been started. A full set of plans and some materials are included.

The parts are stored in an aluminium enclosed trailer.

Garth will consider any reasonable offer for the sailplane and trailer.

Contact him at 35 Hillside Ave, Dandenong, Vic. 3175, or phone (03) 793 2564 (H) or (03) 615 2780 (W).

CLOTH BADGES TO HELP PROMOTE VINTAGE GLIDERS

Stocks are still available of the attractive cloth badges with the VGA motif embroidered in white on a blue ground.

They are available from the VGA Secretary, 2 Heath Avenue, Frankston, Vic. 3199.

The price is only \$4 each, including postage.

EASTER RALLY PROPOSED BY MELBOURNE MEMBERS

Members of the VGA living in the Melbourne area are considering holding a flying meet over the Easter weekend next year.

This will be in addition to any activity held during the Christmas and New Year period.

Some members who attended the regatta at Bridgewater in January this year expressed the opinion that a week of flying in mid-summer weather was exhausting, especially for non-flying family members.

Easter 1986 will be from 28-31 March. Soaring conditions at that time should still be good but the weather should be less severe.

No location has yet been decided for the rally, but the Derby airfield at Bridgewater is likely, as it offers many advantages, not the least of which are a friendly host club and safe surrounding areas for cross country soaring.

If those interested in attending the Easter rally prefer it, the period of flying could be extended beyond the weekend to include all or part of the week before or after Easter.

It is hoped that members of the VGA in other States will look into the possibility of holding local regattas in their own States.

It is likely that some of the Melbourne members will go to Bridgewater for a regatta in the New Year period, but

not for a week, though other members may choose to stay for the longer period.

If members in other States are interested in attending a regatta at Bridgewater over either the New Year or Easter periods, would they please let the VGA secretary know, so that suitable arrangements can be made.

WHO IS INTERESTED IN A BARGAIN KINGFISHER?

Chris Kennedy writes from Butterworth, Malaysia, that he will be returning to Australia this month (September) after a stint of overseas service with the RAAF.

He owns a neat little Kingfisher, which he left at Amberley while he was overseas, but he now wants to sell the Kingy and buy something with more cross country potential.

He says he is prepared to sacrifice the Kingfisher, VH-GRF, complete with basic instruments and trailer, for \$2500.

Preferably, he adds, he would like to see it go to a VGA member, to ensure proper care and attention in the future.

Anyone who wants to take advantage of this bargain can write to A319207, Cpl C.J. Kennedy, 3 Sdn Armament Section, RAAF Air Base, Butterworth, P.W. Malaysia.

Better be quick before he leaves.