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

AN EXPERIMENT WITH RADIO COMMUNICATION

by Ted de Kuyper

As a result of recordings of transmissions made between pilots of sailplanes during the VGA regatta at Bridgewater last January, I am prompted to try a system of plotting the movement of aircraft around the area of operations, with the use of a small VHF radio, a system not new, being used quite extensively by other gliding clubs.

If pilots flying at the VGA regatta at Easter, whose aircraft are equipped with radio, would transmit information about their position and progress, I feel that much useful information could be collected that would assist others.

This information could include height of cloudbase, height of aircraft, position from the field or town along their course, whether in good lift or bad. Also, if a pilot is facing an outlanding, he could call for assistance and notify his position.

This and other such information would be of value to other pilots flying nearby.

Those about to take off would be made aware of conditions before they start.

Ground crews would be able to follow the progress of the aircraft after launching them.

The information supplied should be as clear and concise as possible and, naturally, preceded by the callsign of the sailplane.

I hope pilots flying at the Easter regatta at Bridgewater will co-operate in this trial and that it will be of assistance to all.

If there are any comments that may help, you can phone me at home, (03) 359 3260.

VICTORIAN MEMBERS PLAN EASTER AT BRIDGEWATER

Members of the VGA in Victoria will be gathering at the Derby airfield, Bridgewater, over the Easter weekend for an informal regatta.

It is expected that 8 or 10 vintage sailplanes will attend the meeting, including several from interstate.

The weather in Victoria during March is generally fine and warm, and the pilots attending the meeting are hoping to make good flights.

The host of the regatta is, as usual, the Midland club, which will have two club aircraft flying with the visitors.

JANUARY REGATTA AT BRIDGEWATER PRODUCED A WEEK OF GOOD SOARING AND RELAXATION

The regatta held at Derby airfield, Bridgewater, from 4 to 12 January was one of the best ever held by the VGA.

The weather generally was pleasant and most days were soarable, though a couple of days were rather windy.

As well as 10 vintage sailplanes there were several more modern designs flying at times during the week and this added to the interest.

Apart from the soaring, the week was marked by the relaxed atmosphere and the hospitality of the hosts, the Midland Soaring Club.

Several newcomers were a most welcome addition to the regatta. They were Chris and Peter Brenton of the Barossa Valley club with their Super Arrow and Geoff Gifford and Wally Wolf with the Grunau 4.

The "regulars" included Ian and Alan Patching (Golden Eagle), Keith Nolan (ka6), David and Jenne Goldsmith (ka6 and Hutter H17), Tom Hinton (Super Goose), Paul Johnson (with Keith Nolan's Olympia) and the Midland club's Boomerang and M200.

The more modern sailplanes were the HP14 (Warren Mayfield) and a couple of Libelles (John Findlow and Geoff Young).

All launches were with the Midland club's Auster J5. A total of 84 launches were made during the eight-day regatta.

Perhaps the most satisfied pilot was Paul Johnson, who achieved all three legs of his Silver C in the Olympia. He added to his experience by making several outlandings, as well.

Among the longer distance flights were 299 km by Keith Nolan in his Ka6, 275 km by Tom Hinton in the Super Goose, 173 km by Chris Brenton in the Super Arrow and 36 km by Jenne Goldsmith in the Hutter.

Most of the pilots enjoyed shorter distance flights up to 60 km or so. Conditions were sometimes not as good as they promised to be and several of the pilots set off on long flights only to return because conditions had been weak.

The Goldsmiths' Ka6 suffered some variometer trouble early in the week but this was overcome later with help from Tom Hinton.

Dave Goldsmith, unfortunately, was grounded with a virus infection but he worked hard on the ground.

Heights of 7000-8000 ft were achieved on several days and one day brought heights of 10,000 ft for some pilots.

Altogether, it was a very pleasant regatta and was enjoyed by all participants.

Everyone regretted that two of the usuals, Bob McDicken and Ralph Crompton were not able to attend.

Following the information given by Ray Ash on the present location of the Schneider Gnome (see "Vintage Times", September 1985) I have talked with a couple of our members at the Balaklava Gliding Club.

As it happens, our current president, Bevan Spencer, started flying with the Port Pirie Gliding Club in the late 1950s. He flew the Gnome there.

He said it was during its time at Pirie that the Gnome was changed from a pod and boom fuselage to a steel tube and fabric fuselage because every heavy landing bent the boom.

Bevan says he was thrown into the Gnome much earlier than he should have been and did some damage to the aircraft during a landing (or a series of landings - each one worse than the last).

After that, he dropped out of gliding until he joined the Balaklava club in the late 70s and now is not only president but an instructor as well.

Some time after Bevan had left the Pirie club, the Gnome came into the possession of another pilot who is now a member of the Balaklava club, Bruno Krapez. In fact, Bruno also owned my Grunau Baby prior to 1970.

Bruno has a very fuzzy memory of times and dates of flying these aircraft, it seems, as he was not, I think, connected with the GFA system in those days.

The Gnome's boom section of the original fuselage now resides in a junkheap with other bits of cars, trucks and aircraft behind his hangar at our Whitwarta airfield.

Bruno says the wing of the Gnome was strong enough to withstand a tank driving over it.

In the mid-1970s, another of our members bought the Gnome from Bruno. He was Kym Koch.

During his period of ownership the Gnome was, I think, always aerotowed, but I don't recall it doing any great soaring flights.

I never had the opportunity to fly it but I believe it was fairly twitchy on the controls -- probably not unlike the Kingfisher.

I can recall that the Gnome occasionally beat the tug back to the ground.

Kym must have telescopic collar bones and spine because he is larger than me, yet the cockpit was snug around me.

While he was still living locally (he was a farmer), the Gnome departed for Alice Springs and, eventually, to its demise.

The details of its flying at the Alice, I'll have to leave to someone else.

- - - - -

Editor's note: If anyone is able to provide more information about the Gnome, we would like to have it.

ANOTHER GRUNAU 4 JOINS VGA RANKS

A third Grunau 4 is now in the ranks of the Vintage Gliding Association.

Only four Grunau 4s were ever built, three by Edmund Schneider Limited and one as a homebuilt project by Josef Brabec of Adelaide.

Two of the Schneider-built machines have been active in the VGA for some years. One is owned by Ray Ash, the other by Bob McDicken, both of Sydney.

The latest recruit is owned by Wally Wolf of Wangaratta and Geoff Gifford of Albury. It is VH-GHK, the one built by Josef Brabec, which made its first flight on 26 April 1958. Previous owners have been the Adelaide Soaring Club, Dubbo Gliding Club, Albury/Corowa Gliding Club and Ray Jamieson of Tocumwal.

In joining the VGA, Wally says, "I had my introduction to gliding in Germany. After a long gap I came back to it in 1975, joining the Corowa club. It was here that I first flew this Grunau 4, completing my first 50 km flight in it, with a flight from Corowa to Benalla in 3½ hours.

"I hold a Gold C, having flown 300 km in a Boomerang. I haven't done much cross country flying and would like to try 300 km in the Grunau.

"According to its log book, the Grunau has already made several attempts on 300 km, the best being about 250 km by

Ken Jamieson, son of the previous owner."

Wally says the Grunau's log book showed a total of 1450 hours flying from 4500 flights at the time of purchase. It is in fairly good condition, though some minor work needs to be done on it.

As this is not urgent it will most likely be done at the next 10-yearly inspection in 1988.

TOO MANY PROJECTS - TOO LITTLE TIME

Trying to tackle too many projects at the same time can result in none of them making much progress.

The truth of this has led Gunter Bartasek of Penrith, NSW, to dispose of several of the restoration tasks he has undertaken.

Gunter writes: "I have not had much time during the past year to work on my Hutter H17 or to be involved in any other vintage glider activities.

"For this reason, I gave my partly-built Briegleb BG12 to Peter King of Gosford. He will finish the construction.

"The Cherokee 2 VH-GLU was sold to Jim Collett and partners of Goulburn.

"I now look forward to concentrating on finishing the Hutter.

"I also own a share in a Cirrus, based at Bathurst, and this will satisfy my flying needs for the present."

RESTORED ES49 WILL BE
BASED AT BATHURST, NSW

The ES49 previously owned by the Bunn brothers of Albury will soon be flying again at the hands of its new owner, Maurie Hargans of Bathurst, NSW.

Built by members of the Adelaide Soaring Club and first flown in 1958, the ES49, VH-GLL, will be based at the Bathurst Soaring Club's site at Piper Field.

Since buying the sailplane last June, Maurie has carried out a 20-year inspection on it with the aid of RTO Gunter Bartasek and GFA CTO/A Mike Burns.

During the inspection, the fabric was replaced with a covering of Stitts and a new canopy has replaced the original, which was made from a cut-down Mustang canopy.

REBUILD OF ES49 ALMOST
COMPLETED IN ADELAIDE

Kevin Sedgman of Adelaide reports good progress on the rebuilding of the ES49 that he bought from the Scout Flying Club after it had been damaged in an outlanding several years ago.

He says he expects it to fly again about the time this issue of "Vintage Times" is produced.

Kevin and his wife Helen spent five months overseas in 1985, during which they vis-

ited the International Vintage Glider Rally in Switzerland. Among the old sailplanes there was the only ES49 flying in Europe.

Since his return to Australia, Kevin has been invited to join the team building the replica "Southern Cross" aircraft. This part-time work is occupying him for three days each week.

NEXT INTERNATIONAL RALLY
TO BE AT LASHAM, ENGLAND

The 14th International Vintage Glider Rally will be held from 2 to 9 August this year.

The venue will be Lasham aerodrome, Surrey, the home of the Surrey Gliding Club.

It will be preceded by a Rendez Vous Rally at Dunstable from 26 July to 2 August to allow all the visiting vintage sailplanes to gather before the international event begins.

Any VGA members planning on attending the international rally should contact the Rally Secretary, Vintage Glider Club, Lasham Aerodrome, Alton, Hants, GU34 JSS, England.

The 13th International Vintage Glider Rally at Amlikon in Switzerland attracted 45 vintage sailplanes from seven nations. More than 500 hours were flown during the rally.

In addition to the vintage sailplanes there were several vintage aeroplanes, including a Junkers JU52 which provided passenger flights.

In the December 1985 issue of "Vintage Times", the editor mentioned that he was short of material to fill the newsletter. Since then, a number of members have contributed stories of past activities of historical interest. We are now in the embarrassing position of having too much material. However, all of this material will be used during the next few months and we will be looking for more, so if members have any other such stories of past events, please send them in. All of it is most welcome and will certainly be used eventually.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM HISTORY

THE IMPORTANCE OF CENTRE OF GRAVITY (Submitted by Eric Ehrenberg)

In 1937 the Gliding Club of Victoria, with arrangements well under way to import a new Grunau Baby 2 sailplane, conducted a membership drive and as part of their PR planning invited members of the Model Aero Club of Victoria to come to Beveridge to witness the first flights of the club's newly purchased primary glider.

The demonstration was well attended by aeromodellers and their parents, the former enthusiastically looking forward to the display, the parents having misgivings about the open-air construction of the Zogling.

Purchased from Rice-Oxley, a physically heavyweight type, it was to be flown by the president of the club, Eric McGeehan, a stripling by comparison.

It was a car-tow launch to about 500 feet. The tow line was dropped and the Zogling immediately stalled and spun into the ground.

Eric McGeehan's main injury was to his pride. The primary was wrecked.

To put it mildly, the parents were not impressed. But the aeromodellers were undismayed, immediately recognising the reason for the crash as a centre of gravity problem, due to the vast difference in the weight of the two pilots.

It is of interest to note that those members of the Model Aero Club who joined the GCV developed into perhaps the most successful group of pre-war trainees.

Present-day clubs with diminishing membership could possibly find it profitable to put in a bit of PR work with a local model aero club.

GOAL FLIGHT TO GAWLER IN THE PELICAN (Contributed by Jock Barratt)

I had been invited to present the prizes at the South Australian State Contest at Gawler. I think the year was 1956.

My task was to be at Gawler

by 3.30 pm in time for the presentations at 4 pm, so I decided to fly down from Waikerie in the club's Pelican, with my daughter, Elspeth, as my passenger.

Les Brown winched us into a good thermal at about 12.30 pm and this took us to 4000 ft.

There was a light breeze from the south-east and our course would be south-west so we would not have much help from the wind.

We set course for Blancheown using one weak thermal about halfway there in which we spent a fair time trying to get back to 4000 ft. We could only make 3000 ft so decided to push on.

We found no further lift as we approached Blanchetown and about six miles past the town I selected the last landable area before the scrub and prepared to land.

As we turned over the scrub at 900 ft to make an approach we entered "no sink" so I gingerly turned in it and got "no sink" all the way around.

After a few more turns, it increased to 50 feet a minute up. My variometer was an aircraft 2000 ft/min rate of climb indicator which I used on most of my cross countries in the Pelican.

Slowly the altimeter began moving upwards. At 2000 ft the climb had increased to 300 ft a minute and at 4000 it we were climbing at 500 ft/min.

This thermal took us to more than 8000 ft and how dif-

ferent that scrub looked from that height. We set course for Gawler, trimmed to 90 mph and ate some lunch.

We worked two more thermals to about 8000 ft and rocketed in over Gawler at 5000 ft and bumped along in "no sink" along the roll of the sea breeze.

As it was only 2.45 pm, we flew along this line of no sink to have a look at Adelaide from the air. We arrived back at Gawler at about 3.15 pm so pulled out the brakes and landed, to everyone's surprise, including ours, at exactly 3.30 pm.

That was a very satisfying flight -- to do what one set out to do and to do it on time.

PRELGAUSKAS THEORY IS PROVED CORRECT by Leigh Bunting

My flying since last Spring has been minimal. We added a new member to our family -- a son after two daughters -- and I have been much occupied with the family.

I haven't flown my Grunau since last August but with the summer we have had there were not many days worth flying, anyway.

The Grunau is due for its 30-year inspection next year.

I have been proving the accuracy of the Prelgauskas theory - that flying activity is in inverse relationship to kids, mortgage and work.

GOOD AND BAD TIMES FOR BOB McDICKEN

Bob McDicken of Sydney reports a summer of mixed good and bad fortune.

It started off well, when Bob carried out a number of cross country flights in the Southern Cross club's Pilatus at Forbes.

During a week in early December, Bob made flights of 105 and 150 km as well as several worthwhile local flights.

He had planned to attend the Bridgewater regatta with his Cherokee 2 but found, just before Christmas, that somehow his trailer had suffered a bad gash along one side and the tailplane had also been damaged.

A few days later, Bob was riding his motor-cycle and hit a patch of gravel. He skidded into a safety fence and ended with a broken bone in his shoulder and a cracked rib.

This ended his plans to go to Bridgewater.

Later in the summer, after his recovery from his accident, he had a pleasant flight in the now-repaired Cherokee.

He says he is getting the feel of the sailplane now and is looking forward to more soaring flights in it.

He also took the opportunity during the summer to get checked out for a passenger-carrying rating in the club's IS30.

Bob says he hopes to get to Bridgewater at Easter.

WOODEN AIRCRAFT

For the finest in SPRUCE and PLYWOODS contact . . .



*Stocks of the Choicest timber in all species available to your order.
Propellers, etc. Precision Woodworkers. Write Direct to:-*

PERFECTUS AIRSCREW PTY. LTD.

175 MASON STREET, NEWPORT, 3015, VICTORIA

*Telephone: 391-2076
Telegraphic PERSCREWS*

Fully Approved by
Department of Transport