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Newsletter of the Vintage Glider Association of Australia  
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## BRIDGEWATER REGATTA HAILED AS THE BEST YET. DIAMOND, GOLD AND SILVER LEGS FLOWN.

By David Goldsmith

The annual regatta of the VGA at Bridgewater, Victoria, was held from 29 December to 4 January.

Monday 29th was fine and warm as visitors, some of whom had arrived the previous evening, and members of the Midlands Soaring Club renewed friendships and rigged their sailplanes.

A relaxed atmosphere was evident right from the start, as all present were old friends with a common interest in vintage gliders and having a good time.

Most camped on the airfield and after some reluctance at first, the "bush shower" was enjoyed by many. With heated water, of course.

Chris Brenton was first to be launched in his Super Arrow behind Midland's Auster. He was followed by Bob McDicken, who brought his Cherokee 2 to its first regatta, Ralph Crompton in his Skylark 4, Lynton Parry in a Libelle and then Jenne Goldsmith in her family's Ka6.

The soaring was fine as the pilots refamiliarised themselves with the area and the Midlands M200 two-seater took

three visitors for introductory flights.

Best flight of the day was by Ralph (Feathers) Crompton - naturally - with 5 hr 9 min, which included a 102 km cross country. Nine launches for the day netted 22 hr 6 min flying.

The evening meal set a high standard in informal dining and delectable nutrition (who's writing this? But it was very nice) that was maintained throughout the camp, thanks to the efforts of Nancie Duncan, Jenne Goldsmith, Dawn Miller and Lynne Johnson and their (conscripted) helpers.

Ted de Kuyper, who enthusiastically operated the base radio throughout the regatta, provided evening entertainment with his piano accordion.

Tuesday 30th was partly clouded with a trough moving into the area, however, some good flights were made to a maximum of 6100 feet.

Geoff Gifford arrived with his Grunau 4 and had three flights. Dave Goldsmith got the Feathers Award for the longest flight, 4 hr 42 min in the Ka6, including some formation flying with Feathers in  
(continued next page)

## BEST YET REGATTA

(continued from page 1)

the Skylark 4 and Peter Brenton in the Super Arrow, for some aerial photography.

Paul Johnson had 2 hr 31 min in Keith Nolan's Ka6. This aircraft looks so much like the Olympia "Yellow Witch" and is painted in similar colours, that when everyone made the mistake of calling it an Olympia, Keith explained that it was really "Fine Cotton" - a ring-in - a name apparently bestowed by Jack Barraclough at Mildura.

The M200 again flew three visitors. Totals for the day were 20 hr 48 min from 14 flights.

Wednesday 31st, the weather was a bit dismal, initially rain and then windy, so people had a relaxing day with some minor maintenance being done and, of course, many lies were told in the Midlands clubhouse.

We adjourned to the Royal Hotel at Inglewood for dinner and then returned to the clubhouse to ring in the new year.

New Year's Day dawned very promising and, despite a rather lethargic start by the previous evening's revellers, enthusiastic pilots discussed tasks, smoked barographs and made photo declarations.

Great heights were not achieved until late in the day but plentiful thermals and almost calm conditions maintained everyone's enthusiasm.

Peter Brenton, Feathers and Keith Nolan set out together on a 300 km triangle, via Teddywaddy and Stanhope. Peter and Feathers succeeded while Keith returned before completing the second leg.

Peter delightedly stood the bar that night, having completed his Gold C distance and Diamond goal.

Leigh Bunting converted to the Goldsmith's Hutter H17, Chris Brenton to Bob McDicken's Cherokee, while Geoff Young had a good flight of 3 hr 56 min in his Libelle.

Alan and Ian Patching arrived with the Golden Eagle (it turns 50 in September) and Tom Hinton brought his Super Goose. All three had good soaring flights. Total flying time for the day was 43 hr 28 min from 17 launches.

The previous day's successes inspired further ambitions on Friday 2nd, with Dave Goldsmith declaring a 500 km out and return, Chris Brenton a 300 km out and return and numerous other certificate flight attempts.

The day was hot with thermals starting before 11 am (summer time). It soon became evident that it was an exceptional day with jubilant reports of high altitudes and strong lift coming in over the radio, although a 40 km/hour north-west wind prevented the longer distance flights.

Theo Van Alkamade arrived with his Boomerang and had a flight of 1 hr 47 min. The run

for barographs was on and the final tally was six Gold C heights, of up to 12,000 feet, by Chris Brenton, Paul Johnson, Lynton Perry, Geoff Young, Peter Brenton (Gold C complete in wood!) and Ian Patching, with Lynton getting his Silver distance with an out-and-re-turn to Charleton as well.

Dave Goldsmith flew 260 km out and return, while Bob McDicken landed for a beer with a friendly farmer at Donald, 88 km, and Tom Hinton took the Midland club's "we don't want it" trophy to the Euroa club, 142 km.

A strong south-west change with dusty conditions blew in at 6 pm, causing some consternation for the safety of pilots and aircraft still on height attempts. Theo's Boomerang took quite a buffetting during his landing at the height of the change.

However, soon all were safely down and the aircraft secured. The wind and heavy rain that followed caused an early end to the most memorable regatta the VGA has held.

Flying time for the day was 32 hours 57 minutes from 17 flights. Welcome visitors on the day were Leo Dowling and Dick Duckworth.

On Saturday, after all the derigging was completed, the annual meeting of the VGA was held, then most departed after agreeing that the warmth and friendliness of everyone, combined with some excellent weather conditions, had made

it a heck of a good time all round.

Thanks were expressed to the Midlands Soaring Club and to Mary and Colin Hokin, the owners of the airfield.

Many others put in considerable time, effort and expense to support the regatta as well as participate, especially Ian and Nancie Duncan, as well as Midlands club's tug pilots Rick Miller, Lynton Perry, Colin Hokin and Jenne and Dave Goldsmith.

The regatta had produced a total of 119 hours 19 minutes of flying from 57 launches and resulted in 6 Gold heights, 1 Silver distance and 1 Gold distance with Diamond goal.

Another regatta is planned tentatively to be held at Bridgewater over Easter 1988.

P.S. A lone Hutter H17 was seen soaring over Bridgewater for 38 minutes on Sunday, with not even an eagle present to share the sky.

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## MANY ACTIVITIES PLANNED AT ANNUAL MEETING

At the annual meeting of the Vintage Glider Association at Bridgewater, there was some enthusiastic discussion of future events.

David Goldsmith reported that there would possibly be eight vintage sailplanes in a vintage fly-past that would mark the official opening of the 20th World Gliding Championships at Benalla on Saturday 17 January.

A vintage glider segment at Benalla is to include photographs taken at the 1st World Gliding Championships in Germany in 1937. There would also be photographs of gliding in Australia during the 1940s and 1950s.

Plans were made to hold a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the first flight of the Golden Eagle. This is to be held during September and all vintage glider enthusiasts are to be invited. Details are to be announced later in the year.

Bob McDicken is to attempt to stir up enough interest in NSW to have a regatta in that State.

Peter Brenton is to contact the Barossa Valley Gliding Club in South Australia about the possibility of holding a vintage regatta at Stonefield in January 1988.

An Easter regatta was proposed for Bridgewater next year.

The annual meeting returned Alan Patching as president of the VGA and Allan Ash as secretary/treasurer. The meeting also elected Dave Goldsmith as assistant secretary. The annual subscription is to remain at \$5 a year.

The meeting unanimously agreed that an approach be made to the GFA to have the annual airworthiness administration fee reduced by 50% for vintage sailplanes (over 20 years old) that fly a maximum of 30 hours a year.

The Schneider Trophy for the best maintained vintage sailplane was awarded to David and Jenne Goldsmith for their Ka6, VH-GNB.

It was agreed that the trophy should have a small plate attached, engraved with the name of the winner.

After the annual meeting, Keith Nolan showed films, featuring his Ka6 and some hang gliding.

McDICKEN TO SELL  
HIS GRUNAU 4

Bob McDicken of Sydney says he will sell his Grunau 4, VH-GLX, in the near future as he has bought Ralph Crompton's damaged Ka6, VH-GNN, and will concentrate on getting it airworthy again.

Bob bought his Grunau from the RAAF in unairworthy condition in 1979 but in recent years has done lots of soaring in it.

SOMETHING LOST, SOMETHING GAINED --  
A FLIGHT OF MIXED FORTUNES

by Bob McDicken

On the Friday of the regatta at Bridgewater, 2 January, I nominated Sea Lake out-and-return for an attempt at 300 km in my Cherokee 2.

After a scratchy start, at 800 feet in the circuit area of the airfield at one stage, I finally got away and had got to 11,000 feet over Wedderburn.

But my ground speed into the wind was only about 30 knots so I wasn't getting very far.

From Wedderburn, I could see a large lake off to the left and, assuming I was off track, I headed for it.

I arrived over the town to the south of the lake at 4 pm, having taken off at 1.30 pm, and identified the town as Donald.

With the cold front getting very close and the wind speed increasing, I knew I wouldn't get back to Derby, so decided to backtrack as far as I could to shorten the retrieve.

I left Donald at 4000 feet and reached Cope Cope, 10 km away, at 2000 feet so I decided to land there.

I chose a likely-looking farmhouse with a large paddock beside it and approached the field at 60 knots, which I thought would be just above the wind speed, but when I flared out, the Cherokee just stopped flying and settled gently with the wings level. At ground level the wind was

about 10 knots stronger than it was higher up. The time was 4.35 pm.

Ralph Crompton and Geoff Gifford arrived about 7 pm with the trailer as I was enjoying dinner and a beer with the farmer and his family.

The flight didn't produce the Gold distance and diamond goal I had hoped for, but it did win me a Gold height leg.

LO150 HAS HAD A LOT  
OF CONTEST FLYING

The Voigt LO150B recently bought by Warren Mayfield of Maryborough, Victoria, from Noel Lovett of Arrarat, is no stranger to soaring contests.

The sailplane, VH-GUC, was built in West Germany in 1970 and has now logged 308 hours from 264 launches.

It was flown in the Australian Nationals in 1972-73 and covered 1366 km in contest flights. It has since then been a regular competitor at the Horsham comps.

Warren still owns the HP14T which he has been flying for several years. He says he is sorry he wasn't able to get to the recent regatta at Bridgewater. He spent the Christmas and New Year period in Brisbane.

"But I'd be interested in attending a rally at Easter if one is held," he said.

## PROBLEMS SLOW WORK ON KESTREL RESTORATION

Tom Thompson of Geelong reports that work is continuing slowly on his restoration of Percy Pratt's Dunstable Kestrel to exhibition status.

"I have had to move it several times," he says. "It is a problem finding storage and workshop space."

Tom sees the restoration and flying of vintage gliders as an answer for people who can't afford to own modern sailplanes.

He says, "Like everything else, gliding is going through changes but the cost of buying and maintaining a modern sailplane is getting too high for the average club member who is paying off a mortgage and putting his kids through school.

"Clubs should have more gliders of medium performance for people who find it a financial battle just to do enough hours to keep current."

## YOUNGER MEMBERS JOIN PELICAN SYNDICATE

From Waikerie, veteran of more than 50 years of gliding, Jock Barratt, has invited four younger pilots to join him in flying his 30-year-old Pelican two-seater.

The new pilots are Malcolm Jinks, Robert McKenny, Lloyd Barrett and Mike Hooking.

Jock says that 1986 was the worst year for launches since

he took over ownership of the Pelican from the Waikerie Club. During the year it logged only 45 launches for 42 hours of flying.

Jock says "I am hoping the new syndicate members will get the trailer in good order so that cross countries can be done. I'm getting too old to do landings a long way from home."

## VINTAGE U.S. SAILPLANE STILL FLYING REGULARLY

One of the few US-designed sailplanes in Australia is the Schweizer 2-22, VH-GNT, owned by Harry Walton of the Canberra Gliding Club.

This basic training two-seater was imported to Australia in kit form and assembled by members of the RAAF Richmond Gliding Club in NSW in 1963.

It is a tandem two-seater with a strut-braced wood/metal wing and a steel tube and fabric fuselage and tail. The design dates back to 1947. In the United States, the 2-22 is still the basic trainer in a lot of clubs and gliding schools, though later models of the design are more common.

Harry Walton reports that GNT has logged a total of about 10,000 launches for about 2000 flying hours.

It still gets flown a lot at the Canberra club's site at Bunyan, near Cooma.

## VINTAGE INVOLVEMENT IN WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Vintage sailplanes competed successfully with some of the world's most modern sailplanes at the world gliding championships at Benalla in January -- competed for attention, that is.

Immediately after the official opening ceremony ended, there was a fly-past of seven vintage sailplanes towed aloft by borrowed Tiger Moths and Austers.

The sailplanes were the Golden Eagle (flown by Ian Patching), Hutter H17 (David Goldsmith), Grunau Baby 3A (Neil Jurgens), Grunau 4 (Geoff Gifford), Super Goose (Tom Hinton), Ka6 (Keith Nolan) and Super Arrow (Doug Robinson)

The commentary was given by Allan Ash and Dave Prosser.

After the fly-past, the seven vintage sailplanes were put on static display and got a lot of attention from the crowd.

Jenne Goldsmith arranged a display of photographs taken at the 1st world championships in Germany in 1937. The photos had been printed by Kim James from negatives supplied by Chris Wills of the Vintage Glider Club of Great Britain. Alan Patching arranged for the loan of the negatives.

Another display of historic photos was displayed near the parked vintage gliders.

Kookaburra Publications had good sales of Martin Simons' book on vintage sailplanes from their stand in the shopping mall.

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## ES49 GOES TO NEW CLUB IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Kevin Sedgman reports that he has completed the repairs to the ES49 two-seater that he bought from the Scout Gliding Club after it had outlanded in scrub.

The ES49, VH-GFO, has been bought by the newly-formed Lake Bonny Gliding Club at Barmara, SA.

Kevin comments, "The fact that this club is only 17 miles from Waikerie and about 20 miles from Renmark shows that there is a need for low-cost gliders and cheap flying.

This is something that many clubs are ignoring and something I found had been learned in Britain and Europe.

I have sold the ES49 on the understanding that I may take it to an occasional vintage glider rally. In fact, it is likely that the whole club will take it along with me.

Most of my flying lately has been in the Motor Falke, plus the test flights in the ES49. I will be flying the Motor Falke to Benalla to the opening of the World Gliding Championships in January.

Since I returned from my holiday in Britain and Europe at the end of 1985, I have been almost fully occupied as an engineer on the Southern Cross replica project.

Test flights are expected to be made during February and my work on it will then be finished. It has been a

fascinating project and I am really enjoying my involvement in it.

I received a nice card from the Dutch and German pilots who attended the International Vintage Glider Rally at Lasham in England last August. I very much appreciated their greetings to me and Helen."

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