

Vintage Times

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Articles for Vintage Times are welcomed



PHOTO MORGAN SANDERCOCK

Hunter Valley Gliding Club Easter Vintage and 13.5 metre Rally

Put this one in your diary for next year folks! It will be on again, and it is too good to be missed!

The Hunter Valley Gliding Club, based at Warkworth, Singleton, about 80 km north-west of Newcastle, sure is a club with style! Firstly by buying their own airfield, once the home of Liberator Bombers, now an all weather gliding field of generous proportions. Secondly by erecting one of Australia's largest purpose built glider hangars, plus many subsidiary hangars and an excellent workshop. Thirdly by adding an appropriate fleet of club and private gliders and a Pawnee towplane. And finally, by joining the expanding interest in gliding for pure fun by mixing in a Vintage and 13.5 metre Rally over the Easter holiday.

Vintage activity has increased in recent years in Queensland, Victoria and South Australia, but NSW has been a bit slow to join the party. A Vintage rally was held at Bathurst Club's Piper Airfield in 1983, another rally was held over ten years ago at Lake Keepit. Two Kookaburra Konventions were held at Lockhart, home of the Wagga Wagga Gliding Club, some years ago. However in recent times a number of dedicated Vintage Gliders Australia members from NSW have been making the long trips interstate to feed their passion and enjoy the pleasures of wood and fabric gliding.

For Jenne and I, the real fun started at Central Coast Gliding Club, about half way between Sydney and Newcastle, on Easter Thursday. We called in on their Mangrove Mountain site to assist John McCorquodale and Rob Moffat de-rig the pristine K7 VH-GPG to take to Warkworth. Hold the bus – the cu's are popping! Out with the winch, the K7 and some club gliders, and soon the day is in full swing. Flying at Mangrove Mountain for the first time is breathtaking stuff. If the undulating airstrip bent like a banana is not enough, the high trees and shortage of safe landing areas outside the airfield boundary gets your undivided attention!



Photo Morgan Sandercock
Peter Rundle flies his SF-27M

After waving Peter Rundle off in his vintage Scheibe SF-27M (VH-ZOT!) bound for Warkworth, we each were treated to soaring flights where the coastal views all the way south to Sydney and north to Newcastle were stunning. Next, time to put the gliders in the trailers. The K7, PW-5 and Arie Van Spronssen's DG-202 were derigged in short order, and the interesting drive via the historic Great Northern Road undertaken. This route, while sometimes winding enough to destroy all sense of direction, provides a great country experience and more than a little evidence of the achievements of the convict road gangs of two centuries ago. We hoped Peter would not need to outland....

Actually, Peter had the engine on for only about 15 minutes out of Mangrove Mountain (cloudbase about 5000') before tucking it away

and having a good run under cumulus to Warkworth. He found conditions stronger in the Hunter Valley with 5-6 knot climbs and cloudbase rising to about 8,500', and decided to continue his tour north as far as Denman and Muswellbrook before turning and coming back to land at Warkworth. A three and a half hour flight and a good start for the Rally to follow

Our convoy's late afternoon arrival at Warkworth was met by a cheerful David Pickles, who assisted us find camping and trailer areas and settle in. After a nice dinner at the Jerry's Plains Pub with some clubmembers, we were introduced to the Hunter Valley tradition, believed done on the site since pre-historic times, of important and serious discussion around a campfire. By the end of the rally we were all quite good at it.

Eric Sherwin was having a rather difficult time in his efforts to get to Warkworth. Driving the long distance from Adelaide with his Ka6E GGV in tow, his tow vehicle and home on wheels decided that it had done enough on reaching Parkes and threw in the towel. The NRMA man said that it would take about a fortnight to get a replacement for the terminally "cooked" engine.



Cherokee II, SF-27M, K7 and Ka6E line-up

The Rally began with briefing at 9.30am on Good Friday. Today's weatherman, David Pickles, predicted a cloudbase of 6000' and a westerly wind. Peter Rundle ZOTted off under his own power in a light westerly breeze while the Ka6E, GEA, and the K7 were rigged. The light breeze unfortunately gradually increased, with occasional gusts getting up to 30 knots. Ken Caldwell arrived with his son Ian and the Cherokee II VH-GLU. We elected not to fly and instead helped Ken and Ian rig the Cherokee safely out of the wind in the spacious main club hangar. Visiting vintage gliders were easily accommodated in the club hangars for \$5 per night, helping our peace of mind considerably.

The SF27M remained the only vintage glider to fly for the day with Peter venturing not quite as far as Jerry's Plains. He found the lift broken, narrow,

rough and difficult to centre, though he saw 8 knots at times on his wild rides to a maximum of about 6,000'. A number of good flights were made in club and private gliders in the difficult conditions.



Grunau model

About 25 people enjoyed the clubhouse BBQ on Good Friday evening. Accompanying entertainment from electric and handlaunched model gliders was provided as we watched over a gentle sunset and limp windsock from the front verandah. The very sociable party continued around the roaring campfire until late in the evening.

Checking on Eric's progress, we found that he had spent the night in a motel in Parkes before getting on a bus back to Adelaide with the intention of driving back again with the family car to collect the trailer. Attendance was still a possibility!



A proud John with the K7

Ray Ash (now of Cudgegong Soaring Club at Gulgong) appeared for a cup of tea before briefing on Saturday and was to enjoy some good flying later in the day in the K7 in which he once owned a share, GPG. As usual, Ray has some great stories to tell after an active gliding life going back to building and learning to fly primary gliders at Fleurs, western Sydney, in the 1940s.



Rob takes Carol for her first flight!

The Saturday weather briefing again presented by David Pickles offered us a promising day. Cu with cloudbase about 5,000', low level easterly wind of less than 10 knots, and a higher level westerly wind to hopefully keep the sea breeze at bay. For anyone interested, a triangular task of about 75km was suggested – Jerry's Plains Airfield, Singleton, Broke and back to Warkworth – go around as many times as you like. Easter eggs were handed out at daily briefing for noteworthy flights (and fumbles) on the previous day. Club CFI Nick Wills put on a spectacular aerobatics display (Nick has a low level aerobatics endorsement) in his syndicate RV4 MKW as gliders were readied for the day.



Ken and his Cherokee II

A great day's flying followed. Peter Rundle in the SF27M ZOT abandoned the set task in favour of exploring further west and went out to Sandy Hollow and back, covering 160km. Jenne Goldsmith took Ka6E GEA around the local triangle for a total of 112km, very much enjoying reacquainting herself with this area where she learnt to fly many years ago. The mines have changed the valley immensely, but the Wollombi Brook, the Hunter River, towns and villages are still where you expect to find them and though they may be scars on the landscape, the mines have their own fascination, and seem to

produce some jolly good thermals! Ken Caldwell used the day for area and annual checks and was also kept on his toes by a large mob of kangaroos that decided to cross the strip as he was launching, causing the tug pilot to abandon the launch after full power had been applied. The K7 GPG had a very busy day with John McCorquodale, Rob Moffat, Ray Ash, Dave Goldsmith and others enjoying good lift under the cu.

On Easter Sunday (24th of April) the forecast was again favourable with a 6,000' cloudbase possible under scattered cu with light and variable wind. This proved to be a little optimistic. Ken Caldwell took off early in the day in his Cherokee GLU for a 44min flight during which he was not able to climb above 2800'. Cloudbase rose as the day warmed and after lunch Ken was up for over an hour up to 4,000'. Dave Goldsmith in the Ka6E GEA flew 85km finding good lift along the ranges from Bulga to Jerry's Plains to a maximum of 4,100'. Ryan Lawler from Central Coast Gliding Club qualified for aerotow and had his first flight in the PW-5.



Ryan is delighted after his PW-5 flight

Monday 25th of April dawned with the same low 8/8 stratocumulus that we had experienced on previous mornings but today it broke up about an hour earlier. The wind was forecast to be a little stronger at about 15 knots from the S.E., with a 5,000' cloudbase over the ranges. It proved not to be that good. Cloudbase remained low, about 2,500' (QNH) at best, lift was there but mostly weak. Those who launched early had the best run as the day finished early when the south easterly wind strengthened, bringing with it cooler air and showers over the hills which later extended over the valley. Ken was up for 24 mins in the Cherokee, the Ka6E GEA was up for an hour and the K7 GPG had a couple of scratching flights before the decision was made to derig before the weather worsened. Two pilots of fantastic plastic gliders landed out, Mick Webster at Rosemount and Arie Van Spronsen

at Jerry's Plains airfield, both managing to do a good distance on a pretty weak day.



Ilan shows Jenne his Jaskolka progress

Australia's only Jaskolka is being restored by Ian Bogaard, and the wings and fuselage were on display in the workshop. He is doing a meticulous job on this lovely sailplane, and although there is a long way to go, we look forward to its completion with much anticipation.



James Moffat receives his "Best Bribe" certificate

With gliders retrieved and derigged (and rain setting in) we headed into Singleton for the breakup dinner at the Pearl Light Palace Chinese restaurant. Certificates and nicely presented group photographs were handed out by Hunter Valley Gliding Club President Morgan Sandercock. All round a pleasant end to a very satisfying rally, with the locals already working on their ideas for next Easter. A big thankyou goes to the Hunter Valley Gliding Club from those able to visit the rally.

Plans for post rally flying at Mangrove Mountain had to be changed due to forecast heavy coastal rain. A move inland to Cudgegong Gliding Club at Gulgong

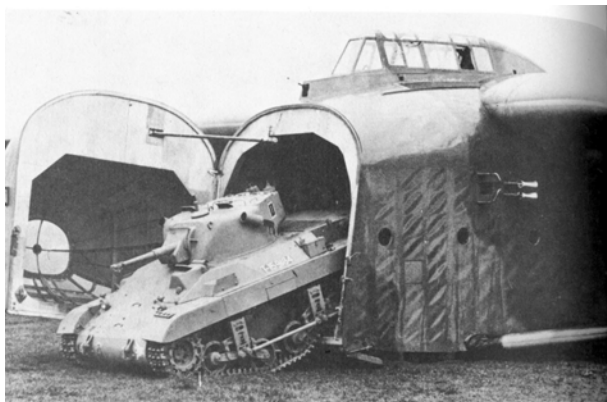
was arranged with the assistance of Ray Ash. After his return to Adelaide, Erik ran out of time to get to the Warkworth Rally, but he did get some great flying at Gulgong, along with Ray, John and Rob with the K7 and Dave and Jenne with the Ka6E.



Wedgetail Eagle Photo Morgan Sandercock

Cuckoo's in the Nest? **Gliders join the Warbirds at Omarka, NZ.** Story and photos from Ian Dunkley

I will assume the presence of Terry Delore with his ASH wowing the crowds with his pendulum like low passes up and down the airfield/battlefield, was intended to demonstrate the potential use of gliders as stealth strafing machines. However as he did not pop the engine up to make a rapid and noisy departure from the mayhem I may have got this all wrong. Either way it was a most impressive display



Hamilcar and Tank

In the absence of Horsa, Hamilcars, Wacos and any of those other huge military gliders, that cost a lot of lives without achieving a great deal, the Weihe was the only wartime glider at the show. It was also, or so I was told, the only genuine German wartime aircraft there so I was

sorry that I did not know more of its wartime and post war history. To be honest the amount of interest shown in the Weihe was surprising, particularly in its manner of construction and the fact that it still "looked modern". This could of course be a reflection of how little even aviation enthusiasts know about gliding. Peter Layne & I estimate we must have spoken to getting on to 1000 of the 25,000 people over the three days we were there.. Much of the time answering questions such as "How far, how high, how much, and how long?" (the answer to the last question being 55 hours in the case of the Weihe. Our "Warbird" also became a "prop" for parents photographing their children in or by the cockpit, and this alone must have done some good for gliding.



Weihe at Omarka

Quite a number of ex glider pilots, and not all of them were old, stopped for a chat. Many had given up gliding when starting a family, or whose parents had flown and it occurs to me this whole group should be targeted by "Vintage Kiwi" and the lower cost advantages of vintage flying demonstrated. However what we clearly need to do is to work on establishing vintage gliding within the "aviation heritage" movement rather than concentrating on those already active in gliding. At one stage we were invaded by what appeared to be a force of the Wehrmacht apparently intent on repatriating the Weihe. However my violent protests in German to this move resulted in the discovery that they were in fact Kiwis in disguise foraging for firewood.

That the Weihe was displayed at Omarka, with a renovated fuselage but uncovered and partially renovated wings turned out to be an advantage as many wanted to examine the construction more closely behind the barrier, amongst these being a group of Air New Zealand engineering apprentices.

However showing the structure was rather nerve racking as it could easily have led to too many fingers getting inside the wings and making even more work.

With that in mind we will be working to have a presence at Wanaka with more space next year using our warbird carport plus other vintage gliders. This year we knew space in the hangar was limited and the organisers had to use CAD to ensure we would not collide with anything solid. This was achieved, after a very difficult rigging, with the help of Marlborough GC members and the surreptitious movement of competing aircraft hardware. We had only two weeks or so to prepare ourselves, and that included completing repairs needed to make the wings transportable, but next year we will have display boards that support the aircraft and provide more information for visitors on the wartime use of gliders



Camphill Prepares for War, Kirby Kite used for Radar Trials

The use of large military gliders to carry troops is of course well known to the general public but less is known about the conventional pre-war gliders that were pressed into service for training and other purposes. One such UK glider still flying is a Kirby Kite complete with impressive camouflage paint work. This was used in wartime radar trials involving, so I understand amongst other things, the pilot simulating a less than ambitious glider invasion of the UK. In the USA a whole series of "TG" series gliders were produced for initial glider pilot training, supplementing Piper Cubs etc minus their engines, and the TG series formed the backbone of US gliding into the early 60's. Today they can now be seen along side other vintage gliders at US rallies, including one built for training navy pilots, the purpose of which escapes me. Germany of course used gliders widely for general pilot training. In the early stages using the well known loophole in the Treaty of Versailles to great advantage.



" A UK Horsa Display Model

There are a number of major restoration/replica building going on to enable troop carrying gliders to be displayed, but only one that I know of has the intention of producing a Waco to fly. If this comes to fruition it would be quite a display hit, with a suitable tug, armed parachutists and soldiers to disembark with violent intent would be a show stopping spectacular.

I consider that "Vintage Kiwis presence at Omaka is a major step forward, as was the establishment of the "Vintage Kiwi Collection" at Classic Wings Museum, and the restoration work that is now going on. Vintage Kiwi now has the chance to become part of a movement wider than just Gliding New Zealand. (Not that I want to bite the hand that supported our birth and still feeds us)



**DON'T MISS THE
MELBOURNE CUP VINTAGE RALLY!
Bacchus Marsh Airfield
29th October to 1st November, 2011
Contact Dave Goldsmith 03 54283358**

Gone to Gulgong!

Story and Photos by John McCorquodale

Following the Vintage Easter Regatta at the Hunter Valley Gliding Club at Warkworth, the original intention was to return to the Central Coast Soaring Club, to do some winching there. Unfortunately this was not to be, as the weather was atrocious on the Coast, as it had rained almost non stop! That being the case we then decided to head away from the coast, and go inland.



Ka6E and K7 at Warkworth

We had contacted Ray Ash who said that we would be welcome to fly at Gulgong, so on Tuesday 26th April, Dave and Jenne drove in their lovely motorhome, towing their Ka6E, and Rob Moffat towed our K7 to the Cudgegong Soaring Club at Gulgong. We arrived and Ray had everything ready for us. Dave and Jenne just drooled at the sight of so many lovely old vintage gliders in the hangar. There is a Dickson Primary that Ray rebuilt many years ago, a Kingfisher, two K7's, a Ka6, and a K8. Ray was in the process of replacing the fabric on top of the K8 wings, and also on the wings of one K7.



Salamandra fuselage

We thought that it was adventurous enough working on those projects, but Ray is not daunted by that as he is also building a 1920's vintage Polish designed 'Salamandra' at his home in Gulgong! The fuselage is in the garage, and the port wing on his back verandah! For an 84 year old, this is an amazing workload, and while he says that "It should go up like a rocket, it most likely will not go anywhere far!!" He is looking forward to flying it.

A South Australian, Erik Sherwin, who originally was going to join us at Warkworth, due to unforeseen engine drama had to leave his vehicle at Parkes, and catch a Greyhound bus back to Adelaide. He drove up in his second car, towing his Ka6E from Parkes and finally arrived on Tuesday afternoon. That is true dedication to gliding !



The port wing is well advanced



Ray Ash with the rudder

We had some wonderful flights, with magnificent winch launches! Because of the length of the strip, our first launch in the K7 was only 2,400 feet into an Easterly wind ! Had we used all of the strip, it would most likely have been close to 3,000 feet! It would have to be the best winch launching site in Australia. I have flown there many times previously, and it really is a joy to be able to get a good height on the winch, allowing far better opportunities to find lift. We all flew in the K7 as an area check, and with some streeting cloud formations, gave us the ability to find lift. On several flights we encountered a large Wedgetail Eagle soaring with us, and in one flight Jenne and I encountered a 9 Kt core going to cloudbase. Erik flew his Ka6E, and was able to have some extended flights.

Ian Harris has the strip looking immaculate, as he was using his slasher to make a safe area for landing. With all the growth in the native grasses, it had grown so much with all the rain over previous months. The dams were all full, and the site was looking great ! Since I was last there, all the trees that Landcare had planted many years ago, were growing so well. With the lovely facilities there, made it a most enjoyable experience for us.



John, Ken, Rob and Jenne celebrate the arrival of Erik at Gulgong

We are thinking about asking if it would be possible to have a Vintage Gliding regatta there in the future, as it is an ideal site for cross country flights in the warmer months. Even in our K7, Ray and I have often had good conditions for 400 Km flights ! What a way to go !!



Blimey, Both Beverley's Blaniks! (well, Super Blaniks actually)



By Ged Terry

Many readers will know of my annual gliding pilgrimages (29 so far) to Australia, trying to escape some of the worst of the British winter weather. In the same vein I have sporadic pilgrimages (7 so far) to fly at Homestead General Airport on the edge of the Everglades in South Florida. I fly with Miami Gliders, with a great bunch of guys whose fleet comprises two L-23 Super Blaniks, a Standard Cirrus, a Pawnee tug (oops, towplane) and a Cessna 172.

I am always curious about the history of anything I fly - a bit nerdy perhaps, but sometimes the trivia can be interesting. For example, before they were exported to the USA (around 2005) Miami Gliders' Super Blaniks, N304MG and N305MG, were registered VH-ZAB and VH-ZBZ with Beverley Soaring Society in WA - AND - I flew ZBZ at Beverley in 1998 and now regularly fly it and the other ex-Beverley Super Blanik at Homestead. Small world. On revealing my fascinating fact at Homestead, the retort was "They both arrived with red dust everywhere" !

Incidentally, the L-23 Super Blanik does not (yet ?) have the airworthiness woes that have smitten the L-13 Blanik so "my" Super Blaniks are hale and hearty and are still flying happily and frequently.

Another co-incidence - at Lake Keepit, at the Vintage Regatta in 2000, I flew the Lake Keepit Soaring Club ASK 21 VH-GMN (which wasn't vintage but, having no taste, I'm happy flying anything, anywhere). I had previously flown this glider in England in 1994 when it was BGA 2805 with the London Gliding Club at Dunstable. Again, small world. Whatever will turn up next I wonder.

Dutch National Vintage Rally

Vereniging-Historische-Zweefvliegtuigen

Jenne and Dave Goldsmith in Holland



The Dutch National Rally is the equivalent of our own Vintage Gliders Australia Annual Rally, held in recent years at Bordertown. The event is amazingly good fun, and the hospitality shown was exceptional. As at Bordertown, briefings are a real social event. President of the VHZ, Jan Forster, is a fun-loving guy who delights in producing unusual props and presentations to the delight of all.



One side of the 6 drum winch

For the 2011 Rally, from 2nd to 5th June, the venue was the AC Salland airfield. This is located in a typically Dutch picturesque area near the city of Zwolle, about 2 hours north-east of Amsterdam. Owned by the gliding club, the wide field has all over grass and a thin bitumen road down the centre for the cable tow-out truck. Six cables can be towed out simultaneously with the swinging arm of the tow truck in locked out position. Winches available were one each of a 2, 4, and 6 drum, with stranded wire or synthetic rope on the drums. About 100 launches a day were carried out, and we observed only one cable break (on the wire). The large clubroom was just big enough for the many participants, but the club hangar and workshop next door catered for only a small number of the visiting gliders. Many gliders were derigged each evening, with the next day's rigging party a pleasant activity in the mild weather conditions.



Slingsby Motor Tutor

Accommodation included the usual variety, from motorhomes and caravans to camping in trailers. Jenne and I stayed in a comfortable Bed and Breakfast about 15 minutes drive from the airfield. Breakfast, lunch and dinner were catered for at the club.



Mounting the Ka4

Gliders present this year displayed a wide variety of shapes and colours, with the Ka6 and Ka6Es the most numerous. Some pilots saw the good weather forecasts and brought their "classic" Ka6 to fly crosscountry, rather than bring their "vintage" glider. From a total of 28 gliders, represented were the Mucha, SlingsbyT38 Grasshopper primary, T30 Prefect, T8 Kirby Tutor, T21b Sedbergh, T31b Tandem Tutor, T34 Sky, Motor Tutor, Kranich II, Bocian, Ka4, Ka6, Ka6E, K7, ASK13, Phoenix, Cobra 15, and Doppelraab.



Briefing before flying the Slingsby Sky



Erwin squeezes into the Prefect

The rally begins with the ceremonial displaying of the warning sign "Flying Wood!" for all to see. At the ten o'clock briefing, after the weather forecast is digested, tasks for 15 metre and open class are announced. The open class task, usually a run around local castles and landmarks, is for those sporting an open cockpit! Photo verification is used.



Slingsby T21b in the workshop

Jenne and I arrived early on 3rd June, to find the rally in full swing, and some familiar faces from previous times present. Over the Dutch tradition of plenty of coffee – and Jenne's green tea! – we renewed friendships and were introduced to anyone nearby. The acceptance and welcome for visiting glider pilots seems universal, and Eric Munk, who travelled Australia and spent two years at Tocumwal, commented to many on the wonderful welcome he had received at Australian Gliding Clubs, even stopping his interstate bus to get off when he noticed gliders launching in a nearby gliding club!

The airfield filled with colourful gliders, as the clear skies and warm weather tempted pilots to fly. With launching in full swing my camera was working overtime when I noticed Jenne climbing into the front seat of a Bocian!

That was quick! Over 2 hours cruising with Hans Dijkstra, and admiring some spectacular and historical landmarks, had her smiling from ear to ear. A delicious dinner, many stories and a few drinks rounded off a very pleasant day. Although the Dutch language was the order of the day, and Jenne was delighted with the patience she received in trying to get some practice in speaking it, most were very happy to practice English when they got the chance.



Hans Dijkstra and Jenne fly the Bocian

The next day the weather was a repeat of the previous, and we each flew the Slingsby Prefect, Jenne having half an hour. It flew very nicely, with no canopy or windscreen and only a light breeze, the whole panorama was there to be seen! I was also delighted with the opportunity to fly the historic Slingsby Sky, of 18 metre span and often mentioned in Philip Wills' books. A late thermal soon had me at 1,080 metres and admiring the beautiful countryside. Returning to assist the scheduled de-rig, another nice thermal was just too tempting to pass up!



The Prefect does a crosswind takeoff

Unfortunately the last day of the rally was cancelled as the rain came down. Packing up the remaining gliders and drinking lots more coffee and tea, we reluctantly said our goodbyes with the hope of joining in again in the not too distant future.



Slingsby T8 "The Pink Panther"



Morning briefing



Eric, Erwin, Jenne and Jan

We would like to thank all the rally participants, both for their efforts to run the rally and for always doing their utmost to make us feel at home. We especially would like to thank Hans Dijkstra, Eric Munk and Erwin Janssen for opportunities to fly their gliders, and Jan Forster and others for their friendly support.

In May, 1991, Marijke Waalkens was kind enough to take us for a flight in her unique Doppelraab. We look forward to responding with similar hospitality when she visits Bordertown 2012!

All round, a very enjoyable rally mixing with nice gliders and great people!



CHRIS WILLS

"The Vintage Glider Club has the sad duty to announce that our long-standing President, and founding member, Chris Wills, passed away on the evening of the 4th of May 2011"

FROM ALAN PATCHING.....

My memory does not recall when I first met Chris, however there had been a close relationship with the Wills family and Australian glider pilots. Philip, his father, frequently visited the Iggulden family when in Australia and after WW2 both his sons flew gliders in Australia. Chris was a member of the Waikerie Gliding Club, South Australia, and had many stories about their members and his flying, while Stephen was a member of my club, the VMFG, at Berwick, Victoria, where he joined the syndicate flying the ex Tony Goodhart LO-150.

I always stayed with Chris on my visits to England in order to enjoy flying with him and to view his great collection of photos and videos. His stories of early gliding were endless, but so interesting. I must admit that after Kitty, his mother, died I cut back on staying with Chris for two reasons, firstly Kitty had put a notice on the bedroom door 'No Dogs in this room' and secondly I found it hard having breakfast with two Greyhounds, who at every opportunity tried to share the meal. Chris was an excellent host feeding and entertaining me the whole time.

His house was of course given over to the production of VGC News with the dining room table was permanently covered in articles and photos for the next edition.

Chris shared with me the view that our gliding heritage must be preserved and available for future pilots to fly. I am sure that I speak for every Vintage pilot in Australia when I say that there will never be another Chris Wills.

Alan Patching
President
Vintage Gliders Australia



HOMEBUILT SAILPLANE CORNER

MINIMOA SYMPOSIUM AND MUSEUM OPEN DAY 3RD APRIL, 2011



Photo John McCorquodale
James Garay

JAMES GARAY, the Editor of the The Australian Homebuilt Sailplane Newsletter, produced issue number 40 in March 2006. It was the last issue due to James' family problems requiring his full attention, and the vacuum for his lively and interesting publication has been partly filled by a section of Vintage Times, the Newsletter of Vintage Gliders Australia.

Interest in Homebuilding in Australia continues, as is underlined by the spectacular project embarked upon by Fernando Salazar and Mal Bennett. James conceived the idea of a symposium, along the lines of previous events organised by the Australian Homebuilt Sailplane Group. Using his organisational skills, and enthusiasm, and his contacts, he put together a wonderful program for the Symposium at Bacchus Marsh.

The Australian Gliding Museum resolved to throw it's full resources in support of the event, offering to run a Museum Open Day and assisting with catering for the combined event, in addition to offering a flying program if the weather was suitable.

The program got off to a good start on time at ten o'clock, with Peter Champness welcoming about 75 guests to the Symposium. He

provided a rundown of the history of the Australian Homebuilt Sailplane group, since it was started by Mark Stanley and the first newsletter appeared in October 1994.



Photo John McCorquodale
Peter Champness

With Peter Raphael providing the slide show to back up the presentations, Peter Champness introduced first speaker James Garay.

James explained his associations with homebuilding over the years, and how he had built friendships with Fernando Salazar and Malcolm Bennett among others. His editing of the newsletter had been a great pleasure but relied on members contributions and these contributions started to decrease. Time became short when family health issues grew, and although he was assisted in editing the newsletter by Peter Champness he reluctantly made issue 40 his last. James gave a rundown of some of the previous symposiums, which had been a regular part of activities, and they sounded very interesting.

Peter then introduced Fernando Salazar to those assembled, including a brief rundown of Fernando's past aviation exploits. Fernando has certainly had an interesting life! His love affair with the Minimoa began in the Spanish Pyrenees at Monflorite, in 1949, where he was working at the School of Gliding. Gliding was banned in Germany after the war, so the Spanish School was very popular with Europeans wishing to glide. Fernando managed to be offered some flights in a Minimoa owned by an ex-Luftwaffe pilot, and he logged 8 hours and 32 minutes.



Photo John Ashford
Mal Bennett and Fernando Salazar

Fifty-five years later, in Australia Fernando was still dreaming of owning his own Minimoa, but he had some difficulties locating a set of plans. He also had some bulkheads made in Germany, but this was very expensive. He was very pleased to be introduced to Mal Bennett, who has since made wonderful progress with the project.

Peter then introduced Doug Lyon, who gave a talk on structures. During an informative dissertation Doug explained the problems facing designers, and the limited knowledge of design and loadings in the early 1930's. This was carried forward to include tension and compression, twisting and the intricacies of control deflection and reversal as it applies to gliders with long ailerons, such as the Minimoa. Doug even discussed why control reversal occurred when fighters were being designed that could approach the speed of sound



Photo John McCorquodale
Doug Lyon



Photo John McCorquodale
Dave Goldsmith

After a morning tea provided by Ian "Moose" Cowie and his team from the Australian Gliding Museum, Peter introduced Dave Goldsmith, President of the Australian Gliding Museum.

Dave acknowledged the great progress made in the eleven years since the Museum began, by a team dedicated to the preservation

of all old gliders and gliding history, in danger of being lost since the fibreglass revolution. With supporters such as Bruce Brockhoff, Aviaquip Pty Ltd and the Gliding Federation of Australia, and many others, with a second hangar about to be built, and with workshop volunteer teams at Ferntree Gully and Bacchus Marsh, over forty gliders have been saved and/or restored (many of them built by home builders), and much gliding history documented and preserved.



Photo John Ashford
Martin Simons in his VGC T-Shirt

Peter then introduced Martin Simons, already very well known as an author of many gliding books and an authority on gliding history. Martin explained that in 1932 Wolf Hirth commissioned Friedrich Wenk to design, and Edmund Schneider to build, the Moazagotl, a beautiful sailplane of 20 metre span. The Minimoa was developed by Schemp Hirth to offer a high performance sailplane at reasonable cost, with a span of 17 metres. The prototype first flew in 1935, and after a redesign it was put into production in 1936. Over 100 were built when production stopped in 1939. Martin told an amusing tale about a Minimoa which changed hands for a case of beer, but finished up the subject of ownership litigation where it was valued at DM100,000!

Peter now introduced the final speaker, the "Guru" himself, Malcolm Bennett. Mal immediately launched into a well-modulated dissertation on how he approached each phase of construction step by step, the problems that confronted him and how he solved them – and there were many! There was an enormous breadth of information, of interest to anyone faced with the challenge of building (or repairing) a wooden sailplane. This presentation was the highlight of the symposium, the sad possibility is that no recording or video of the whole event or Mal's part in it was successful.

As the Symposium drew to a close those attending were invited to the Museum open day for lunch and to inspect the actual Minimoa fuselage, with rudder and tailplane fitted, on display in the Gliding Museum. The level of workmanship, the attention to detail, the smoothness and accuracy of construction, the beauty of the raw wood, were all

there for everyone to see! There is no doubt that Mal is building a masterpiece!

During the afternoon passengers and spectators were treated to 6 flights in the Australian Gliding Museum's Slingsby T31b, and Jenne Goldsmith flew her Hutter 17.



Photo John Ashford

Thrill-seekers Peter Raphael and Ross Birch



Photo John McCorquodale

Forward Fuselage, controls and wing supports with the elevator pushrod



Photo John McCorquodale

Minimoa with tail feathers fitted, Skylark 4 in the foreground



Photo Cliff Pritchard

Tail group, the rudder is easily removed to allow the tailplane to be fitted or removed



Photo Cliff Pritchard

Museum Open Day

Vintage Gliders Australia Annual Rally



BORDERTOWN 2012

7th to 15th January

It's on again - all welcome!

Contact Ian Patching 03 94383510

A shortage of contributions means there is every chance we will take a rest from publishing the July edition. Until next issue, stay safe, keep warm, and send in an article!

Dave and Jenne

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