

# Cabletalk

November 2008

Christmas is Coming



Welcome to this new electronic edition of our club newsletter, we hope you enjoy it and, maybe, feel that you could write an article for the next edition.

Our annual Christmas dinner will be held this year on Saturday 13th December.

By popular request the venue will be the same as last year at the Woodcote Park Golf Club, Coulsdon. For those of you that rely on a gps to find your way there the postcode is CR5 2QQ. Drinks will be from 7pm with dinner at 7:30pm which will comprise of a three course meal with mince pies and coffee for just £22.50 per person. The dress code is smart casual i.e. no jeans, T-shirts or trainers. Please contact the office as soon as pos-

sible for your tickets so that we can confirm the numbers to cater for .

During November we will continue to operate 5 days a week if the weather is satisfactory, although the first week, apart from Friday, has been a succession of low cloud and damp conditions.

The weather can sometimes be quite good at this time of the year. Thermals require a temperature difference and unstable conditions to thrive. On 22nd and 23rd of October several flights were made along a well defined cloud street towards Epsom Downs. Although we can never make up for such a disappointing summer it does bring a smile to your face when the weather conditions are good.



## New winch on its way

Our existing winch continues to do sterling service since it was found at the Cotswold Gliding Club during a club flying week there. After much fettling it produces very reasonable launches but struggles on calm days or when we operate with a cross wind. It is also a bit rough on cables because it has fairly small cable drums.

We are having a new winch built by Skylaunch which promises to give us excellent launches with better cable management. We have started paying towards it and should

have it by the spring next year. Please respond to our recent appeal for club members to help with the purchase. The sooner we can pay for it the sooner we will benefit from having the new winch.



## Team Kenley

Club Chairman—Adrian Hewlett

Secretary—Marc Corrance

Treasurer—Ed Brown

Membership Secretary—Russell King

Safety Officer—Michael Pointon

Club Instructor—Steve Codd

Chief Flying Instructor—Richard Fitch

Equipment—Steve Skinner

Any others—A N Other

You can contact any member of the team through the club at:

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**020 8763 0091**

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**[www.southlondongliding.co.uk](http://www.southlondongliding.co.uk)**

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Comments on this newsletter and any contributions and photographs are welcomed and should be sent to the "Cabletalk Editor" at the club.

## Big Changes at the Club this Year

Besides the promise of a new winch there have been a number of big changes at the club this year.

The most obvious is the new club house. This has provided us with secure and dry club rooms and office space, a great improvement on the old buildings. With a great team effort from many club members we took down the old and leaky workshop and storage building and then converted the old club rooms into a workshop.

The new roof on the hangar has enabled us to keep our gliders and equipment dry. The old covering had become so thin that it was porous and let in the rain. The new roof together with the sliding doors and the segregation of the vehicles from gliders has greatly improved our operations.

The imposed requirement to register our glider fleet under new European regulations has meant that they have sprouted big letters on the underside

of the wings and on the fuselage. The only glider to escape this treatment is the T21 which is not required to disfigure itself due to its age.

Another change that slipped quietly by has been the end of a long partnership with our trusty old K7 gliders. They were the mainstay of our club for many years, indeed most of our club members learned to glide in them, but they were looking dated and had becoming more difficult to keep in operational order.

We also said goodbye to our Falke motor glider. This had seen very little use since Peter Poole (our previous CFI) moved away. It was taking up valuable hangar space and always seemed to be in the way when packing the hangar.

A big thank you to all the club members that rallied round and helped bring about these big changes to our gliding club.





## Achievements

The achievements book in the clubhouse is there for all club members to share their progress in gliding. The number of entries this year seems a bit light, so please add any of your memorable flights or milestone so that we can all share your experiences.

Congratulations to:

David Kirby-Smith and Chris Mitchell for completing their bronze badge.

Philippe White for his first solo and also Rod Connors who went solo at Portmoak.

Russell King for flying further and further away from Kenley.

Also congratulations to Michael Pointon



and Larry Lawes on becoming Basic Instructors and Marc Corrance for completing his Assistant rating.

Two other flying related achievements, Trevor Fielder for his NPPL in motor gliders and Richard Fitch for his NPPL in microlight aircraft.

## T21 Summer—it was not



Photo by Bob Sluman

The weather this summer was disappointing, there were no long hot summer days but lots of grey and windy ones. As a result our venerable T21 (Percy) had much less time out of the hangar and in the air than usual.

Another factor for its restful summer is

the limited availability of members and instructors to ensure that it is handled properly on the airfield and there are enough people around to put it away at the end of the day.

Whenever it flies it brings smiles to the passengers and members and is greatly admired. It is a club asset with a checkered history, having been a total loss in two separate

accidents.

It started life with the Southdown Gliding Club around July 1948. They kept it for 21 years until a solo pilot crashed it. It visited several other clubs before we acquired it from the Kent Gliding Club two decades ago.

## Instructoritis

.....does anyone else suffer from this debilitating affliction?

Well it had been a good day, enjoyable flights in the K8 when Steve said "OK David lets go and do some field landings." Showing me the airfield map in the launch caravan I tried to orientate myself to his new obscure landing site. Claiming to understand the briefing I went to put on a parachute and get into T40. I don't like this plane....always something going wrong with it. A Jonah Steve calls it. I began feeling nervous but dutifully got in thinking "Is this such a good thing?" A few minutes later Steve arrived with a smile on his face holding a disc card with white sticky tape on the edges. Oh dear, I thought, trust him to remember to blank out the altimeter. I hoped it was too small or the tape wouldn't stick but no, it was perfect. To make matters worse the words "Don't look at me", were written on it.

Steve got in and I thought—what next? Oh, the pre flight checks. What are they? Grappling with my thoughts I just recalled CB SIFT CBE. Right. OK... C... Controls, yes they are OK. B... what's that. Oh yes... Ballast. "Not needed and non fitted" I said trying to sound confident. Doing well. What next? S... Straps, "mine OK are yours?" Yes, comes the answer. I... Instruments, ok, what I can see of them. Where is 50 knots? Its moved since I was last in this plane. New instruments. Yes, 6 o'clock. F... what is F? Brain blank again, ah yes, Flaps, not fitted. T... Trim set for 50 knots for approach speed. Stress the word '**approach**' and don't ever say landing speed, you get told off if you do. C... Canopy, closed and locked. B... Brakes and locked ok. Now for E... Eventualities. Forget these and he will give you some. "In the event of a launch failure (don't say cable break or you get told off again), attitude, 50 knots level out and decide whether to land ahead or go around to the left and land appropriately." No comment from behind means all must be well. Now, cable on and hold onto the release knob. Will there be a launch failure? I don't trust Steve. Oh dear, I think Phil is on the winch. Last time he gave me a horrendous power failure and I only just managed to land

ahead nearly ending up in the war memorial!

Cable moving—up we go - no launch failure. What a relief! Level out, now here do I go? Voice from behind "Why are we doing 55 knots?" Oh dear, forgot to trim—what's 5 knots anyway. Trim done successfully. What next... Yes...I will look back and try to remember where I am supposed to land. Must not forget High Key, where will that be? Voice from behind "We are in 2 up". I don't believe it, he wants me to go soaring. All I want to do is get back down as soon as possible and end this trauma. What is this man on?! I turn right watching the poor yaw string go all other the place. Voice from behind "WHY are we turning RIGHT?" Oh dear, I should obviously turned left. I straighten up and turn left. Frustrated voice from behind "We are out of the thermal now!" Oh how I hate this! I do a couple of turns to show willing and all aspects of coordination have deserted me. Now best get back. Angle looks a bit cramped so I head off to where I think we should be going, forgetting all about High Key. Thinking it had gone very quiet I realise I spoke too soon. Voice from behind "I HAVE." Steve takes over ... a couple of turns and we are back on track, "you are now on your base leg!" Oh dear I think, whatever happened to the diagonal leg? I turn right and right again onto the approach. I see the windsock looming and notice that I am rather close to it. I put my hand on the air brake. Voice from behind "DON'T even THINK about opening the air braket!" "No", I say, "I wasn't going to". We land with a bump. Arrived as Steve says.



We get out. I confess how terrible it was and Steve agrees. "We will go again", he says. I say "yes" but really mean no. On the long walk back I offer large amounts of cream cakes in exchange for Steve just signing me off, There is no reply except a wry smile. I take that as a "No". Later Steve says "Best get back in the K8 and go and learn to fly again.

David Kirby-Smith

## Michael Dilnot

Michael, who soloed with us on his 16th birthday, is taking a year out to travel the world.

Dear all at Surrey Hills!

Firstly, apologies for not writing much over the past three and a bit months! There should be a number of postcards on their way to you, but given the national postal system of some of the countries I've been through, I may yet beat them back!

Anyways, I'm now writing to you from the school in Calcutta, India, where I am now living and working until December. I'm currently responsible for teaching most of the Senior Maths and Science here as their regular teacher is unavailable. It's fantastic teaching the kids here as not only are they really bright, but they are also very keen to learn. ('Mike Sir' or 'Mike Uncle' as they call me is, I am told, their favourite teacher!)

As I said, I will be living here now until December 1st, having arrived on the 3rd of October. From here, I will be flying to Singapore for a few days before carrying onto Perth and then Adelaide in Australia for Christmas. Oh, and apologies but I don't think I will be able to attend the Christmas dinner on the 13th as the taxi may cost quite a bit!

Anyhow, I am getting very itchy feet, having not flown for around four months

now! Once I'm settled in Oz and have some sort of income I'm hoping to find a club to join and perhaps do my Silver badge.

I hear the weather back home hasn't been too bad given the time of year, so I am hoping you have all had some good flying!

Will write again soon but for now I need to teach Class VII Physics!

All the best and happy flying!

Mike Dilnot



## Our Club Instructors

Richard Fitch says that when he completed the BGA instructor returns for 2006 our club had himself as the only Full Category Instructor, no Assistant instructors and three Basic Instructors (Peter Wann, Marc Corrance and Steve Skinner).

This year however the return contained more than twice that number of instructors. We have two Full Cats (Richard Fitch and Steve Codd), one Assistant (Marc Corrance) and six Ba-

sic Instructors (Peter Wann, Steve Skinner, Steve Swann, Ingram Gavan, Michael Pointon and Larry Lawes).

This is very reassuring for the club but there is still room for more to cover operations and share the instruction.

We occasionally welcome instructors from other gliding clubs when they are able to help us.