

Cabletalk

January 2011

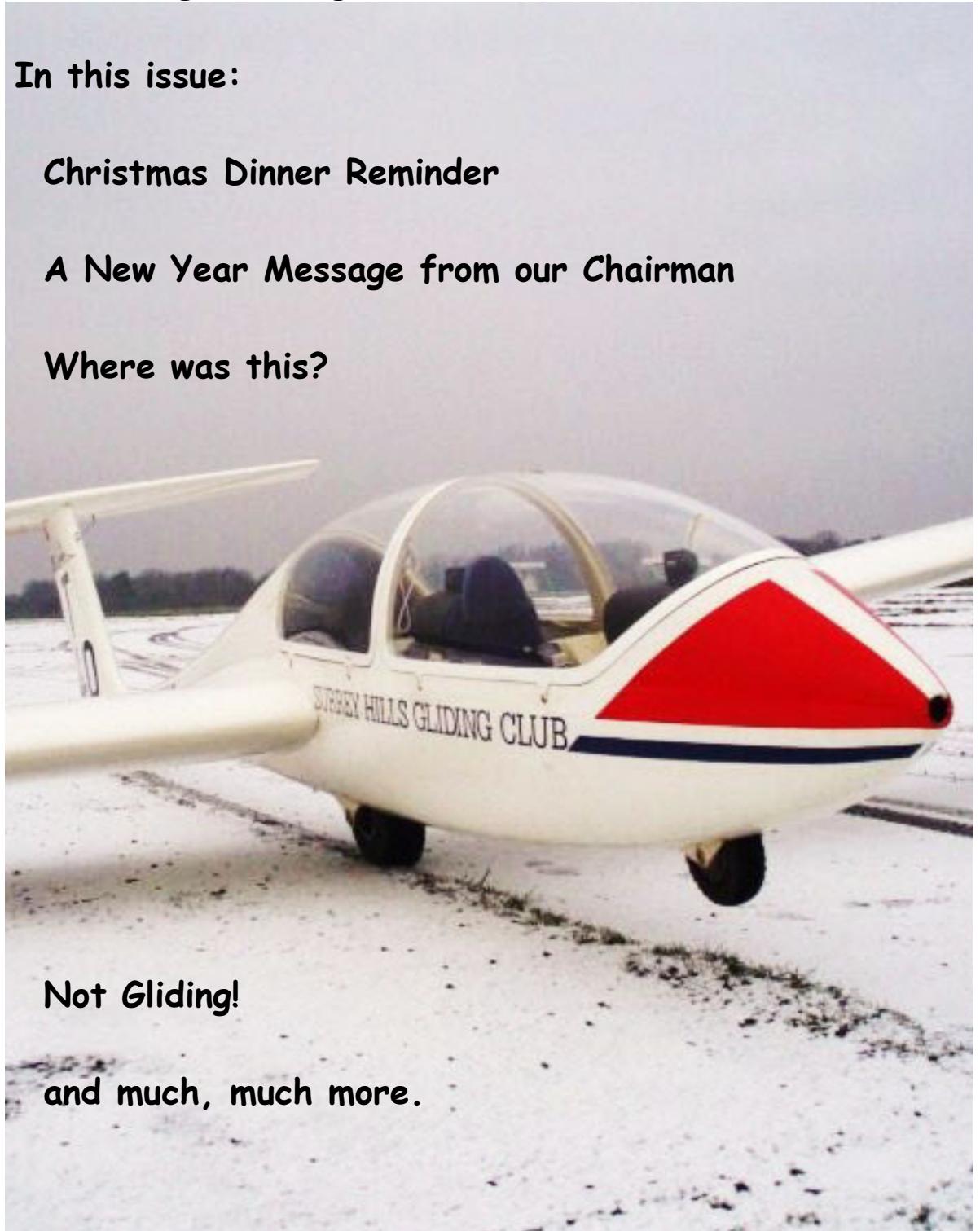
A very happy New Year to all our members and friends and welcome to the first 2011 edition of Cabletalk, the Surrey Hills Gliding Club magazine.

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Christmas Dinner Reminder

A New Year Message from our Chairman

Where was this?



Not Gliding!

and much, much more.

Christmas Dinner

As most of you will know we had to reschedule the Christmas Dinner and Prize Giving due to bad weather and the new date for the meal is the 15th January. That is very soon so if you have not already booked your place then now is the time to do it.

The tickets are still just £24 for a three course meal at the Woodcote Park Golf Club in Coulsdon and there are still places available for those who want to come.



I look forward to seeing you all there
best regards

Marc Corrance

Surrey Hills Gliding Club Team

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

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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.

A New Year message from our Chairman

By Adrian Hewlett

Out with the old!!

No, not an ageist message to those of us who are drawing the State Pension - but to put 2010 to bed and welcome whatever 2011 brings.

Firstly, I hope you all had a good Christmas, despite snow, ice, fog and anything else Mother Nature threw at us. My excitement was coming down Tithe Pit Shaw Lane - not knowing it had been closed - the local vandals had removed the closure signs!

2010 was in one way one of the better years for the Club that I can recall - with two main features - a clean sheet on accidents and incidents - as Patrick Naegeli (BGA Chairman) had implored us to strive for - well done, and the completion of the replacement of the old wooden huts with budget tin sheds. This only leaves the cosmetics to finish the updating of our buildings. Well done to you all, particularly the staff, instructors and nameless willing helpers who have given their time to achieve these goals.

So, what does 2011 bring? Sadly, a significant increase in our expense seems inevitable. Our electricity rates, fixed for 3 years are now at 2010 - up about 30% ouch, and all of you know full well of the increases in petrol and diesel prices: LPG is bound to increase by similar percentages. The March Budget is unlikely to hold any good news, so we must try to control our expenses and find ways of increasing our income. Last year, we increased fees and prices for trial lessons and your Committee has looked carefully at income we get from you in the coming years.

After much debate, the good news is - No increase in launch fees!!

Now for the other items: Subs for flying members up to £264 pa (£24.00 pa increase). Subs for Juniors, Social and family members up to £45 pa. We researched flying fees, and "wood" has been at 20p/min since at least 1998, and "glass" has been at 30p/min since we bought KFG. So from 1 March 2011, flying fees on all Club gliders will rise by 5p/min - not so easy for mental arithmetic, but cribs will be available to help fill out your slips. There's an incentive to fill your boots in January and February! (5p/min might seem a big rise, but still only £3.00 extra for an hours' flight! Still great value for the enjoyment you get from flying at Kenley.

Looking further ahead, there seems a possibility that we shall have to close down for the period of the Olympic Games. So that's why I was not in favour of the UK spending £Billions to host the junket! It is ironic that one sporting event can militate against another. If it does affect us, I foresee a programme of writing letters, emails etc to those in power to negotiate a sensible exclusion zone which would enable us (or 615) to continue in what is the middle of the soaring season. Nothing attempted, nothing gained!

A New Year message from our Chairman

(Continued)

My final wish for 2011 is to have to resort to flying lists because so many members turn up to fly each day! Our last return of flying activity to the BGA (October '09 - September '10) showed total launches down by 443 - members' launches down by 348. Doing some crude estimates, this is equivalent to a reduction in income of about £7500 - serious at a time when we are struggling to repay loans from members which helped to buy T40, and the need to service the repayment of the Wills Fund loan, used to buy our Skylaunch winch - only another £16,000 to find!

It is a requirement that all Gliding Club chairmen suffer from acute depression. I hope that you will have the best year of gliding ever, and so help to effect a permanent cure. I look forward to seeing many of you at our rearranged Annual Dinner on 15 January, and in the words of the BGA Chairman,

"Have fun, stay safe!"

Adrian Hewlett



Closure Dates 2011

These are the closure dates that we have been given by the ATC.

15 - 25th April 5 days 2 bank holiday

27th May to 5th June 5 days one bank holiday

21 - 31 July 7 days

19 -29 August 6 days plus one bank holiday

21 - 30 October 6 days

Where was this?

by Richard Fitch



This is one of the many photographs that I took last summer whilst flying around Europe in a microlight, but where is it?

Well, thanks to the wonders of a GPS system, which knows exactly where I am and the time that I was there, it is possible to find out.

The camera that I use stores the date and time of the picture, and by comparing this with the GPS trace, I can tell exactly where I was when the picture was taken. But this doesn't give me the name of the place in the photograph!

However, by loading the GPS trace of the flight onto Google Earth, I can pinpoint the location of the photograph. I can then tilt and rotate the view on Google Earth to replicate the photograph. It turns out to be a picture of Sonabia which is between Santander and San Sebastian on the north Spanish coast. The light blue line below is the GPS trace. Isn't technology brilliant?



Not Gliding

by Richard Fitch

This year two members from our gliding club travelled to southern Europe in a microlight. Within the last two years both Philip Skinner and myself attained our NPPL (National Private Pilots Licence) for microlights and have been flying to local airfields for very expensive cups of tea. But Philip wanted a bit of adventure so he asked me if I would join him on an organised journey down through Europe to Gibraltar and back with five other planes. Our aircraft was Philip's Ikarus C42 microlight which can cruise at 90 knots (104 mph) and carry enough fuel for 4 hours. We did over 40 hours flying in 9 days and visited France, Spain and Portugal.



We landed at 17 different airfields varying from large international airports to mountain strips.

Day 1 started very early, we were airborne from Philip's farm at 06:30 and made our way across the English Channel to Abbeville where we met the other pilots who had flown in from Essex and Norfolk. Then we were off on a 3.5 hours hop to Charearoux for lunch followed by another 3 hours to Lezignan in the south of France for the night. **Day 2** we flew up over the Pyrenees mountains, up to 8000 feet where we flew with gliders over Cerdanya, with breathtaking views of the rugged mountains. This was another 3 hours trip which took us down to Castellon for a leisurely Spanish lunch on the coast. Then followed a spectacular 3 hours flight out over the Med at 200 feet all the way down the Spanish coast to a small private airstrip at Vera, just as the sun was setting. The strip owners had prepared a local meal for us and then it was off to sleep in a caravan (without air-conditioning) which was very hot.



Leta (Granada)
Microlight Strip

Day 3, to my relief, had only 1.5 hours flying. We left Vera and flew to a small Microlight strip at Leta, to the north of Granada. This was the shortest and steepest runway we encountered with olive trees all around it. Unfortunately the person who was supposed to meet us failed to turn up and we were marooned for 3 hours in the heat (over 40 degrees). We eventually got taxis to Granada and our hotel. In the early evening we visited the fantastic Alhambra Palace. All this in 3 days.

Not Gliding

(continued)

Day 4 and a taxi ride back to our planes in a Toyota Prius, the driver refused to go the last half mile up the dirt track, so we had to walk. The local flying club helped us by fetching fuel and by mid-day we were airborne. We flew over the Sierra Nevada and down to Marbella, then out to sea where we waited until air traffic control gave permission to over fly the Gibraltar runway (not below 500 feet). The view was amazing with the road into Gibraltar crossing the runway and cruise ships in the port. We then turned left, out over the sea again towards Africa, to keep us out of



Approaching Gibraltar

Spanish airspace. After 3 hours we landed at Jerez for fuel and lunch, the largest airport so far and very officious. Our next stop was Portimao in Portugal. We flew over the beautiful Algarve which is so rugged that a field landing would be impossible. That evening we enjoyed an amazing sea food meal in a



Cape St Vincent

beach restaurant and a good nights sleep on the 15th floor of a modern hotel.

Day 5 was another 3 hour trip. We went past Cape St. Vincent, the furthest southwestern point of Europe and then followed the Atlantic coast north to Cascais, and we were travelling towards home.

Another taxi ride took us to our hotel in the centre of Lisbon. An amazing city where they still use trams built in the 1930's, in which we travelled right around the town as it bumped and squeezed through narrow streets. The following morning our taxi driver, taking us back to the airport, nearly drove into another car whilst using his mobile



Lisbon

phone.

Day 6 and we continued travelling north for three hours, up through Portugal to a lunch break at Braga. This airfield had a race track around it and was home to the forest fire fighters. We had to move our microlights twice while helicopters were taking off.

Not Gliding

(continued)

After lunch we proceeded further north with a relatively short hop (1.5 hours) out of Portugal and into north Spain. We landed near Lugo, a Roman walled town, and took a taxi to our hotel in the middle of town. The following morning we awoke to drizzle and low cloud, the first bad weather of our trip, and we ended up staying for a second night. **Day 8**

and we were off again over the Cordillera mountain range towards the spectacular north Spanish coast.

As we proceeded east we caught up with the drizzly weather and had to divert into Santander airport. After lunch and lots of bureaucracy the rain cleared and we were off again.

Our destination was Niort. We proceeded past Bilbao and Biarritz and turned north along the French

Atlantic coast. The wind had strengthened and our progress into the wind slowed, we would not make our destination without a fuel stop. Two of the



French Atlantic Coast



Flight Planning at Niort

aircraft with us were CTSWs and carried twice the fuel that we could, but we had to divert with Geoff, who flew a Rans S7, into Bordeaux and mixed with the jets. Suitably refuelled we arrived at Niort quite late and were whisked away to our hotel in the town by a very friendly member of the local flying club.

Day 9 and we needed more fuel to get to Abbeville but Niort had been drained by

a visiting Dakota so we went north and had a bumpy ride to Angers. When we arrived there was a line of gliders waiting for the cumulus to start, there were

plenty of blue thermals, but no cloud. We refuelled and after 2.5 hours we arrived in Abbeville again. We filed a flight plan for England and set off over the channel in glorious weather to dear old Blighty. We landed back at Philip's farm an hour and a half later at 18:15, the end a great adventure.



Dover Harbour