

CABLETALK

SURREY HILLS GLIDING CLUB NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2016

Editor's notes

Chris Leggett

As I prepare this my third edition of **Cabletalk** the good weather seems to be coming to an end and hopefully everyone has enjoyed the summer's flying – not the best summer on record but the number of flying days were about the same as 2015.

It was also great to see Simon Cousins back at the club after his surgery, hopefully it won't be too long before he is back flying. It was also good to see that Trevor has been passed fit to fly again. Congratulations go to Michal on going solo in September.

Paul Hayward has continued the monthly evening meetings for members, some have been very well attended and others less so. These are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:30pm in the clubhouse, seats are on a first come, first served basis. If anyone has specific topics they want to discuss or hear about then please let Paul know.

As you all know we had a very successful Vintage Glider Week this year and the plans are to hopefully hold another one next year.

This newsletter is for the members so please consider writing an article for the next edition – there are lots of stories that members recount verbally – just taking some time to write them down would be great. Thanks to those who have already supplied articles and photos.

From the Chairman

Adrian Hewlett

After the AGM this year, to my horror the other members of the committee again asked me to continue as Chairman of the Club – and as no other committee member was willing to oust me, I reluctantly agreed. How did all this come about?

When I retired from my day job at the end of 2000, my son gave me a 4-flight voucher. I enjoyed the experience, and, living a mere 2 nautical miles away as the glider flies, I decided to



join the Club and learn to fly. Then the Club was a very different place, a bit of a mystery as to how it all worked, so when the late lamented Peter Wann wanted to give up as Club Treasurer, in November 2001 I agreed to act as book keeper and joined the committee. Winding forward to January 2006, Pam and I took our first long ocean cruise from Southampton to Singapore, so I asked for a volunteer to take my place as Hon Treasurer – mainly so that the Club's employees could be paid in my absence. Edward Brown stepped up to take over, but when I returned in April, the other members of the committee unanimously asked me to be Chairman to follow the inestimable Peter Bolton.

After 10 years in the post, I feel that the Chairman's mantle should pass to younger shoulders. Probably, although I say it myself, my main claim to posterity has not involved the flying aspects of the Club, but paperwork – meeting HMRC's requirements for online payroll management, registering as a Community Amateur Sports



Michal after his first solo flight.

Club, giving quasi charitable status and the establishment of a Workplace Pension Scheme come to mind! I write this now to give other members of the Club a chance to think about what they can offer. Having said that, I note from a trawl through my records that from my earliest days at the Club, Jill Oake, Philip and Stephen Skinner, Richard Fitch, Paul Hayward and Marc Corrance were all involved in various ways in keeping the Club alive and well!

Looking forward, gliding at Kenley faces a number of challenges. Perhaps the key unknown is the future of 615VGS. It is well known that MoD have decided to halve the number of gliding squadrons; 615 has apparently been spared – but still no news as when their aircraft will be returned and they can restart operations. But the real issue may well be whether their existing staff want to return to flying here.

Other imponderables include the proposed new regime on pilot – and more especially instructor licences – to replace the long-standing BI, Ass Cat and Full Cat ratings. For example, a new category replacing the BI is suggested to be a Flight Introductory Pilot acting as a demonstration pilot to some unwary soul whose only flying requirement is, as I understand, 30 hours solo flying. The introduction of pilot licencing moves back on a regular basis – now scheduled for 2020 by which time, being then almost 80, my passion for gliding will probably have waned – even if my GP would countersign my medical declaration to fly!

To close, a few pleas:

I too enjoy the social value of being at the Club, but if there is no member at the radio, please break off the chat to log aircraft down.

In the log, please use CAPITAL letters for the pilots names – it makes life much easier for the office ladies.

In the event of any discussion of membership terms, please refer the question to Steve Codd or the office.

End of mini rant – have fun – stay safe.

Steve's notes

Steve Codd

Another soaring season is coming to an end, well at least the easy soaring, just because we are heading into the winter months doesn't mean the end of soaring. Looking back through my log books I can see that I've logged at least one soaring flight in almost all the months over the winter over the past few years.

The season started with the return of T40 in "as new" condition, FHO as it now is, then went up to Sutton Bank to fly in the Northerns, but the weather was abysmal. Not joking but Sutton Bank are asking competitors if holding the Northerns in Spain next year would be possible, surely that would be the Southerns. Mark Corrance then went on to fly in Enterprise and I flew the Bicester Regionals, Tom Arscott also competed in the World Championship in Lithuania and the Junior Nationals. Not bad for a Club not renowned for cross country flying.

We have gained another four private gliders, an LS4 and an SZD55 both being put to use by their owners and the Dart that I owned until 2003/4 is now flying from Kenley. The fourth glider is a single seat Astir but that, and its trailer, are undergoing some major restoration work and it is hoped this will all be completed for next spring. It's good to see members going away to other sites and expanding horizons, Shenington, Bicester, Aston Down, Ringmer, Parham and just last weekend Waldershare, or Channel as it is better known. I'm intending to take a Grob to Channel over the weekend of 15th/16th October. They are having a weekend with a tug as well as winching, the more the merrier, even if not soarable, aerotows over the coast will be possible.

The club still has some club branded clothing and this can be purchased, at a discounted price, from the office or by seeing me.

The club fleet is in fine fettle but always needs care and attention, especially when it comes to cleaning over the winter. The dead flies get





Dave – we think the trailer needs a bit of work ...

replaced by mud, this needs to be cleaned off at the end of the day or sooner if it's building up in the wheel boxes. Also the canopies need to be kept as clean as possible. Use warm soapy water, applied gently, to remove dust and dirt before polishing. The golf buggies also need to be checked over before use, oil and fuel especially. If you are unsure, ask don't just leave it and hope it will be spotted before it runs out of fluids.

Little moan over with, let's all have a safe and fun winter of flying.

Who Needs Therapy?

Serena Lambré

When you are new to a gliding club you are frequently asked the same question: "What made



you start flying?" I have avoided answering for eight months, but this is what happened.

Shortly before Christmas my therapist said to me, "I'm sure you've heard the saying: 'Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, but expecting different results.'" I thought about this for a while and realized that I had been seeing said therapist for years, yet I came back, week after week, feeling lost and needing support. So I decided to stop going to therapy.

Whether or not Dr B had drawn my attention to the quote as a means of setting me free (in a strange passive-aggressive, double-bluff type move) – or whether she'd just run out of things to say and the conversation had rather backfired on her – is anybody's guess. Either way, the upshot for me was that in late November I was suddenly liberated from my Friday afternoon commitment and also had some spare cash to throw around.

Like any recently self-diagnosed sane person, I knew that to leave a void unfilled could lead to problems, so I wanted to fill that Friday space with a new (less expensive and less depressing) activity. Over Christmas my brother and I were discussing resolutions for 2016 and we both decided that rather than give something up this year we should both learn a new skill from scratch, and race each other. (Over the last six years I have painstakingly





given up every vice there is to give up, so I have literally no pleasures left to deprive myself of other than tea, and to be clear, I do not count tea as a vice. I see it as a Human Right!).

So after lengthy discussion my brother and I reached our decisions: he would learn to drive a car and I would learn to fly.

Perfect – I had my void-filler.

I turned up at Kenley at 10am on January 8th, cold, scared and feeling rather daunted by the challenge I had set myself. I had experienced a winch launch once, 5 years previously, and hated every single G-pulling second of it. I was not looking forward to the day ahead. But I had set myself a goal, so I plastered a smile on my face and set about The Learning Process. Every Friday morning I would drive to Caterham with a feeling

of dread in the pit of my stomach, and I would leave 8 hours later utterly exhausted and mildly traumatised.

By April though, perhaps predictably, I was chronically addicted to gliding. I do tend to get chronically addicted to things, thus the need for therapy (which I also became chronically addicted to) but I was certainly not expecting this level of joy and love for sitting in a torpedo-shaped cavity and being catapulted into the sky.

One of things I love is that gliding requires so much mental processing power that I am incapable of thinking about anything else while I fly. The ridiculously overactive 'Hey, Let's Analyse Everything In The Entire World-slash-Universe' department of my brain is forced to shut down for a few blessed minutes and oh, the blessed relief!

So back to the original question, "What made you start flying?" The honest answer would be: 1) fear of going insane and 2) a bet with my brother. And what better reasons are there to start anything?

In regards to therapy, I have not regretted my trade for an instant; gliding is a lot cheaper than therapy, has given me way more self-confidence than all the best intentions and sweet words of my dear (ex) therapist, and I'm not embarrassed to say what I do on a Friday any more.

Gliding doesn't make me feel more sane and it hasn't changed the way I see the human race; I have always looked down on the human race, just now I do it from a different QFE. But gliding, like climbing, has introduced me to another tiny community of wonderful people who have a passion and are willing to share it so graciously with me. Gliding has opened up another avenue for seeing the world, in the form of flying holidays. And gliding has put back an excitement in my life and an enthusiasm for starting each day that I hadn't felt for quite a while.

My father loved everything to do with aviation and he introduced me to Sir Douglas Bader when I was eight years old: one of my most treasured memories. My father died twenty-five years ago and I can barely remember the sound of his voice. He hasn't been around to see any of my



achievements in life (not that there have been a great many!) and he won't be around to see me go solo. But I know he would be so proud of me if he were here and he would have loved hanging out at Kenley, smoking his pipe and sharing stories.

So perhaps why I started to fly doesn't really matter. Why will I continue to fly? Because it stills my head, warms my heart and heals my soul. Just like it says on the tin.

The yellow line ...

Jonathan Hill

For a recent Wednesday gathering I was asked to discuss how best to talk to members of the public (MoP) who erred inside the yellow line. Knowing fish and chips were in the offing I knew I had to keep it succinct!

Seriously though, we all know life is simple when we're in and 'they're' out but what makes it complicated is when they're also in and to further complicate matters some of those who are in are non-compliant (I'll deal with those last) some are compliant and a few haven't a clue which planet they're on, I'll deal with them first ...

A couple of weeks back our winch meister Phil in the Disco beat me in Thunderbird 2 (Golf buggy 2) to an elderly woman with a walking stick who'd almost made it half way across from the Hayes Lane side, she claimed she had serious cramp, though she seemed to be making good progress to me. It quickly became apparent a slice or two was missing from the loaf. Despite Phil patiently explaining her perilous situation her cramp was definitely a priority. So with words of advice she got a free Disco ride to the other side and despite her cramp went on her way. I think it fair to say no end of explanation would have impressed upon her how close she could have come to denting FHO! Compassion was the only option and who better than our winch meister to administer it.

More commonly all the slices are present but the loaf has been left on the shelf. There is no malicious intent when mum pushing the 'tester' (pram/tricycle etc) ahead strolls across our sacred turf or a group of gormless yuts wander down the runway probably glued to their smart phones (not sure why 'smart' doesn't transfer to yuts?) . . . they simply just don't think! These I approach with a direct 'Hello, why are you walking across an active airfield?'. The usual reply being 'is it?'. 'Yes', I respond now let's return the way you've come to a place of safety' (always good to ensure any perceived gain is lost). During the journey back to whence they came I try to educate without alienating them in the hope they can continue their Kenley experience thinking those strange gliding folk aren't so bad and yes they've got a point, being hit by ½ a ton of glider is probably a bit of a downer. So, educated but without feathers ruffled, it does take some patience, tact and even good humour but hopefully leaving them with a good impression.

Thankfully rare but the more challenging non-compliant MoP, yes we've all met them. Some insolent yuts, probably a few professional dog walkers and yes, that local resident who has an absolute right to walk on the airfield (probably because his great great granddad did so in-between the Sopwith Camels and SE5as!) So, placing yourself with them between you and the nearest yellow line start with the standard direct but polite, 'Hello, what are you doing on an active airfield?', 'I've every right to be here' (or words to that effect . . .) comes the reply. Forget the who's got rights bit, that's for lawyers to argue in a court of law, just stick to the safety theme. 'Sir, it's for your safety as well as ours if you stay outside the yellow line, please come with me now'. They'll probably decline your offer of an escort and your persistence will inevitably lead to escalation quickly followed by confrontation. Fisty cuffs or annihilation by golf buggy unfortunately is not an option these pink and fluffy days, but we do have a duty of care. I suggest we stay with these less



helpful souls and continue to encourage them to leave the hallowed turf and with a bit of polite cajoling sticking rigourously to the safety theme (for which you'll never be criticised) continue to advise them of the ever present safety issue. Their flat refusal requires you to continue to practise your polite firm patience while continuing to emphasise the ever present safety issue. If it means flying has to stop so be it. Experience has taught that usually they've something more important to do than waste their time debating their survival chances if hit by DCOC with an aviator who thinks they can fly without an engine and eventually they'll depart.

If they threaten you with violence a breach of the peace is imminent, immediately dial 999 request police and concisely tell the operator you are a gliding club member asking a MoP to leave the active airfield for their safety and they refuse to do so and are threatening to assault you but you are unable to leave them because of the safety implications, I need police quickly. (Make sure the gate is open).

Should the escalation come to shove or worse (the SHGC member being the victim I hope ...) do not retaliate or it becomes accusation vs counter accusation (there's rarely an independent witness around to corroborate accounts) and the issue becomes indeterminable for the lucky officer who gets to deal with it. Back off, dial 999 and request police quickly to deal with an assault with the suspect still present or nearby.

Having spoken to many MoP, watching the gliders contributes significantly to their time spent walking around the airfield as they marvel as we are catapulted skyward then practise the black art of staying up, we should try to cultivate positive relations with all of them.

Concluding Wednesday's discussion it was agreed by all that we have a lot to lose if we get it wrong. Remember, it's not necessarily what you say but how you say it that matters. Remaining polite, tactful and diplomatic with good humour really does go a long way to resolving these issues, unless you've got a bad dose of cramp!

Contact Details

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