

Cabletalk

Surrey Hills Gliding Club Newsletter

July 2020

Editor's notes

The last few months have certainly been challenging but we seem to be slowly getting back to a 'new normal'. We have recently welcomed back our pre-solo pilots and those needing check flights, and, albeit slowly, we are starting to fly some Air Experience flights. These are essential to the financial well being of the club but safety and the health of everyone comes first so procedures have changed.

On a very positive note congratulations go to Sam Coole for getting his Silver distance, height and duration all in one flight and at his very first attempt (see his article below). Before the flight could be undertaken we made him work hard by helping Jon get the open trailer ready to retrieve the K6.

Congratulations also go to Eric Short who re-soloed for the first time since 2014.

My first cross country . . .

Sam Coole

After hours of gruelling work by Jonathan Hill with help from myself in converting the open trailer to take the K6, it was completed on the 6 July. I quickly decided that Tuesday 7 July looked like a good day (talk about good timing!) ... After lengthy conversations with Marc Corrance that evening, I had done all the necessary preparation by the morning. Looking at RASP in the morning, the day would



Climbing up towards 3,500ft.

deteriorate a little by the afternoon. My thinking was that I'd better hurry up and get going then!

I launched at 10:20am and climbed up a thermal nice and quickly. I suddenly realised how much stuff I had brought with me, the K6 felt *even* more cramped than usual. I thought I would stay local for a bit and get a feel for the day. It was a good thing I did as 20 minutes later I fell out of the sky! When I landed, I was so disappointed – 'the sky is booming and I'm down here already' I thought. Richard dashed over with the tow out gear and got me back to the launch point very hastily! Before I went again, 'I better get a picture for the Facebook' he said. 'Oh yes of course, that's why I landed, we forgot the picture!' – I told myself at least.

I launched *again* at 11.10am. I quickly found a thermal and climbed up again. At this point I just went for it – I knew the sky was working! I soon found myself at Junction 6 at 1,400ft QFE thinking 'I'm



Objective one – distance achieved – Challock in sight.

probably out of range at this point, what have I gotten myself into?'. Fortunately, I climbed up again. I started to make my way down the motorway, keeping between 2,500ft and 2,200ft most of the time. Just after Westerham, Gatwick's

airspace turns south and therefore so could I. Shortly after this I got down to 1,100ft above the ground. I had a nice field underneath me but I managed to find something. I averaged about 0.3kts for a while before I got a bit higher and managed to find a better bit, quickly climbing back up to 2,500ft amsl. At this point I could see I was near the 3,500ft airspace. Shortly afterwards, I was there, and on my way up to 3,500ft. 'Ah, I've basically done it now' I thought.



Objective two – height achieved – 4,900ft.

From then onwards was fairly uneventful. At one point I got down to about 1,600ft agl but I climbed away happily. After 1 hour 20 minutes I arrived at Challock (pictured). Saying that I was relieved would be an understatement! Only 3 and a half hours to go . . .



Objective three – duration achieved – time to land!



A very happy pilot!

The highest I reached was about 4,900ft which covered my silver height gain with a nice margin to spare.

With about an hour and a half left to complete the 5 hours, the cumulus started getting smaller and the thermals weaker. I concluded that if the day continues to

deteriorate at this rate, I would not be able to make the duration. 'You're having a laugh' I was thinking, I had gotten this far as well! At roughly the same time, Jon, Marc C and Mark K were on their way down to get me and were thinking the same thing. However, it seemed that they brought the thermals with them as the sky got better again.

I carefully timed my descent so that I could be on the ground as quickly as possible whilst ensuring the 5 hours. I landed after 5 hours and 4 minutes and I could not walk afterwards!

Certainly, a day I will never forget . . .

Marc Corrance checked my trace later that day, and confirmed he was happy that I had not busted airspace and had completed all 3 silver legs. Once the BGA have approved it, that should be my silver all done.

FreeFlight

Terry Hagerty

I've noticed that, save for a very few members (no more than three or four), the great majority of you do not use FreeFlight to announce your availability on the field on our active flying days.

Some of you might not decide if you are coming on a given day until the last minute and then suddenly turn up if the weather is good and thermic. This cannot go on, particularly as we move forward post the virus situation to begin to welcome back the public for voucher flying. We really need to know in advance how many and who are coming to help on each flying day, otherwise we run the risk of having to postpone planned voucher flights on the very morning that people are to come to the Club to enjoy their special flight experience.

Don't forget that it is the Club which has planned all these voucher dates and times, not the public, and it will be embarrassing if we have to commence cancelling peoples' flights at the last minute having arranged them in the first place. Please commit to helping on a day as well as turning up to fly.

1. Sporting hobby group initially plus a heavy whack with one. (4)
SHGC (gives initials SHG plus a whack (as a Club))
2. Doesn't exactly grab the aeroplane. (4)
GROB
3. Not A1, move on flier! (2)
P1
4. Put out some of the flames, and that's a warning. (4)
FLARM (removing E and S from 'flames' leaves FLAM. Add an R (5)
5. A singularly warm garment to help you up. (7)
Thermal
6. Brands Hatch has one but some pilots eschew them. (8)
CIRCUITS
7. Get away quickly, like the sea vessel. (6)
LAUNCH

Use your FreeFlight login details to see what Free-Flight contains and get used to using its facilities such as your flight log, the balance on your flying account, and, importantly, let us know when you plan to come. This will stop the need for some Committee members having to spend their time duplicating effort, copying emails and entering data on FreeFlight all of which members should do themselves. After all, we can all plan meals out, theatre visits, trips to the seaside etc. Why not plan your days at the Club?

'Cryptic Clues' Answers and Winner

Terry Hagerty

Having sorted through the avalanche of entries for this effort at trying to exercise your grey matter I can report that the winner by only three points is Adrian Roberts. Congratulations! The prizes consist of: a book on 'How to use FreeFlight'; a waterproof joystick cover; and most importantly, a free winch launch at SHGC will be arranged for you shortly.

The answers to the clues are:

8. There's no valley in Winchcombe, but it's certainly windy there. (5)
WINCH (remove 'combe' or valley from Winchcombe. Windy meaning to wind)
9. Like Napoleon with his uncle – Man , that programme was ages ago, and he was on his own! (4)
SOLO (TV series The Man from Uncle)
10. The gold-leaf man's air carrier, nearly. (6)
GLIDER (not gilder)
11. Pull the gutter back but only halfway, then fly it. (3)
TUG (half of 'gutter' is gut, reversed)
12. Leave most of the toast and call, then its secured. (4, 4)
TOST RING (most of 'toast' leaves Tost, then call or 'ring')
13. Has everyone left ? Shout it! (3, 3)
ALL OUT
14. A chairman ran that comical race three times with someone else and insisted on a couple of teas at the end. (7)
LEGGETT (three-legged race – legge with 2 Ts at end)
15. Tie these too quickly and you will strain something early on in the process. (5)
KNOTS (too fast a launch will stress the aircraft)
16. No point in standing under one of these in the rain, you have to sit down. Clear? (6)
CANOPY
17. Not exactly the periodic Table, but always good to chat or read something airily. (9)
CABLETALK (not TABLE but CABLE, plus talk (chat))

The Longest Day – 1995

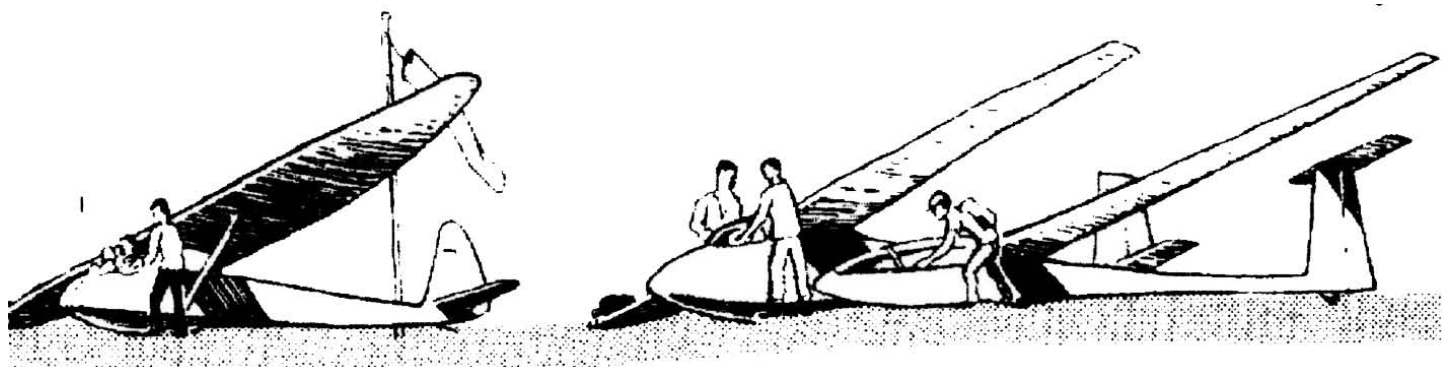
Richard Fitch

Editor: This is a reprint of an article first published in Cabletalk in 1995!

A fraction of an inch beyond my right foot I could see 2,000ft down into a farmyard. A small herd of cows were on their way to be milked. Beyond my left

foot a horse was trotting across a field. How did my feet get there?

Well it all started when I arrived at Kenley at 8:00am on 21 June. The airfield was full of activity. All the gliders were out at the launch point, the two club K7s, a K8, a swallow, the T21 and a visiting K13 from Parham. Launching had already started so I helped out and added my name to an





already growing flying list. The weather was superb with a light northerly wind and plenty of sunshine.

I had my first flight at 11:45am. Every glider was connecting with thermals so I was looking forward to a reasonable flight. Steve (my instructor) had other ideas. I had three flights with him of a total duration of 4 minutes, something to do with the cable breaking and the winch running out of power, although I suspect that he was jealously protecting his 5 hour record. After this Steve got out and things improved. I had two flights on my own, my first solo flights for five years. The second lasted 29 minutes while I bumbled over Purley watching trains, traffic jams and children playing on a school field.

I was hungry and was going for some lunch when Al, who had brought his

microlight to Kenley on a trailer, was looking for someone to drive his VW camper. He was going to Westerham to take off and fly back to Kenley for some aerial photography and wanted the VW taken back to Kenley. I volunteered and soon found myself at a grass strip beside the M25 at Westerham helping to assemble his Microlight. When it was assembled and shipshape Al asked me if I would like a flight around the fields before he set off for Kenley – **would I!** So I donned a flying suit, helmet and gloves and we took off. It was an amazing experience, we flew south past Bough Beech reservoir to Hever Castle. The views around my feet and across the Kent countryside were fantastic. After 22 minutes we gently landed back at the grass strip where, after refuelling, Al took off with Alistaire for the filming at

Kenley. I drove the left-hand drive VW back to Kenley and arrived to see them chasing gliders around the airfield. After a while they glided down, power off, and landed quietly at the airfield.

Since I was still hungry and it was now 6:30pm, I went off in search of lunch. Thank you Surrey Hills Gliding club for a very memorable longest day.

From the Chairman

Chris Leggett

This year, so far, has been very challenging for so many reasons. We started the year without a permanent manager and therefore a Full Cat instructor on the airfield 5 days a week. All of our regular instructors were fantastic in making sure that we could operate 5 days a week. However that meant that on some days they were the only qualified instructor on the airfield and therefore they experienced some issues with flying the Air Experience flights and our own training flights.

Then of course in mid-March we closed down for COVID-19 – something none of us could have planned for. The closure lasted over 2 months and it was not until mid-May that we could reopen the club and even then it was for solo flying only.



CFI Richard Fitch landing the first flight after lockdown.

Thanks go to CFI Richard and the other instructors for briefing all the solo pilots before letting them fly to get their currency back. Thanks also to all the pilots for being sensible and repaying the faith Richard had in our ability to fly after a long lay-off without having a check flight.

From mid-July we welcomed back 2 seat flying and, with the help of the instructors happy to fly with P2 pilots, we have been able to start some training flights again. Some pilots have already been cleared to solo so congratulations to them.

There are so many people to thank that I will almost certainly upset some people I don't mention – however thanks go to everyone who has helped.

Thanks to the whole of the committee – committee meetings are a bit different under lockdown and Zoom meetings, more regularly than normal because everything is changing quickly, has been the order of the day.

On the ground at the club maintenance and annual inspections were all completed to allow us to fly when the rules permitted and thanks go primarily to Jon and Ian for getting this done but also thanks to the many others that helped along the way. Phil also has kept the buggies running and the ground looking good.

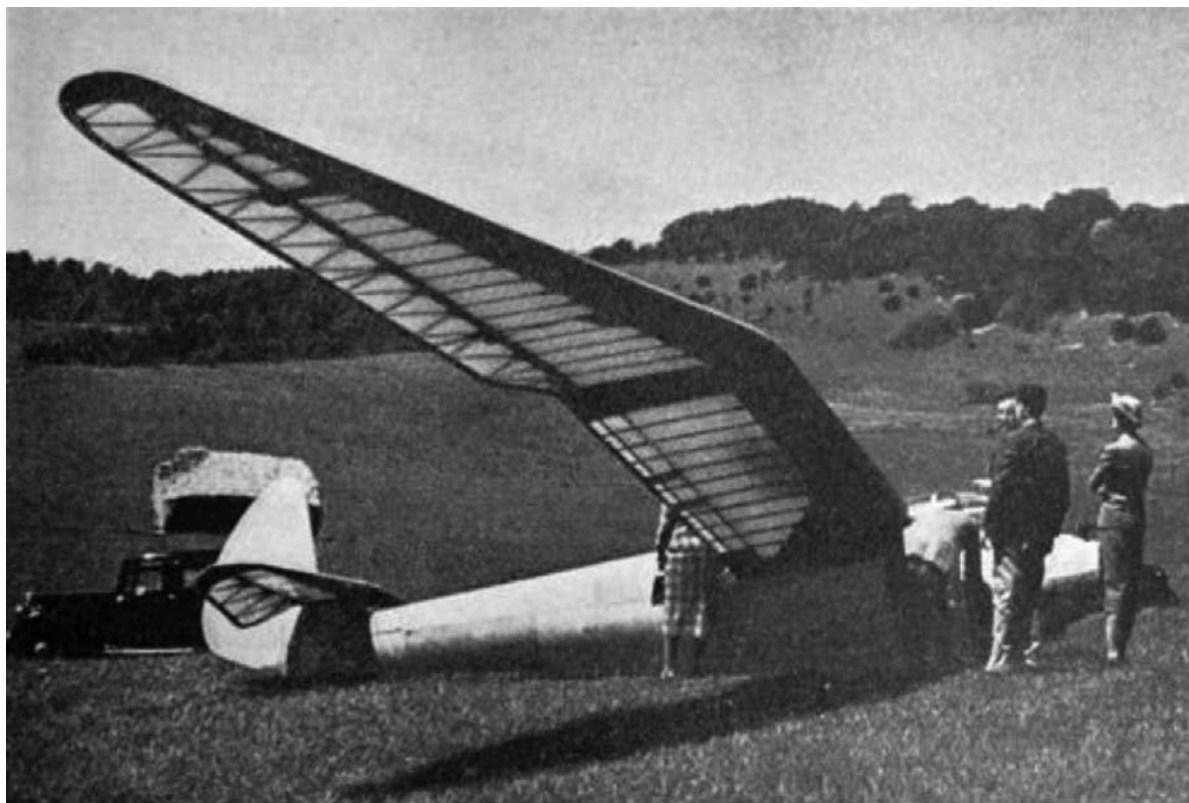
Mark Kidd has put in hours of work both with FreeFlight and sorting paperwork – in particular the insurances which was all new to him and took a lot of sorting.

Lastly but by no means least, is Dorcas – what can I say – very few people realise the effort and time she puts in to keep the club running. The start of COVID-19 meant hundreds of Air Ex flights to cancel but now we are starting to book in a few. She also fields hundreds of emails every month. None of this is straight forward but Dorcas always has a handle on what needs doing next.

Back in the day

Jonathan Hill

I used to fly model slope soarers at Colley Hill . . . pre M25 days . . . I'll give it a go in the K8 . . . who's got the bungee?



A Minimoa on the site of the Surrey Gliding Club at Bucklands Hill, between Reigate and Dorking, where there is fourteen miles of slope soaring

Contact Details

The Directors of the Club are:

Jason Barton
Terry Hagerty

The Club Committee is made up of:

Chris Leggett (Chairman)
Marc Corrance (Secretary)
Richard Fitch (CFI)
Mark Kidd (Treasurer)
Paul Hayward (Safety Officer)
Jonathan Hill (Technical Officer)
Stephen Skinner
Trevor Fielder

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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 above email address.