

Vintage Times

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Newsletter of Vintage Gliders Australia

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THE POT OF GOLD! IAN PATCHING FLIES THE BG12a VH-GND

NEARLY THERE!

Our 100th issue will look at one of those great pioneers who bravely cast caution to the winds and developed Gliding, so that those who follow may have the pleasure of "messing about with old gliders!"

REGIONAL RALLY AT BENDIGO

29th Oct to 1st Nov, 2005

Plans are taking shape for a regional vintage rally to be held at Raywood, home of the Bendigo Gliding Club, over the four days of the **Melbourne Cup long weekend**. The Bendigo club hold a coaching course for cross country flying at that time, and it is expected that our activities will fit in well with the course. During the day the local area should be relatively quiet while the course members are flying their tasks. Catering will be provided by the club's members and their families, winch launches are available and two tow-planes will be present. The club has an excellent clubhouse and good hangarage facilities, although hangarspace is not expected to be available for the visiting gliders.

The airfield is located 5 km East of Raywood in flat country ideal for gliding. The weather should have warmed up by then and good flights are to be expected. This gives our members a wonderful opportunity to dust off the winter chills and get into practice early for some great summer gliding! Lots of local attractions are within easy reach and Bendigo is just down the road. Camping on the field is available and there are many local hotels and motels.

Full details are expected in issue 100 of VT, however mark the dates in your calendar and prepare for a great time. For further details, suggestions and updates please contact Dave Goldsmith. Thanks are due to the Bendigo Gliding Club for supporting VGA over the weekend.

I.V.S.M.



ELMIRA, NY, USA
2005

Six members are now expected to attend the IVSM 2005 Vintage Sailplane event in August. They are Alan and Lorna Patching, John Ashford, Dave and Jenne Goldsmith and Hans Prem.

The event is to be held at Harris Hill, Elmira, New York State from 20th to 27th August, 2005. VGA representatives took Australia's oldest airworthy glider, the Golden Eagle, to the last IVSM 5 years ago.



Australian Gliding Museum Inc

Secretary Graeme Barton, 03 98021098

Editor Geoff Hearn, 03 9729 3889

Issue 11 features the Grunau Babies in Australia. The Museum website is now up and running. You can view the website for a comprehensive overview of activities on www.geocities.com/aus_gm (Note the underscore between aus_gm).

The Museum has enjoyed wonderful support in the provision of workshop facilities in the past, however a change of ownership of the workshop means that we must now pay our way. A number of proposals are being examined and donations are requested. Some supporters are saving money on their telephone bill and also having 3% of call fees sent to the AGM every month, by using Message CTC as their home phone provider. Full details are available at www.messagectc.com.au or 1300 367 117. Message has agreed to transfer their new 10 cent call promotion plans to established museum supporting customers on request. Compare their rates with your present bill!

The Museum also asks for the donation of surplus releases, instruments,

publications or any item of gliding paraphernalia that may be of interest.

Unfortunately some items have been discarded in the past that would greatly assist with restorations, preservations and planned displays, and we hope all gliding people can keep the Museum in mind when any item is no longer needed. Please also ensure that the Museum is mentioned in an appropriate place as beneficiary of your gliding paraphernalia if it is likely to be disposed of by family or friends.

The Museum is able to make it's glass bead blaster available for small components for an appropriate fee.

VGA members will be sad to learn of the passing of AGM Vice-President Dave Darbyshire.

Vintage Glider Club (International)

www.vintagegliderclub.org.uk

VGC News issue 114 features the VGA Bordertown Rally, including many glossy photos and the full rundown from VT 97. There is also a nice Kookaburra photo with Ray Ash's story of Neil Bennett's 300 km flight in the Kookaburra.

Vintage Sailplane Association (USA) www.vintagesailplane.org

Bungee Cord spring 2005 is jampacked with news and photos, including the review of Paul Schweizer's book "Soaring through the 20th Century", also "How long can you tread water?", (an article about hangar flooding!), and the Baby Albatross display at the SSA Convention (shades of our own efforts with the ES50 "Club" at the GFA AGM!).

The Australian Homebuilt Sailplane,
3 Magnolia Ave., Kings Park, Vic., 3021
www.geocities.com/capecanaverall/hangar/3510

Another interesting issue with articles about airbrush technique, installing a trim on Woodstock "Woody Roo", The Wooden Whiz about the BG12, timber selection, trailer talk and "Experimental or just mental?", reporting on the recent symposium.

Soaring Australia www.gfa.org.au

July issue features stage two of Emilis's museum at Monarto. A new 150 sq. m. shed has been added, connected to stage one by a "docking station".

The Yellow Witch

A Personal Slant on the End of An Era



BY GED TERRY

VGA Members will know that my long standing friend Keith Nolan recently parted with The Yellow Witch after many, many years of loving ownership - the end of an era. It is the end of an era for me too.

As many Members will know, I have shared the flying of The Yellow Witch (always referred to by Keith and me as "The Oly") with Keith at Vintage Regattas for some years on my annual gliding pilgrimages to Australia.

Indeed, I first met Keith - and The Yellow Witch - at a Vintage Regatta at Lochiel in 1989. With the generosity so typical of VGA Members, Keith soon had me airborne in "The Oly".



PETER BROOKMAN PHOTO

Since then we have flown together (Keith and me, "The Oly" and me and Keith and "The Oly") many times in many places. I discover that I have flown The Yellow Witch from more airfields than any other single glider.

In addition to Lochiel, there has been Nyah, Ararat, Whitwarta, Mangalore, Raywood, Locksley, Gawler, Bacchus Marsh, Stonefield and Bordertown. 11 sites, 70 hours, 102 launches. I savour every moment.

I am truly privileged to have been associated with this historic and accomplished example of Australian gliding heritage and its owner (who deserves the same accolade!).

I wish The Yellow Witch and its new owner well and Keith well in his future flying.

At one stage, Keith also owned Olympia GLY, which I also flew at a couple of Vintage Regattas - but, as they say, that's another story.

Be warned, I will still be turning up at Vintage Regattas.....

Letters

Grunau News from Leigh Bunting
VH-GLW

The mystery of the school exercise book log sheets pinned to the front of GLW's logbook appears to have a likely solution.

Various sources said that SCGC obtained the aircraft unfinished but these sheets said it was flying in 1956.

GLW replaced another SCGC Grunau that was written off.

Information from Ray Ash, and elsewhere said that this first Grunau was pranged when hitting a car on landing. On looking at these log sheets again, a note on the final page said, 'Collision with car'.

Hence it seems very likely that these log sheets belong to that first Grunau and some person has just carried on in the 'new' log book with the times of the old Grunau added to GLW. So GLW did some 124hrs before it even left the ground.

Therefore, it appears that I'll have to remove these pages and doctor GLW's logbook to reflect the actual times that it has done in the proper log book pages.

The next thing - should these old pages be returned to SCGC?

VH-GHY

The Hoinville Grunau, which has been in the care of John Barnes in

Rockhampton has been exchanged for an ASW20.

The new owner is Nigel Arnot in Brisbane. Nigel has plans to add it to his collection, which includes the Hawker Sea Fury and Yak 3.

I have been in touch with Nigel and he confirms the transfer. I enclose part of an email I received from him:

"Great to hear from you, yes I am now the proud owner of VH-GHY. Can you believe it I have not even seen the aircraft yet but I know that I will love it. I have a fascination with old aircraft be it powered or non powered so it is great to add this to the collection.

I will over the next 12 months add some finer touches to the Grunau before hopefully flying it.

Will very much look forward to catching up with you when you come through and there is plenty of room for a large trailer."

Cheers for now, Leigh

From "JR" Marshall

I got onto the Australian Gliding Museum website this morning, and put it in my favourites. Is the GB3 flyable? It used to live here, and it would be nice to fly it, I was too young when it was here, but I did have my first ever flight in the ES50 aged 4 sitting on Mums knee with Wolfgang Lellau at the controls

My memory of that flight is limited, but I do recall others. I can remember my first experience of a cable break, that was in our Kooka (Millicent's) and Dad was flying. Millicent used to go to Waikerie for a week, during school holidays, in the summer, (during fruit season). I remember using a radio for the first time in 1966, talking to Bill Sinclair (a Millicent member), flying Waikerie's KA6, doing his 5 hours. I got myself into a little bit of trouble, because I used the radio when no-one else was around, and I was only about 6 years old. That was also my first encounter with the Yellow Witch, Dad did his 5 hours in it on the 1st. of Feb.1966. Regards JR

GYMPIE RALLY CANCELLED

As a result of an accident that unfortunately involved the fatality of a relative of a club pilot in a two-seater, the planned June Rally at Gympie did not go ahead. Ron Geake has said that the club will try for another Vintage Rally some time in the future.

FOR SALE

VH GLU(e) Cherokee II

Glu(e) will be for sale on completion of its 40yr survey. Price \$4500 including trailer.

Contact Lyle Whitfield, P.O Box 1196, Goulburn 2580

bosmit@goulburn.net.au



FOR SALE:-

VH-GTW Ka6cr, 1967, 3215 hours, annual due 27-10-03, very good condition

VH-GPY ASK13, 1967, 5623 hours, annual due 12-10-02, good condition

VH-GZY ASK-13, 3280 hours, nosewheel, annual due 22-3-03. The best K13 in the world?

VH-HDV Blanik, 3280 hours, last flown 1997, sweetest Blanik to fly
Callair tugs VH-APC and VH-MPG,
"I am negotiable with prices and would rather be "financing" than selling, (barring one tug), however all aircraft are available for the best offer".

Les Webster, Tel 03 5798 5260, Fax 03 5798 5545, Mobile 0414188181

EP-2 VH-GXK. Currently stored and hasn't flown for some years.

Will be sold with a new Form 2 and comes with an open trailer which is very basic.

Price neg.

ES-60 b Sparrow. VH-GGP. Requires 40 yearly, but appears to be in very good condition.

Privately owned for many years it is only just run in with just over 1000 hours.

Price neg.

K-7 VH-U11. Currently stored but will be sold with a current Form 2.

Open trailer.

Price neg.

Contact Ian Patching for further details on any of these aircraft.

Another Busy Year!

BY IAN PATCHING

The time since the rally has been very interesting to say the least. There have been a few things happening with gliders moving and people seeking aircraft. In April Geoff Hearn and I went to Central Coast NSW and took delivery of a BG-12a, GND. A few items showed up on the inspection and these were rectified over the last couple of months culminating with the first flight on the 1st of July. Apart from a very annoying whistling from the canopy seal the glider is very pleasant to fly, a bit heavy on the ailerons but the flap system is very simple to use and work much like airbrakes. GND was built in the late 50's by Bill Selge of Adelaide and has spent time with him, Canberra Gliding Club and private owners. Like many homebuilts it doesn't have a lot of hours and like many BG-12's it is a bit on the heavy side but that means it should go well in strong conditions.



BG12a VH-GND

Bob Wyatt in Townsville has been enjoying his Motor Falke so much that he decided to sell his Foka 5r, GQN and this was quickly snapped up by Mark White, Caleb's dad. He will go to Townsville in August to collect it. Bobs wife Anne is quite ill and our thoughts go out to her.

There are some other gliders on the market that are pretty good, see the classified section.



THE BERGFALKE 2-55

The team at Locksley have bought the Bergfalke 2 from Byron Bay and hope to collect it very soon and use it for training. I did a repair on their Ka6, GRV and also completed its Form 2. I have also completed Form 2's on the Longwing, GRN and Shortwing, GRX Kookaburras.

Caleb continues with the work on the EP-2, IZZ which is undergoing a change of colour before he takes it to the Junior Nationals at Temora in December. We figure that with a red fuselage it will go much faster and surprise some of the glass pundits. Good luck Caleb. Steve Curtiss has offered to help with the painting and we are aiming to have it back in the air for the start of september to allow caleb some valuable practice time.

Queens Birthday Weekend.

The VGA again held its mini Form 2 weekend at Bacchus Marsh. The number of gliders was down this time but we certainly were kept busy. The K-7 came from Sth. Gippsland GC for a 40 yearly and this was almost completed on the weekend. The glider is in very good condition and only required minor works to pass the test. The inspection was subsequently completed 2 weekends later. A very good effort from Klaus and Dennis. I spent my time fiddling with the Iranian 2 seater in preparation for first of type certification. We also did some weighing on a Pawnee, and John

Ashford continued with the ongoing inspection and modifications to the K-2, GHO.

A big thankyou to Alan Patching for his time again.

David Howse continues with the rebuilding of his Shortwing, GLE and is starting to look at the wing now as the fuselage has progressed so far. Keep going Dave. I have also finally sunk my teeth into the repair of the K6e, GEA. The stb wing has been broken in half and will require major surgery to fix it. Alan and I went over the spar last weekend and agree the job is repairable, all it requires is time, patience and of course money. This is the first Major repair I am attempting and it is a bit daunting. I can tell you that as I remove ply and ribs further and further along the wing to enable the splices to be done I sometimes wonder if it is all worth it. BUT, I look at the rest of the glider which sits virtually undamaged and still think it is. I will keep members updated as the repair continues.

Keith Nolan has kindly offered to run a mini wood working course at the Rally during January. Look out for further details in the next edition of VT or contact Keith for instructions on the requirements. Thanks Keith. Cheers, Ian Patching.



WELL DONE VHZ!

Congratulations to our friends at the Vintage Glider Club Netherlands, who have issued a special colour edition of their magazine "De Spandraad" in celebration of their twentieth anniversary! Vintage Associations in Australia and the UK are remembered for their congratulations on the formation of the VHZ twenty years ago. For more information log on to the excellent website at www.zweefhist.nl, and click on the Union Jack for English.

Geoff Gifford Trophy Flight



By Peter Champness

Peter won the Geoff Gifford Trophy awarded at Bordertown 2005 for the best flight by a vintage glider between annual rallies. This is his story....

Briefing on the expected weather at Raywood for 31st October, 2004 was by Terry Bellair. Surface winds were forecast at 10-15 kts from the NW with SW winds above eight thousand feet of similar strength. Thermals were predicted to eight thousand feet and Terry cautiously predicted the possibility of clouds with the inversion breaking about 1pm.

A task was set for the day which was a sort of polygon comprising with the major axis orientated East-West: Raywood, Llanelly, St Arnaud airfield, Mitiamo, Elmore and back to Raywood. A circle of 20 km was defined around each turn point. Pilots could elect to turn at any point in the circle thereby shortening or extending the course depending on the conditions and one's individual progress. I didn't take much notice of the task because I had to go home in the late afternoon and did not expect to fly cross country. I also neglected to enter the turn points into my GPS.

We sat around as the morning passed by and the temperature gradually increased. No one went for a test flight and we were all surprised when cumulus clouds suddenly appeared all

over the sky at about 12:30. This prompted a sudden rush for the flight line with the first launches occurring about 1pm. The launching point was a dangerous place to be for a while with pilots towing out and jockeying for position and there was at least one minor collision. I was happy to hang back as I was planning local flying. I lined up in front of the Beaufort Club Super Arrow. The club member was being coached by the CFI to attempt his Silver C fifty kilometer flight.



I launched at about 2pm and was towed into a good thermal with increased in strength as I got higher until I had seven to eight kts up. At about three thousand feet I looked down. The Super Arrow was launched below me but he did not get settled in the thermal and I was clearly pulling away. I heard later he tried moving north looking for a better thermal and out landed about 15 km away which was a bit of a disappointment given the potential of the day. I took the first thermal to nine thousand feet, just below cloud base and decided to proceed to the West toward St Arnaud.

After the first very good thermal I changed my mind about local flying. Really good cross country days don't occur that often and shouldn't be wasted. If I out landed I was going to be very late home but the retrieve crew would help me box up the glider which I was going to do any way so that would save some time. I thought about my potential task. I didn't have Llanelly on my GPS and had not been there before so I decided to try for St Arnaud which I did have co-ordinates for and assess the options after that.

In front of me the sky had a good coverage of cumulus clouds with bases at nine thousand feet. There were no streets but

the clouds were not especially far apart and I could choose to divert slightly left or right of track to fly under the better looking clouds in my path. Most of the clouds had some lift under them with occasional strong cores. I did not turn in the lift because I was still very high but I slowed down whenever the vario showed an up indication so as to "dwell in the lift as long as possible". I made about 30 km into the wind in this way without making a turn and was approaching the first forested area in my path. The township of Wedderburn lies within this forest. I had an out landing near Wedderburn on the slope of Mt Koorong two years ago and spent about 6 hours wandering from one empty farm house to another before I was finally rescued by a farmer spot lighting for foxes well after dark. This caused a bit of drama because the SAR plan had been instituted at sundown and the police notified of my absence.

I passed Wedderburn and found a good core under a cloud in which I recovered my height. Beyond Wedderburn the country is cleared farm land with another forest about 30 km beyond. I began to look around for St Arnaud. I couldn't see it but the GPS said I was on track and still had some distance to go. Soon after I saw a glider circling, ahead and somewhat below me. This was quite exciting because all the fiberglass gliders had departed before me. Disregarding the fact that they had been via Llanelly it meant I had been flying as fast as the others and had maybe even caught up a bit. I put the nose down and sped over to his thermal joining a few hundred feet above him. I recognised David Wilson flying the other glider. The thermal was not such a good one, I was only managing about four knots compared with seven to eight knots in other thermals. We each did about six or seven turns and then left. I didn't see him again after that.

Soon after this I started to see a moderate sized town beyond the forest in the distant haze. This turned out to be St Arnaud. The Airfield was about

five to eight kilometers further on to the West of the town. The turn always seems to take ages since to keep the turn point in sight beyond the wing tip even during a steep turn requires one to fly somewhat beyond the turn point, particularly at high altitude. It takes even longer into the wind.

After turning at the St Arnaud airfield I made a course to the North East across wind. I was planning to fly to Mitiamo but I had a problem here because I wasn't sure where Mitiamo was and I did not have it logged into my GPS. The road sign on the Raywood turnoff at Eaglehawk says Pyramid Hill/Mitiamo. This led me to think that Mitiamo should be North of Pyramid Hill on the same road. To make matters worse I thought it best to turn the GPS off since I had not been able to charge the batteries over night and I had flown about five hours since yesterday which meant that the batteries must be pretty low. I thought I might need it later to find the way home.



PETER'S FOKA 5

As I made my way North East I noticed an interesting cloud not far off track. It was quite a big cumulus with a cloud base at nine and a half thousand feet but it had a smoothly sloping face on the westerly side with some wisps of a lenticular cloud forming over the top. This seemed very likely to indicate a shear wave, just like Terry Bellair had talked about. I considered trying to contact the wave but decided not to waste time because it was now after 4pm and I was at my furthest distance from Raywood.

After about forty minutes on the North East course I came to a town with two lakes. This looked like a very nice spot. I flew over the centre of the town, which I later looked up on the map and discovered it was the famous township of Boort. I then began to wonder about the location of

Mitiamo. From Boort I could see Pyramid Hill. I could not see any town North of Pyramid Hill and I could see almost to the Murray River. After flying on for another ten minutes I decided to turn at Pyramid Hill instead and changed course to the East.

Boort to Pyramid Hill did not take long with the wind behind me now. I had another good climb at PH to about nine and a half thousand feet and turned south toward Raywood. I thought about the options. It was down wind to Raywood and it looked as though I would easily get there with a lot of height to spare. I decided to take a detour toward Elmore to use up the excess height. The clouds were starting to disappear from the sky by now. There was one good cloud on the way but it began to dissolve as I approached. I passed south of the town with the Silo which I had seen on the first day, the town south of the large square of scrub which marks Pyramid Hill. Could this be the missing Mitiamo? I checked the map later and found that it was.

I kept an eye on the distance to Raywood during this leg. I had the height for a diversion back to Raywood if no further lift was found. It would be a pity to land out after such a good flight. I decided to avail myself of the discretionary turn point arrangements and try to turn within 20 km of Elmore so as to claim Elmore as a turn point. I switched my GPS back on and found I had about 30 km to go. In the end I flew to 9.5 km from Elmore on the GPS before turning back toward Raywood. As luck would have it I found buoyant air and lots of lift on the final leg arriving back over the airfield with three thousand feet to spare. A beat up would have been nice but the old Foka is supposed to have glue problems so it is best not to over stress the wings. I made a pass over the airfield then pulled the airbrakes, set up a fairly high circuit and landed about 6:45 pm, flying time 4 hrs and 19 minutes.

I packed the glider into the trailer as quickly as possible after landing assisted by Mal Bennett. The drive back to Melbourne was uneventful and the glider trailer was deposited in the back garden. The next day I had to go to work but when I got home I sat down with a map to check my flight. I thought I might have made about 250 km and was thrilled to find that the distance between my established turn points was 315 km. I entered it in my log book as my second 300km flight in the Foka 5.

Within a few days the Vintage Glider News Letter arrived and I read the article by Lee Bunting about his epic Flight in his Grunau 2B. I also read Ian Patching's note about the Geoff Gifford Trophy for notable cross country flights and decided to include a claim with my membership renewal. I was thrilled to win the trophy but felt that Lee's flight might have been a better one. Ian probably gave me the wrong handicap on the Foka 5. I hope you will forgive me Lee, however if I don't give it back now.

BORDERTOWN 2006 VGA Annual Rally

7th to 15th January, 2006

VGA Secretary/Treasurer Ian Patching, has confirmed that the consensus for 2006 is that we return to Bordertown. The Bordertown-Keith gliding Club is more than happy to have us with them again. He added that the discussion should be for the following year 2007 and the contenders are: Locksley, Bendigo, Mildura, and a site in NSW (perhaps Bathurst or Gulgong). Ian says we should also consider an Easter Regatta so people could get together when the weather isn't so hot, and others may also be able to come and enjoy some vintage gliding.

SADLY we report the passing of Mardi Gething on 16th July, 2005. She was well known as an active pilot and instructor. Mardi was a member of Sunraysia Gliding Club and wife of the late Richard Gething, who was the first full-time GFA Secretary.

The LO150 VH-GFH Modifications and Markings

by Gary Sunderland

VH-GFH was originally shipped to Australia in 1955 on board a Royal Australian Navy (RAN) aircraft carrier, ostensibly for the RAN Gliding Association (RANGA), based at Nowra, but actually as the private mount for Commander Tony Goodhart (RN). Commander Goodhart was then attached to the RAN and was the CFI of the RANGA. He was the brother of Commander Nick Goodhart, also a famous British glider pilot.

The glider was painted in the (then) RANGA colour scheme of silver all over, with broad red bands across both wings and a red rudder. An early modification carried out for Tony was to increase the chord of the fin by nine inches with a parallel section, and fit a new fin post to hinge the rudder. This increased the directional stability, but at the expense of rudder lock at high angles of yaw.

Tony set a world speed record over a 300km triangular course of just under 75km/hr in January, 1956, and probably would have set other records in Australia at the time but for the difficulty of arranging turning point observers for record flights. Those were the days before photographic verification was introduced, and most records were for distance and goal flights.

Upon departure back to the U.K. , Tony declared the LO 150 too advanced and difficult for ordinary (colonial?) pilots to fly safely, and convinced RANGA to sell it (for which I personally give thanks!).

Upon hearing that the LO 150 was for sale Derek Reid and Don Brown of the VMFG immediately made an offer and started looking around for other private syndicate members. Among the first were John Lilly, Boris (Bob) Slusarev and Otto (call me Bob) Brand, all experienced fliers, Stephen Wills (son of the famous Phillip) and the writer,

only recently solo in the T31. In later years, the syndicate included such notables as Jim Simpson, Bob McCullough, David Ferguson, John Potts, Tom Philcox, Neil McRury, Tim and Tony Tabart, and Mike Rogers.

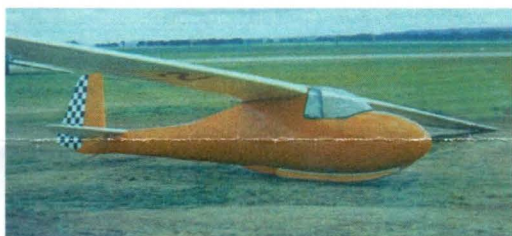
Under John Lilly's influence, we sanded back to silver, which looked horrible, and painted the LO150 pure white, as Jack said: "to show the purity of it's outlines". In those days gliders were painted all the colours of the rainbow, and a pure white glider was a novelty. As supplied, the LO150 was originally fitted with "shoulder" releases, which required a rope yoke to attach to the winch wire or tow rope. This was inconvenient, so an early modification was to install an "Ottfur" belly release.

The design of the LO 150 was well ahead of it's time, and the glider was extremely easy to fly, with docile flight characteristics, low control loads and a good performance. With the flaps down, which mechanism drooped the ailerons, the handling was as docile as a Grunau Baby, and with the flaps up the LO 150 had an impressive glide up to 100 knots, very much like a modern sailplane. The only complaint was the bolt upright seating position, which was common to most gliders of that time. After 5 hours in the LO 150 the pilot staggered out with a sore back and behind. Some of the problem was due to the back pack parachute, fitted into a recess in the vertical main bulkhead, which also acted as the backrest for the pilot. During steep turns the weight of the parachute could be felt through the harness tugging down on the pilot's shoulders, to increase the general discomfort.

Some years later a Geelong syndicate imported another LO 150 and Bob McGillivray modified the seating of this one to provide some back seat slope. This must have been a very difficult exercise, within the confines of the cramped cockpit.

VH-GFH flew at all of the early Australian National Gliding Championships, even though these were handicapped competitions, and the LO 150's scores were severely penalized. At the second nationals at Gawler, David Ferguson won the 200 km triangle task, despite the handicap and despite the observer missing

his start, because we had no radio installed at the time, so Dave had to accept the launch time. These were the days when we were allocated contest numbers and the LO 150 was marked "12". Later we painted "2" for the first Benalla Nats under one wing and on the fin. The LO 150 there after flew with this number, and the syndicate became the "Number Two" syndicate. The rudder was painted red again to aid visibility.



THE NUMBER 2 SYNDICATE LO 150
While the seating was somewhat uncomfortable for most pilots, the cockpit was a very tight squeeze for tall pilots and Tony Goodhart, John Potts, Dave Ferguson and Tony Tabart had difficulty fitting themselves in the space available. In particular Tony Tabart had to twist sideways into the cockpit because his shoulders were broader than the width available.

We shared the LO 150 at the first Waikerie National Championships, held in December 1965 – January 1966 where Tony had his first taste of a serious contest.

During the preceding winter the syndicate carried out a major refurbishment of the LO 150 to restore it's performance. The original glider was completely covered with plywood and with an automotive filler and paint surface, which was distorted and cracking. All of the filler was painstakingly scraped off and replaced with epoxy and micro-balloon mix and sanded back to an accurate profile. All of the surfaces were then covered with fabric and dope, with a final high visibility paint scheme of an orange fuselage and a black and white "checkerboard" rudder. At about the same time the syndicate obtained it's first radio, a HF band set, which had the advantage of ground to ground reception, but with the disadvantage of

an external aerial from the fuselage to the top of the fin. Thus the glider performance gains were probably cancelled out by the drag of the external aerial!

In any event the syndicate decided to sell the LO 150 and move on to a Boomerang at first, and then to an open Libelle. The Libelle was VH-GXH, an all white sailplane marked with a simple number "2" on the fin. We finally had our ideal sailplane, comfortable and easy to fly, plenty of performance for the time and aesthetically pleasing to John Lilly! This glider was also sold at a later time and was flown, with some success by Johnathon Shand, the GFA Technical Officer at the time.

The remainder of the "Number two" syndicate still exists in Otto Brand and Neil McRory, who operate a 17 meter DG out of Tocumwal. VH-GFH still exists "somewhere in NSW" according to Ian Patching. Otto is planning for some sort of re-union of the old syndicate members in 2007, which would mark 50 years for the syndicate, and it would be nice if the old LO could be present for the occasion, hopefully preserved for the Australian Gliding Museum.

THE BIRD THAT FLAPPED IT'S WINGS

By Fred Foord

A true story, the pilot's name suppressed to protect him, but he would have been known to many who flew at Lasham in the period 50's to 70's

Time – A warm summer day in 1949

Place – Southdown Gliding Club, Friston, Sussex, UK.

Activity – Slope soaring.

Our site was an ex Battle of Britain airfield on the South Downs close to Eastbourne. In fact on the westernmost three of the white cliffs called the 'Seven Sisters'; Haven Brow, Short Brow and Rough Brow. (You need local knowledge to know that and I was a local lad from Eastbourne). Southdown flew there from when we started up in 1947 until we moved back inland to Bopeep Hill on the North-facing slope of the South Downs, close to Itford

Hill where it had all started in 1922. At Friston we soared over the vertical cliffs with only the sea ahead of us, which had some disadvantages! On the western boundary Haven Brow sloped down to the River Cuckmere, one of the few Sussex rivers cutting through the South Downs from north to south.

One weekend a few pilots from a neighbouring club came along to share the flying. Late in the afternoon the wind, which wasn't very strong, veered around to the west so that soaring was only possible on the western slope. K. F... was enjoying the soaring and not having the necessary local knowledge was reluctant to give it away, after all there were some seagulls showing him how it should be done. So he followed the gulls southwards to the estuary end of the slope, then around the corner - eastwards. He was down to cliff top level, about 200 feet above sea level, by this time. The tide was out but the shingle beach was relatively crowded with bathers enjoying the opportunity to tan themselves. He looked back at his seagull, who had the local knowledge, which said 'when you get in this situation - flap your wings. And it did!

There was no option open except to land in the sea, which fortunately was calm, and no less importantly it was low tide. He managed to get into wind, what there was of it, and then he was at flaring level. He suddenly realised that the water beneath him was only a couple of inches deep - he was over a sand bar. His lucky day! By the time he had stopped, which with the drag of the water on his skid was PBQ, the holidaymakers were wading out through deeper water to reach him, and they carried his glider safely to the shore without even getting the fuselage wet.

Fred Foord 3.2.05



AUSTRALIAN GLIDING MUSEUM GB 111
Having it's form 2 inspection, June 2004.

In reply to JR Marshall (see "letters" in this issue of VT), the aircraft needs a recover due to the age of it's fabric but is otherwise airworthy.

BUNGEE RUNNERS

By Wal Stott

There's been great soaring at the strip today
and the pilots are all having plenty to say
10,000 to cloudbase, lift of 10 knots
300k triangles with speed on the stops.

We are packing the hangar and wiping them
proud
everyone is laughing and talking quite loud
About eagles, close calls and where they've
been
flying the ridge with the hang-gliders seen.

I went back for the map to check the flight
these beautiful machines and the hangars
were quiet
Up in the rafters there's an old primary plane
what tales it could tell, what joys and what pain.

It was easy to imagine at the end of the day
the pilots would be laughing and having their
say
Of flights, of distance, just like their dream
100 yards or more down the hill that's green.

There were landings, take-offs, bungee
runner's falls
ground loops and failures and several stalls
There's wind in the riggings and on their face
it was done for fun and not for the race.

They strived up the hill for seconds of flight
we fly at a hundred and up out of sight
It's hard to tell who's had the most fun
their short hundred yards or us with our ton.