

# Vintage Times

Newsletter of Vintage Gliders Australia

[www.vintageglidersaustralia.org.au](http://www.vintageglidersaustralia.org.au)

Issue 108 October 2007

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**Membership \$20 every October** Articles for Vintage Times are welcomed



## *T31 revels in thermal and ridge lift at Boonah*

Stewart Hamey, in the front seat, and John Feeney enjoy some open cockpit flying at Boonah, Qld, on 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2007. Flying the ridge in Laurie Simpkin's T31 for 56 minutes, they reached a height of 1824 feet.

PHOTO by Stewart Hamey

Aerotowed by Cessna 150 (180Hp) VH-WWP, three flights were made on the day.

On the first flight, John Stockwell, who last flew a T31 in 1973, occupied the front seat, and Stewart Hamey occupied the other seat. During the 33 minute flight in thermals, a maximum height of 3,400 feet was reached.

On flight number two, Stewart occupied the front seat and Laurie Simpkins was behind. With a flight of 60 minutes in thermals and on the ridge, a maximum height of 3,040 feet was attained.

Flight number three saw Stewart Hamey in the front seat and John Feeney in the rear. Flight time was 56 minutes using ridge lift and a best height of 1820 feet was reached.

Summing up the day, Stewart said "We had a great time !" Well, Stewart, going from the photos we sure have to agree!

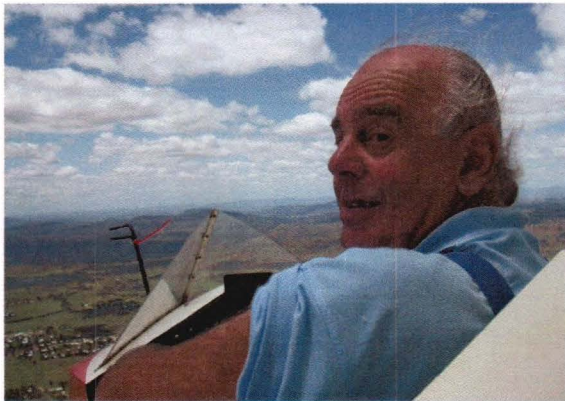
**THANKS TO STEWART HAMEY AND LAURIE SIMPKINS FOR THE STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS USED IN THIS ARTICLE**



**Stewart Hamey and Laurie Simpkins**



**Stewart Hamey & John Feeney ready for liftoff**



**John Stockwell enjoys his first flight in a T31 since 1973**



**Between the struts! Boonah Airfield**

## **BORDERTOWN 2008**



Ian Patching has advised that all is in place for another great Annual Rally at Bordertown. The Rally will run from **5<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> January**, however once again early arrivals will be catered for, please keep Ian informed if you plan to arrive before Saturday.

The Bordertown and Keith Gliding Club has facilities in good shape and are again ready to ensure an enjoyable time for all participants.

Erik Sherwin and Emilis Pregauskas have put some effort into gathering information to assess the proposal of Bordertown as a permanent home for the VGA Annual Rally. Their correspondence is presented in the pages of this issue.

## Vintage Glider Fly-In

BARAMBAH DISTRICT GLIDING CLUB  
Wondai Airfield 27 - 30 September 2007  
FROM RON GEAKE



**BERNARD "SPEEDY" GONSALVES AND Ka6**

Although small in number the welcoming friendly atmosphere prevailed and excellent flying was had by all.

Bernard "Speedy" Gonsalves brought K6cr GSR and Ron Geake brought Boomerang GPP.

Visitors were John Aitken, Bert Persson, Mike Green and a group from Caboolture. Barambah District Gliding Club members were Simon Rammelt with Mini Nimbus FQA, Neville Badior with Libelle GCT, and Ib Braes with Ventus GGF.

Speedy logged 8 hours and climbed to over 10,000 ft. Ib, Simon and Neville had excellent flights with heights over 12,000 ft.

Bert Perssons flew his Teste from Caboolture on Saturday, stayed overnight and returned on Sunday – all on glide power, no motor after launch – consultation with a map showing the terrain will highlight to magnitude of these flights.

Bert and Ib. knew of each others gliding exploits over many years in Europe and Australia, and finally met for the first time during Bert's visit.



**RON GEAKE'S BOOMERANG GPP**

The purpose of the Fly-Ins and the Annual Regatta is to promote Vintage Gliding in Queensland so it is intended to continue with these Events to encourage participation but as we have such excellent conditions at Wondai we extend an open invitation for all to come at any time as we have winch and Auster available each flying weekend.

The next Fly-In will be from **Thursday 27 December until Sunday 30 December 2007**  
Ron Geake Ph. 07 5486 7247; Mob. 04 1771 9797; Email: [rongeake@bigpond.com](mailto:rongeake@bigpond.com)

## Leigh Bunting receives Vintage Glider Club Commendation!



Leigh Bunting has been awarded a special commendation at the Vintage Glider Club Annual Dinner in the United Kingdom.

Leigh was originally nominated by Alan Patching for the Frank Reeks Trophy for restoration, which was awarded to a Belgian Grunau when the judges noted some small non-standard mods to VH-GDN. (maybe the data downloader for the flarm??). However they noted the very high standard of Leigh's restoration and awarded a silver salver. The inscription is "VGC Commendation prize for Grunau Ib restoration VH-GDN 2007, Leigh Bunting. The plate was awarded to Leigh in his absence by VGC President Chris Wills and will be forwarded to Leigh in Australia"



The Silver Salver

## Paul B. MacCready scientist and inventor of unconventional aircraft



**PAUL MACCREADY**

From the web via Martin Simons  
Paul MacCready, who has died aged 81, was known as the "father of human-powered flight".

In the 1970s MacCready, an American aeronautical engineer, found himself responsible for a \$100,000 debt after he had guaranteed a relative's business venture which subsequently failed. He decided to try to win the £50,000 prize put up by the British industrialist Henry Kremer for a successful human-powered flight.

The prize had gone unclaimed for 18 years, but on August 23 1977 MacCready's Gossamer Condor - piloted (or rather pedalled) by Bryan Allen - made the first sustained, controlled flight powered solely by a human.

The machine weighed 70lb and was constructed from aluminum, foam, piano wire and Mylar - a lightweight Polyester material. The seven-and-a-half minute flight covered a figure-of-eight course around pylons half a mile apart at Shafter, California.

Kremer then offered another prize, of £100,000, for the first human-powered crossing of the English Channel, and it took MacCready less than two years to claim it, with his Gossamer Albatross.

This contraption, also weighing 70lb, had a 96ft wingspan. Allen was again the pilot, with MacCready watching from a boat below. The flight lasted nearly three hours and covered 22 miles.

Paul MacCready, the son of a doctor, was born at New Haven, Connecticut, on September 25 1925. From the age of 12 he built model aeroplanes and gliders, and at 16 he qualified as a pilot.

After the war, during which he flew with the US Navy, MacCready took a degree in Physics at Yale and a doctorate in Aeronautical Engineering from the California Institute of Technology at Pasadena.

At the same time he took up gliding, winning the American championship in 1948, 1949 and 1953, and represented the United States in

international competitions on four occasions.

In 1956 he became the first American to win the world championship. He also invented the MacCready Ring, used by glider pilots the world over to select optimum speed for the maximum glide.

MacCready established his first company, Meteorology Research, in 1951, and 20 years later founded AeroVironment, a firm which acts as consultants on environmental issues and wind power; it also designs remote-controlled electric planes, both as toys and as reconnaissance tools for the American military.

Among his other inventions, MacCready created the Gossamer Penguin, the world's first successful completely solar-powered aeroplane. In 1981 an improved version, Solar Challenger, flew from Paris to Canterbury, a distance of 163 miles, attaining an altitude of 11,000ft.

In 1985 the Smithsonian Institute commissioned MacCready to build a life-size, flying replica of a pterodactyl.

MacCready was also interested in designing surface vehicles with a view to conservation.

In 1987 he built the solar-powered Sunraycer to compete in a race across Australia; and three years later, in collaboration with General Motors, he produced the Impact, an electric car which could accelerate from nought to 60 in eight seconds.

In 1991 MacCready was inducted into the Aviation Hall of Fame. He retired as chairman of AeroVironment due to ill health on August 20, eight days before his death.

Paul MacCready is survived by his wife, Judy, and three sons.

## Just hangin' around.....

FROM CHRIS MCDONNELL

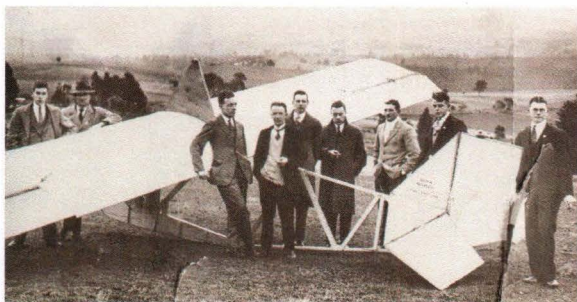


Here is a picture of Kingfisher GLD. I have been searching for her for quite a while. Found her hanging in a shed where she has been for years in QLD.

Needs a quick form 2 and a tyre kick only. Owner is not a glider pilot but just likes to look at her, so she is likely to stay where she is except for the offering of an unreal amount of dollars.

# GEORGE ALLAWAY

FROM Bob Allaway



You may be interested in this early photograph. That's dad (George) with the old fashioned shirt and Major Shaw with his hand on the glider

The picture is on the family website as well along with a few pictures of dad, he was in the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) in the first world war stationed in France, he was a mechanic and worked on the old biplanes. He came to Australia from Birmingham in 1926 and opened a Motorcycle Dealership in Warrnambool, (pictured on the home page). Also picture of dad on motorcycle and mum and dad at my wedding Treasury Gardens, the depression saw the end of the motorcycle shop and from there I think he went into Gliding schools. He also built the glider in which Percy Pratt held the gliding record of the time (Monument To Percy Pratt on top of Tower Hill Warrnambool). During WW2 he was one of the team of 6 experts called upon to solve the problem of our Bi Winged Bombers diving into the ground, I believe this was found to be the guy wires supporting the wings were not being tensioned correctly allowing the wings to flex.

Mum use to make the spars for the wings. I think he started in Perth WA making them I have some old pictures of construction. Also you will note under history on the WEB Page Mum standing in front of the old Melbourne Airport Hangar Fishermans Bend.

[www.allaway.com.au/](http://www.allaway.com.au/)

Ed:- Vintage Times 103 had the location of the Allaway Gliding School on the map produced by Robyn Sunderland for Gary Sunderland's article "Early Flying Near Melbourne".

## Note from South Australia FROM EMILIS PRELGAUSKAS

ES59 Arrow VH-GNF has reportedly been taken over by Ian Linke (the Adelaide based acrylic canopy fabricator) for repair back to flying condition.

The aircraft was damaged last year while stored, by storm leakage in a hangar, the Adelaide University Gliding Club inspected the damage and cleaned all fabric from the wing. Originally with the intention that the club re-build.

Contact has been received from Ken Duggan, a former active glider pilot, looking to complete construction of an ULF-1. This is an additional airframe of this type to the incomplete one at Monarto being worked on by Chris Dearden.

At a recent winter lecture In Adelaide on the topic of sea breezes and utilising them for soaring, that presenter made the point that in the past the performance of sailplanes like Boomerangs limited that use; and said the presenter - ' but now that we are all flying sailplanes with more than 40:1, sea breezes are not a problem' .

His proposition was that it is practical now to fly downwind after launch to intersect the front and soar; and on the homeward glide, the last climb in the front will always get you home. This comment goes with others from time to time, that point to a fragmentation across the sport between differing cultures of soaring flight. ie it distinguishes itself from recognition of the experiences still current in the vintage sector.

Along similar lines, GFA interest in CASA Part 103 is in the designation of it as a Recreational Aviation Administrative Organisation (RAAO). Flight Safety Australia magazine lists only GFA (and not HGFA) in relation to RAAO for gliders in the broadest sense of the definition.

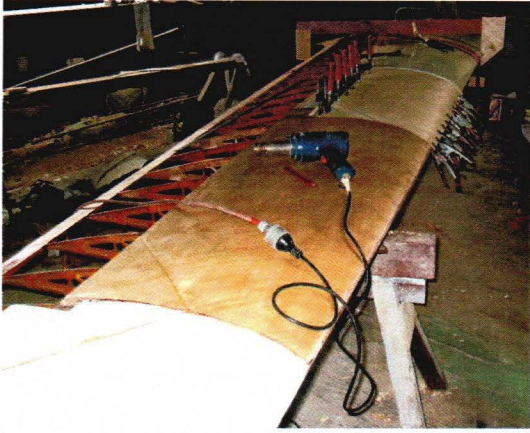
## **"THE RENMARK GLIDING CLUB TROPHY"** **FOR THE HIGHEST PLACED WOODEN GLIDER**

This trophy, comprising two hand crafted hardwood wooden gliders, each mounted on a slender turned hardwood pylon, on a turned maple base, all finished in clear lacquer and bearing about 15 brass engraving plates, was donated in the 1996/97 season by the Renmark Gliding Club; to be awarded at the Club Class (formerly Sports & Two-Seater Class) Australian National Gliding Championships each year, for the best placing by the pilot of a wooden aircraft



Eventually there were no more entries of wooden sailplanes in the Club and Sports class Nationals, so after consultation with the donors, Renmark Gliding Club, and with Vintage Gliders Australia it was agreed that the trophy would best retain its original dedication by being transferred to VGA.  
Fred Foord

## REPAIRS to Ka6e VH-GEA



A major repair to the wing of the damaged Ka6e belonging to Ian Patching and Dennis Hipperson. Mal Bennett has spliced the wing spar etc



"First rig in 16 years. We are a bit excited!"  
Well done to Ian, Mal and Dennis, we look forward to seeing GEA fly at Bordertown!

## GFA Annual Convention in Melbourne



John Ashford kindly presented the world's oldest operational fibreglass sailplane, the FS-24 Phonix, to be the star attraction at the GFA Seminar and Annual General Meeting in Melbourne on 8<sup>th</sup> September. Resplendent with a Vintage Gliders Australia sticker, the aircraft attracted admiring glances from modern and vintage pilots alike.



At the GFA Annual Dinner, GFA Treasurer and VSA President Ian Grant celebrates the award of the FAI Lilienthal Medal to Alan Patching, while Ian and Ruth Patching also enjoy the moment.

## FROM BRUCE STEPHENSON IN ENGLAND



Hi all,

Finally got the first rig done of my Mucha glider after three years of hard work. Just got weight and balance to do and adjust flying controls, then all done...finally.

Happy Landings, Bruce Stephenson

**NOTE** Bruce edits the Aussie content and does a précis of VINTAGE TIMES for VGC News magazine. He would like to have contact with a VGA member interested in passing on all the Aussie news. If interested please contact Dave Goldsmith

## New VGA member to build a T31 FROM CRAIGE BRYSON

Hi David & Jenne

I spoke to you (Jenne) today in regards to my search for vintage glider drawings in particular the Slingsby T31.

I am keen to start up gliding again and get serious about my real passion with vintage gliders. With my aircraft restoration back ground, I am very interested in scratch building my own vintage glider. My favourite glider has always been the DFS Habicht but feel a simpler project would be a better place to start. Which leads me to the other gliders I'd like to build, the SG-38 and or Slingsby T31 or the T21. I have also been keen on the Hutter 17 too but believe I'm too heavy to fly one. (98kgs)

Are the drawings for these aircraft still commercially available and could you suggest how I could go about obtaining copies?

**Editor's Note:-** VGA members including Martin Simons were in touch to assist Craige locate plans.



I assume you all are more glider buffs than powered aircraft but I thought I'd share with you a few photos of my latest RC model which I finished about a month ago.

It's a scratch built 1/4 scale WW1 Sopwith Snipe with a 93" wingspan. I built it from my own drawings in about 7 months. I now have about 30 wonderful flights with it and it flies like a dream.

Best Regards

*Craige Bryson*

## FOR SALE

Hi all, I have decided after having enjoyed 200+ hours over last 7 years to part with my Ka6cr (I will still have a share in a Ka7).

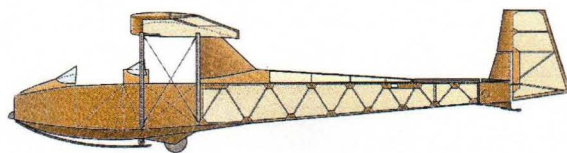
It is in Excellent condition and includes tow out gear and an excellent full Gal dipped(sub frame) enclosed trailer. I would like \$7,500 but am open to offers depending on timing.

I currently have it stored in the hanger as Central Coast Soaring Club Mangrove Mountain NSW and am still flying it most weekends.

You can contact myself **Arie van Spronsen** on (h)0243 920090, (m)0419 973 343 or email [arie@internode.on.net](mailto:arie@internode.on.net)

I also have some photos on my web album at <http://picasaweb.google.co.uk/glidesailrc>

## MUSEUM PRESENTATION and T31 ROLLOUT



Sailplanes 1945-1965, Martin Simons

THE Australian Gliding Museum Inc (AGM) held a presentation day, and the roll-out of the T31, on November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2007, at Bacchus Marsh Airfield. The event was particularly significant as, after eight years of progress and hard work, a major supporter was presenting a donation for the construction of the first premises owned by the AGM, and the first aircraft fully restored to flying condition was rolled out.



**Graeme Barton, Bruce Hearn, Bruce Brockhoff, Jim Barton, Ian Grant and Alan Patching**

After an introduction by AGM President Alan Patching, Ian Grant, GFA Treasurer and VSA President, spoke of the development of the AGM and it's importance in preserving Australia's gliding heritage. He then delighted the onlookers, not the least Alan himself, by presenting a substantial contribution by GFA towards Alan's expenses in going to the Island of Rhodes, Greece, to be presented with the prestigious Lilienthal Medal at the FAI Conference!

Bruce Brockhoff, well known Australian International Team pilot and three-time winner of the Australian National Championships 15 metre class, supported the establishment of the "Australian Gliding Museum Bruce Brockhoff Annex" at Bacchus Marsh with a donation of \$100,000. After an entertaining dissertation of his joys and adventures in gliding, Bruce made the presentation to the AGM Treasurer Jim Barton, to the enthusiastic applause of the large crowd. Among those present were two recipients of the Australia Medal, a recipient of the FAI Lilienthal Medal, three National Gliding champions and one World Gliding champion - Brad Edwards and son Markus had flown from Armidale, NSW, to attend the ceremony. Bruce then took the especially inscribed stainless steel spade to turn the first sod for the new 18 by 20 metre building.

The AGM Bruce Brockhoff Annex is initially to be used as a storeroom and workshop, as well as an archive centre for memorabilia and gliding publications. At the present time much of the AGM's collection is housed in member's and friend's sheds scattered around Victoria. It is hoped to build a team of volunteer restorers from the west side of Melbourne to complement the AGM Ferntree Gully Workshop team. The AGM is still working towards opening our display at Point Cook as part of the Duigan Heritage Centre.

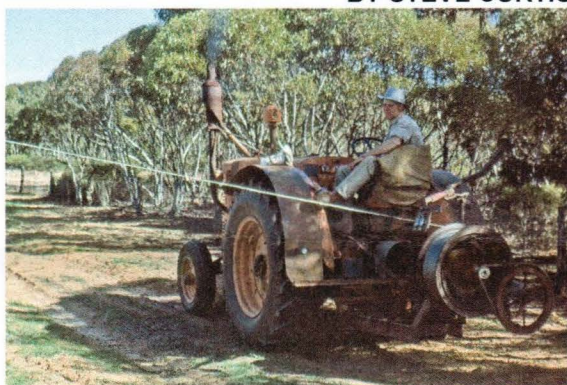


Ross Birch Photo

The T31 is the first glider to be restored to full flying status by the AGM. The aircraft was the first in the fleet of the Wimmera Soaring Club at Horsham in 1963, having been bought from the Royal Australian Naval Gliding Association. It was taken back to Horsham, for painting by Joe Luciani, and some nostalgia for club members. It is finished in red and silver. The T31 is enjoying something of a revival with Laurie Simpkins recently restoring another to flying status in Queensland.

## 1960's Gliding

BY STEVE CURTIS



Just thought you might like to see one of the tractor PTO winches Campbell Curtis (my old man) came up with in the 1960's. This tractor was originally a Chamberlain 40K with a kerosene engine. The engine was replaced by a Leyland Comet 75 diesel, a conversion done by the 'old man' a couple of years earlier and as you see it here.

The chap driving is Ray Fischer who is originally from Qld, hence the bare feet :) On the other end of the stranded cable is the Bocian 1D

we had. The cable is still brand new as you can see by the bright color. Roger Harris (now in NZ) took this picture, originally as a slide.



The Kookaburra VH-GHS that came from Millicent and we bought as a wreck, here seen with my school buddy Bernie Beer on an instructional flight with Roger Harris in the back seat and myself holding the wing - circa 1968, flying from the farm paddock.



Our Bocian ready to be launched with Bill Duncan (a local farmer) on an instructional flight also with Roger Harris, (probably 1967) at Lake Cullulleraine. This is a paddock immediately to the south of the Sturt Highway. It was not the final place of the Cullulleraine airstrip, but just a paddock we had permission to fly out of before the airstrip was built and is shown at the eastern end.

The winch we used for the Cullulleraine flying was a new self mobile winch based on a Customline V8 and bolted to the back of a small truck (photos to come), although the tractor winch was used if we flew from the farm or someone wanted a launch from there.

### **VALE** Ted Pascoe,

From Leigh Bunting

I don't know whether you have heard that Ted Pascoe is no longer with us. He has been ill for some time.

One of our members was closely involved with him, so he has recalled events as best his aging memory can.

Ted was also one of the club instructors that helped train me. I do remember the test flying of the EP2 at Balaklava. I also spent many nights at Ted's place working on club aircraft or just chewing the fat. He was a great bloke. RIP Ted

**Dear Balaklava Gliding Club members,**

with thanks to Terry Neumann Today's (Friday) Advertiser conveys the sad news of the passing of another of our past and much valued members.

E.A. (Ted) Pascoe is reported to have passed away at the RAH on Sunday October 21st at the age of 80 years.

Those members who have been around for a while will probably think immediately of "The Spruce Goose" - the EP1 glider which Ted designed and built in (at a guess) the early 60's, perhaps even the late 50's.

After all no-one designs and builds a glider in six weeks, or even six months, much less fights the paper war with the then DCA in order that it might be possible to one day fly the device. So The Goose was already a part of club history and, along with its creator, a veritable legend when I came along to gliding in 1967. It was to further immortalized by the many adventures which Merv Gill took the little aircraft through in later times.

Ted went on to design, build and fly a second aircraft - the EP2 (or Super Goose) a more futuristic design with a T tailplane, but like it's predecessor, a small petite aircraft which not only looked good, but, by all accounts flew well also. I recall one particularly pleasant summer afternoon when I spent the best part of an hour or so in Whitwarta skies in our Boomerang sampling local thermals in company with Ted in the EP2. There wasn't a lot of difference in the performances of the two aircraft at the modest speeds we were using on the day.

We have lost one of the great characters and talents of the sport.

Terry Neumann 26 October 2007.



Clubhouse extensions were officially opened on Sunday morning by President Jack Lavery, who unveiled a painting by Bendigo club member Ralph Keller, whose art has featured on covers of Soaring Australia.

Seven aircraft participated in the Regatta. They were:-

**ES60B** Super Arrow, Bendigo Gliding Club with Craig Dilks

**IS-29**, Patrick Roberts and Ken Williams  
**Woodstock**, Peter Raphael

**Super Woodstock**, Mal Bennett

**Ka6**, Dave and Jenne Goldsmith

**Motor Falke**, Pete Boreham and Neil Halsall

**Bocian**, Bendigo Gliding Club syndicate

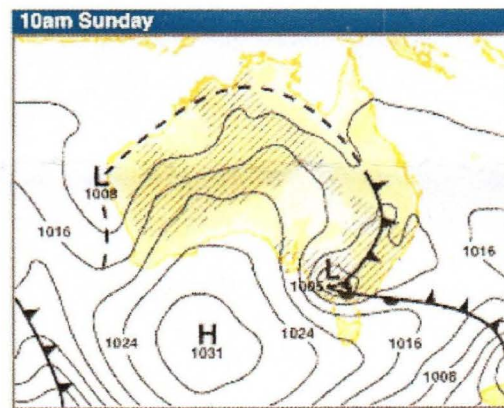
It was good to see many friendly faces among VGA arrive, including Keith and Edna Nolan with the Sapphire ultralight and Duffy the poetical dog! Others were James Garay and his wife, Peter Champness flying in the coaching course, John King, George Vasiliadis and Lillian with xxxxx the dog. Tom Bird, a long-time Instructor from Alice Springs Gliding Club and a new VGA member, was in the area and managed to extend his trip to spend Saturday at the regatta. Dennis and Marion Hipperson are warming up for the imminent first flight of their Ka6e. John Viney, and Craig Dilks are members of the local club, with Craig flying the Super Arrow. Keith Willis, John Anselmi and Peter Champness flew in the coaching course.

## MELBOURNE CUP VINTAGE REGATTA

BY DAVE GOLDSMITH

The Third Melbourne Cup Vintage Regatta was held from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> November, 2007, again at Raywood, home of the Bendigo Gliding Club. The Victorian Soaring Association were conducting their annual cross-country coaching course at the same time, and plenty of friendly regulars, coupled with catering arrangements to care for the combined events, assisted to keep the ball rolling.

The absolutely dismal weather forecast for the weekend deterred many possible VGA members, and owners of at least two gliders on open trailers (Kookaburra and Hutter 17) and one in an enclosed trailer (Dart 17R) decided against making the trip. Others who were deterred by the forecast knuckled down to preparing for the coming season and the Bordertown Rally.



**FIND BENDIGO ON THE MAP!**

**Saturday** was cloudy and windy, but the rain stayed away until later in the afternoon. After lunch a few flights were made, with Jenne Goldsmith having the longest and highest Vintage flight of the day, 20 minutes up to 1800 feet above ground in the Ka6!



Peter Raphael, Woodstock and tow-mini-bike!

**Sunday's** weather was indescribable, so I won't go beyond mentioning wind and rain! However, lots was happening in the newly enlarged clubhouse to keep everyone occupied. Certificates and Cherry Ripes were ceremoniously presented to Jenne Goldsmith for yesterday's best height, distance and duration. David Wilson, running the coaching course, gave a rundown on the weather prospects for the next few days, and then a very informative talk on thermal structures and how to get the best out of them. The remainder of the day was spent eating, (thanks to Helen Dilks and her mother Val) drinking, telling lies, telling bigger lies, and watching movies (thanks to Peter Raphael).



Neale Halsall and Pete Boreham from Mangalore Gliding Club (now based at the Nagambie Soaring Centre at Warring) flew in the Scheibe SF25C Motorfalke VH KPK Photo Peter Raphael



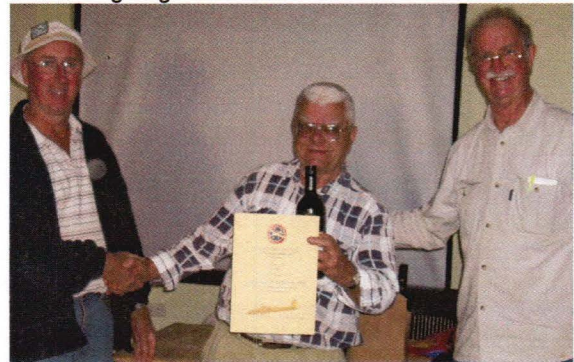
Craig Dilks receives the Daily Prize from Dave Goldsmith for the longest duration on Monday

The Met man had forecast that the low pressure area was moving east more quickly than forecast, and so **Monday** dawned with abating winds and a clearing sky. Dave Goldsmith (Ka6) and Craig Dilks (Super Arrow) launched off early and flew in different directions. Peter Raph was hot on their heels in the Woodstock. Craig did the longest flight with 163 km, and Dave did 153 km.

Handicap scores closed the gap, and a tie was declared. Craig flew for 2 hours 49, beating Dave (2hours 45) and Peter (2 hours 17) for the duration award. Dave won the greatest altitude award, with 6700 feet, while Peter climbed to 6,588 and Craig to 5,800. A very pleasant day was had by all, with some visitors also having flights. However, the best was yet to come.

**Tuesday** dawned fine and clear, with light winds. Well shaped cumulus developed early, and remained throughout the day with plenty of sunlight between. Jenne won the daily distance award with 260 kms, while Mal flew 162 km and Peter Raph covered 142 km. Mal and Peter started late after working on some instrument gremlins in the Super Woodstock. Peter won the height award with 7770 feet, with Jenne and Mal a close second and third. Jenne won the duration award with 5 hours 7 minutes.

Final prizes were presented by Bendigo Gliding Club President Jack Lavery. During the rally, overall height was awarded to Peter Raphael, with longest duration and greatest distance going to Jenne Goldsmith.



The award for the "Best Presented Vintage Sailplane" was awarded by Jack Lavery to Mal Bennett for Super Woodstock VH-GFJ.



Bendigo Gliding Club members Keith, Mark and John welcome Jenne home on Tuesday.

**Footnote:** The week continued to boom, with Craig Dilks completing 200 km in the Woodstock on Wednesday and flights up to 600 km (in plastic gliders) over the next four days. On the Sunday Jenne flew 328 km, climbing to 11,600 feet.

## RECEIVING THE LILIENTHAL MEDAL

*By Alan Patching*

I was pleasantly surprised to be advised by Bob Henderson, President IGC that I had been awarded the Lilienthal Medal at their meeting in March and that Max Bishop of the FAI would be in touch regarding the presentation.



FAI President Pierre Portman made the presentation. Since I knew this would be in Europe, somewhere, I relaxed knowing that Henk Meertens, the ASAC delegate, would collect and return it to Australia. However not only family and gliding friends but others who had looked it up on Google urged me to go and personally receive the award. Finding out the location and details of attending took until nearly the end of August so that it was after the deadline for registration!!! The Greek Aero Club who were organising the event were very accommodating and even more so when they did not receive my money until after we had returned home. The story about transfer of funds is another saga.

My daughter Margaret decided to accompany me and we spent four nights in Athens looking at very ancient ruins before flying to the island of Rhodes for the 101st FAI General Conference to be held in the town of Ixia, which is about 5 km from the old town of Rhodos. On arrival at the airport Margaret spotted the FAI welcome desk where they immediately produced a taxi for our hotel which was less than 5 minutes walk away from the conference. We had been given an overseas kit by my local federal member of parliament which enabled the conference hotel to fly an Australian flag along with others at the entrance.

The FAI Awards for 2006 were presented at the opening ceremony held in the grounds of the Rhodos Citadel attended by a gathering of over 150 people consisting of local dignitaries, FAI officials, Members of delegations from participating countries and of course those recipients able to attend of which there were about 40 out of the 85 eligible.

For each presentation the complete submission was read while a photo of the recipient was displayed along with a summary of their achievements on a large screen. The FAI President, Pierre Portman, then made the presentation which in my case came towards the

end, being a major award, and consisted of both a medal and a framed certificate.

There was a short presentation for Steve Fossett who was to have received a DE LA VALX Medal for his world records.

I renewed a number of friendships including Loek Boermans, President OSTIV, who received the Pirat Gehriger Diploma and Tor Johanason who competed for Norway in a number of World Comps and is a Companion of the FAI. At the closing dinner to which Margaret and I were also invited, another friend Bernald Smith, USA, was admitted as a Companion of Honour. In making their recommendation for the award the GFA emphasised my contribution to glider airworthiness and in particular the fatigue of sailplanes. Newer members may not be aware that composite gliders started with a service life of only 3000 hours, which was ridiculously short considering at that time the GCV were flying their gliders 1000 hours each glider per year!!! A letter of support from Gerhard Waibel to the GFA acknowledged that the research done into flight loads and the fatigue testing of a Janus wing, which was done at the RMIT University has considerably extended the service life. This work is described in my OSTIV papers and the RMIT video 'Beyond 3000' held by the GFA. I had no official involvement in the FAI Conference, however I was invited to attend some sessions of interest which enabled me to meet Marina Galetto, Italian delegate and wife of George who spent last summer here in Australia coaching at a number of sites. He was very impressed with the Aussie scene both in regards to gliding and our style of living and we may see them both next time.

Margaret and I found the trip both interesting and rewarding and I would recommend any FAI award winner to make the journey for a personal presentation.

I would like to express my thanks to the VSA for their financial support and to the GFA, who on my return made a significant contribution to the cost of the trip.

**2007/08 MEMBERSHIP IS DUE!**

**PLEASE POST YOUR CHEQUE TODAY**

We will again be offering Martin Simons

FABULOUS book "Sailplanes 1920-

1945" as a raffle prize for just \$2,

signed by the author at Bordertown!

Second prize is a de-luxe Vintage Glider Calendar, and a Third prize is possible!

Prizes posted to absent winners.

Thank you to Martin for generously donating the first prize for this year's raffle!

## **PROPOSAL FOR BORDERTOWN TO BE THE BASE FOR THE VGA ANNUAL RALLY**

**Editorial:** *At the Vintage Gliders Australia Annual Rally Annual General Meeting (AGM) in January, this year, a proposal for Bordertown to be a permanent base for Vintage Gliders Australia was raised by some members. During discussion, reasons for and against the proposal were put, and in the end the proposal was not adopted. The following correspondence has been received on 21<sup>st</sup> November, 2007 from Erik Sherwin and Emilis Prelgauskas. In the interests of all members giving the proposal for VGA Annual Rallies to be at Bordertown consideration, if the matter is raised at the 2008 AGM, the correspondence is reproduced here:-*

**Dear Peter** (Brookman, President, Bordertown Keith Gliding Club), Ian (Patching), David & Jenne (Goldsmith),

At the AGM of the VGA at the 2007 Bordertown Vintage Regatta, it was proposed that Bordertown be the base for the annual Vintage Glider Rally. Subsequently, Emilis and I put forward some questions as a strategic management initiative on this proposal, which was sent to Peter and Ian..

To date we have had no feedback from this question paper. This does not imply that no discussion has taken place elsewhere, but we request that the proposal be again raised at the next AGM. If some, or all, of the questions, raised in our paper, are reprinted in Vintage Times, then maybe a clearer picture will emerge as to future directions.

The concept of a 'White Knight' is one we feel ought to be pursued, since it would greatly increase the visibility of gliding as a recreation and sport. Alan Scott (Scotts Transport) and Softwoods are the only two names that immediately come to mind from that area of South Australia, but there must be others. In any case what is needed is a point of contact such that any proposal does not arrive on a Manager's desk 'cold', such as Foodland marketing sheet. Any such proposal is likely to be treated in the same way as a Foodland sheet - straight into the waste paper basket. Local knowledge is critical here.

During the Regatta, several people from the VGA visited the Bordertown Tourist Bureau and staff here were very interested to hear what was taking place. However, they were disappointed that no information of the event had reached them beforehand. Perhaps liaison with the staff of this establishment could help in

providing visibility for the sport and also able to offer assistance for sponsorship contacts.

### **Proposed:**

23-Jan-07

Bordertown & Keith Gliding Club (B&KGC) become the Base for the National Vintage Gliding Association Rally.

The following are questions that may need to be considered prior to any further action. Action to put this proposal in place when the climate is not compatible may condemn future efforts, conversely, if options become apparent by taking specific directions, then a win/win situation may well be realised.

### **Questions:**

1. Who owns the airfield, ie. who holds the deeds?
2. Is there a lease on the site and if so held by whom and what is the duration?
3. Stakeholders.

B&KGC  
Flying Doctor  
Local Council (local  
community)  
State Govt  
Cwlth Govt  
VGA  
Other?

1. Does B&KGC have a Mission Statement that includes reference to local community asset, ie something the Council can see as a need to support? As a suggestion:-

The mission of the B&KGC is to encourage airmindedness within the community, principally through soaring flight, by adherence to safe operating procedures, and the provision of well ordered facilities. It endorses best practice in instruction and a courteous environment within the Club.

4. Does VGA have a Mission Statement that can tie in with that of B&KGC?
5. Would the B&KGC be able to handle this proposal, with a potential increase in numbers?
  - Possible rostering of VGA members?
  - Need for external support for cleaning and meal?
  - Direct Council support?
  - Increased charges for accommodation?
  - Other?
6. Need to assess facilities:
  - Impingement of facilities/trailers/tie-down area on runway approach edges
  - Accommodation,

- Ablutions,
- Water,
- Power,
- Options for acquisition of land adjacent to existing airfield boundaries?
  - Hanger space,
  - Tie-down area,
  - Trailer parking,
- Winch,
- Communications,
- Runway 13/31
- Other?

- Does the Flying Doctor and local community see the site as essential for the foreseeable future?
- What cost/benefit would the local Council see:
  - Increase in tourism dollars?
  - Increase in publicity?
  - Increase in education (Schools, Scouts etc)?
  - Other?
- What is the economic environment?
  - Would Council invest resources if matching grants could be obtained from State &/or Cwth Govt (Dept of Sport, Recreation & Tourism)?
  - Any 'known 'White Knights' to aid in persuading the above of the community benefits in support of the concept?
- Currently, the greatest support for the VGA comes from VGA Museum members in Victoria.
  - Are these members happy about the concept?
  - Does it preclude NSW, WA and Queensland members from participating (for reasons of distance)?
  - Other?

Emilis Prelgauskas  
 E. Sherwin  
 Adelaide Hills Soaring Group



Woodstock HNW over Bordertown



## HOMEBUILT SAILPLANE CORNER

WITH PETER CHAMPNESS

### The Flying Plank – Part 1

Peter Champness

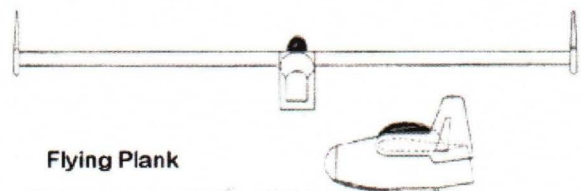
#### Backstrom EPB-1A "Flying Plank" (1)

*The Flying Plank was a small glider developed in 1954 by Al Backstrom assisted by Phil Easley and Jack Powell as an attempt to combine minimum size and easy construction with reasonable performance. The prototype EPB-1 was used for drag reduction tests at the Mississippi State College. It used a modified Abrial reflex airfoil. Plans for the 1A version were sold and a number built by amateurs, most with twin wingtip rudders, but some were completed with a central fin and rudder at the end of a lengthened fuselage (EPB1-C) to improve performance and control. Spans have varied up to 9.30 m / 30.5 ft. A self-launching model was developed later.*

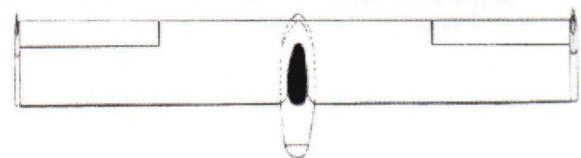
*Except for the fiberglass nose cap for the fuselage, standard wood structure was used throughout, and construction time for an experience woodworker was in the neighborhood of 600 hours. More than 150 sets of plans were sold.*

*An improved version, the "Super Plank", was under development in 1973. At least two of them were built, by Larry Linville and Dennis Harmon.*

*The Flying Plank concept was used by Jim Marske when building his prototype XM-1.*



Flying Plank



#### *Characteristics and performance of the EPB-1A*

*Wing span 7.62 m (25 ft)*

*Wing area 9.29 m<sup>2</sup>*

*Aspect ratio 6.5*

*Empty weight 68 kg*

*Gross weight 159 kg*

*Airfoil Abrial 15%*

*Glide ratio 20:1*

*Sink rate 1.07 m/sec*

The flying plank was in one respect the most successful homebuilt glider ever built in Australia. Six were completed, more than any other type, before or since (I think). On the other hand only three ever flew (officially). One pilot was killed, at least one was injured. In the end type approval was not granted in Australia and the rest were grounded. This in part was a result of the (unrelated) death of its chief proponent, Fred Hoinville. After his death no one else seemed to have sufficient energy or enthusiasm to perform the necessary flight trials and perhaps the owners of the remaining aircraft were discouraged by the poor gliding performance of the initial trials.



The Flying Plank was and remains the most controversial glider ever flown in Australia. Fred Hoinville, who actually flew the Plank, was enthusiastic about it whilst many who had not flown it were skeptical and often overtly hostile towards it. Extreme opinions about the plank persist to this day. A year ago I asked the contributors to the Soaring website for any information they might have about the Plank. I received a number of replies including the following:

*"Fred Hoinville had one at one stage. I think there is a picture in his book "Halfway to Heaven"*

*This aircraft (if it may be called that - and frankly I hesitate to do so) is reputed to be the one which somewhat mysteriously found itself in the Clare Soaring Club later in life where it was generally shielded (and correctly so) from public gaze at the back of one of the more poorly lit hangars.*

*There was a rumour that it was smuck away to a distant paddock in a quiet little valley and actually had a couple of short flights but this remains a rumour, and would certainly be outside of the club's operations, supervision or permission. Perhaps it would be better to leave this tale as one of those mysterious and scary bar rumours. For it did fly, it would have been truly scary, nay terrifying.*

*There were also rumours that it was subsequently discovered in one of the Waikerie buildings. Indeed I thought I actually saw it myself hiding (the Plank that is - not me) in the roof of the maintenance hangar at one stage but it may have been an aberration, which, when I think about it, is probably the best description for the aircraft itself. A truly dreadful concept.*

This was written by a person who never even saw the plank fly. He only saw it hanging from the roof of the hangar!

Certainly the plank does look a bit intimidating. Part of the reason for this is that it is really very small, only 25 ft in span and about 7 ft long. The very short length gives the impression of longitudinal instability, although this was not necessarily the case in practice. The AV36 flying wing glider, although similar in type, was larger and did not attract the same hostility.

One feature of flying wings of this type is that the allowable centre of gravity range is very short, only a few inches between the forward and the aft limits. Provided the C of G is kept within this range all should be well. As with other aircraft if the C of G is too far forward it may not take off, or if it does take off may not flare on landing and if too far aft it will be unstable in pitch. To assist in establishing the correct C of G the designer placed the single wheel exactly at the best balance point. With no pilot the glider would rest tail down. When the pilot clambered on board the glider should rock gently forward on to the skid if the balance is correct. If it remains firmly tail down the C of G is too far aft.

A further reason for the controversy was the mini midget debate (2), once again promoted by Fred Hoinville. Hoinville's idea was that gliding in Australia would be advanced by the availability of a small glider of modest performance which would be within the means of the average working man and further that it should be a glider that any one could build and anyone could fly. The mini midget was the term invented by Hoinville to describe this concept, which he determined should have a span of twenty five feet, mainly so that it could be constructed in a single car garage.

When plans of the EPB-1A Flying Plank were sold in America, Hoinville thought that it suited his concept perfectly. When he found little support for his idea from the GFA he decided to sell the plans independently through the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), of which he was President at the time.

Others disagreed with the idea, partly on the grounds that such a small glider would not have adequate performance to be useful for soaring flight and partly because they feared that people with no experience and little idea about wooden aircraft construction might attempt to build the plank, and having done so attempt to fly it, without proper supervision either of the construction or the flying (3)

#### **References:**

1. www.nurflugel.com
2. A History of Gliding in Australia – Alan Ash
3. Doug Lyons ( former CTOA of the GFA) – personal conversation.

**AND FINALLY** Thanks for your patience while we waited for the Melbourne Cup Regatta and Museum articles.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY & SAFE NEW YEAR!**

See you at Bordertown 2008!

Dave and Jenne

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