

Vintage Times

Newsletter of Vintage Gliders Australia

VINTAGE GLIDER PROJECTS - 2025



FROM THE EDITOR

Thanks for the feed back on the last issue of Vintage Times. In this issue :

Things have been quiet over the winter but a few new projects have emerged ready for the gliding season.

Peter Rundle reports on the Hunter Valley Gliding Clubs Bocian restoration.

Emilis reports on the completion of the ULF-1 at Monarto.

I give an update on the Olympia.

Dave Howse

Photos credits: , Peter Rundle, Emilis and David Howse .

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B O C I A N R E S T O R A T I O N P R O J E C T V H - W U H**Red Red Wine**

“Have some more red wine Pete”. Errgggh! The next morning I came to and realised that I’d been conned into being part of a group who wanted to restore vintage gliders. How do these things keep happening to me? It’s enough to make one give up the grog. A few days later I rang Peter Raphael hoping together we could formulate a plan to extract me from my predicament. Raph however, was no help at all and instead asked if I wanted a Bocian. I protested saying that GQJ was already flying. But NO, that was not the glider he had in mind. There was another Bocian in the system. It seems that some 20 years ago a gliding club had folded due to the loss of their airfield. This Bocian was packed onto a trailer and parked in a shed, hoping that one day someone would return it to the skies. Pete reckoned that someone should be me, or at least the group I had accidentally joined under the fog of red wine. The price? “Free to good home”. With my history of successfully restoring timber gliders I was trapped. I could hardly protest that I was a “bad” home. Thus Bocian 1E, VH-WUH came to Vintage Gliders NSW (the VGN) to be restored. The first concern was the rego, it was just a year post Covid and the city of Wuhan had been in the news a lot. Working on a glider registered “WUH” seemed like a bad omen. However, the aircraft was in excellent condition and required very little in the way of repairs. The process in a nutshell was; remove all the old paint and fabric, clean, inspect, seal the timber with epoxy, then new paint and fabric. This actually represents a lot of work. Most people have a romantic view of restoring timber gliders. What could be sweeter than the smell of fresh wood shavings as you plane a piece of timber to size and make that ever so neat repair? The reality is that there is very little of this. It’s mostly using horrid chemicals to strip old paint from the aircraft, then endless hours of sanding, apply new horrid chemicals with allergic reactions, more sanding, then priming, more sanding and finally, the horrid toxic solvents of modern paints that contain isocyanates that are wildly carcinogenic. This disconnect between the dream and reality meant that the number of helpers turning up each week dwindled until there were just a few. The project was in danger of stalling. Thankfully a few die hards keep the project moving. As it became clear that the glider was close to flying, a rush of enthusiasm saw her across the line. With the aircraft finished the VGN group held a meeting. Apparently the only minuted item was a note that I had “volunteered” to do the test flight. When this meeting occurred and why I wasn’t invited are still confusing, to me at least (how do these things keep happening to me?). Of the group I had the most hours in a Bocian and I had done the bulk of the airworthiness work, so in fairness, I was probably the sensible choice. Whilst it’s an honour to be the first to fly the glider, it is also a serious undertaking. It was not without some trepidation that I walked around the aircraft for the umpteenth time, checking and rechecking everything. However, the glider flew beautifully. I have flown GQJ (a Bocian 1D) many times and whilst very nice to fly it has a few little coordination quirks in the turn. I had read that the designers were aware of this and with the 1E, chose to reduce the forward sweep of the wing. It seems they have been successful as WUH is even nicer to fly. The glider has now had some 20 flights and a dozen hours in the air. It’s current home is the Hunter Valley Gliding Club at Warkworth and it is available to any member of the VGN to fly for themselves or to take one of their friends



On arrival at the workshop.



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ULF-1 at Monarto

Glider projects take a long time to gestate. Originally designed in the mid 1970s, the ULF-1 type was envisaged as a learning project about ultra-light airframe build by its German originators.

That is, not a sailplane or standard aircraft to standards such as BCAR section E or JAR22.

In today's parlance (half a century later) somewhat akin to a Class 2 hang glider, modern equivalents being in size and performance close to ES59 Arrow, albeit in a slower speed range.

Where ULF is close to ES57 Kingfisher in size and performance, within the 20 to 37knot speed range.

The build uses a mix of traditional and recent materials in the fundamentally primary type keel, truss fuselage frame, and ply/foam/balsa material mix. The 3ply thickness vary 0.4mm to 1mm.

Monarto Sailplane Museum has access to 3 projects of this type.

The oldest, named no.79 after the build plan set, John Harris the reputed owner, was extant except for missing parts some 15 years ago. The mid one comprises parts prepared by Ken Duggen who abandoned work when unable to connect to a like minded community. The last is only the plan set no. 248 made available to the museum by Chris Dearden.

no.79 is now assembled, and the workshop is beginning to explore the Duggen project parts.

The photos show the 10metre span, 136kg auw airframe as assembled, the cockpit underside has 'doors' because there is no floor for getting in and out.

The fuselage side sign advises that this is not a standard aircraft, the risk is borne entirely by the occupant.



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OLYMPIA Update.

Not much has been done on the Olympia over winter due to the cold temps for gluing. I was lucky to be able to finish off the skinning which gave the fuselage enough rigidity so that it could be removed from the jig.



VGA News Flash

This upcoming Vintage Gliders Australia 2026 Annual Rally we will be holding our usual AGM meeting.

At this AGM we will need to discuss the future direction and set up of our organization. We will then have a vote on the outcome of our decision.

We encourage members to attend this meeting.

FOR SALE

Ka6E VH-GGV

Survey undertaken by Emilis Prelgauskas & apart from installation of instm panel, & Decemberbe a tyre pressure check all should be well, except, with all-flying elevator, trim in pitch sensitive so a new- comer to gliding could overcorrect into trouble - but Dave & Jenne Goldsmith have a Ka6E, who will agree the type is a most agreeable bird, & with semi-recline cockpit seat- very comfortable.

Erik Sherwin

Duster VH-HDT

Duster 13m Sailplane VH-HDT

Basic Instruments

Max Pilot 98kg

My logbook says I last flew 2006.

Any offer will be considered.

Peter Raphael

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Remember to call J R Marshall for your GFA
Form 2 concession approval on 0407 417 747

Vintage Gliders Australia was formed to help and promote the flying and maintenance of older gliders. With their unique flying characters and individual airworthiness problems this group sets out to assist anyone interested in these wonderful flying machines.

WWW.VINTAGEGLIDERSAUSTRALIA.ORG.AU

Upcoming Events

January 2026

- National VGA Rally and AGM – Horsham Gliding Club or Millicent GC.

March 2026

- Ararat Gliding Club Vintage Rally Vic. Labour Day weekend.

April 2026

- Hunter Valley Rally - Singleton NSW, will be held over the Easter long weekend.

November 2026

- Australian Gliding Museum AGM and open day. Melbourne cup day
- Weekend.

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