

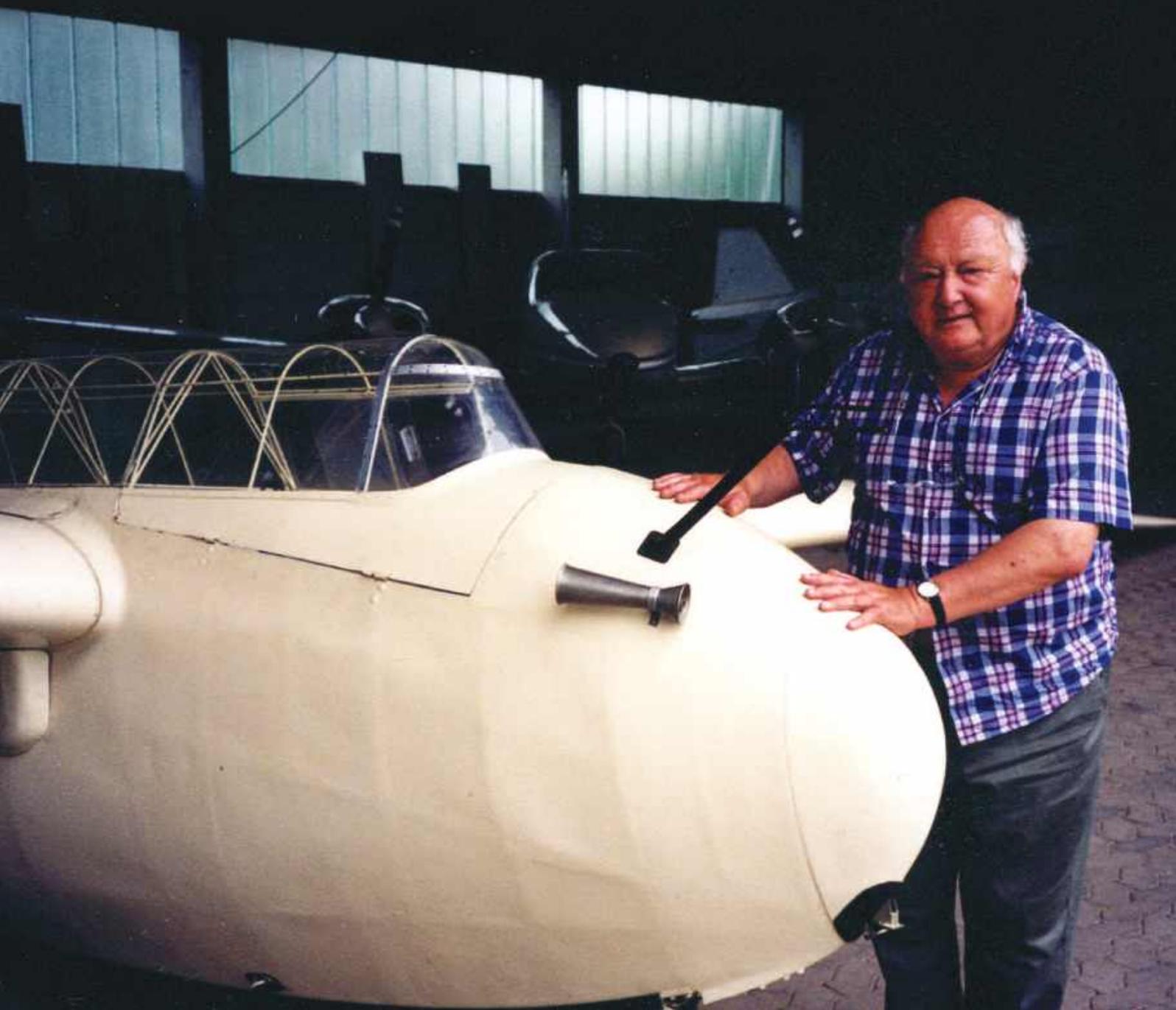


# VGC News

No. 133 Summer 2011

## Chris Wills

*27th August 1931 - 4th May 2011*





<http://www.vintagegliderclub.org>

## Objectives of the Vintage Glider Club

To promote the international preservation, restoration and flying of historical and vintage gliders; to collect, preserve and publish information about the above; to locate and preserve documents and artifacts connected with gliding; to co-operate and negotiate with government bodies and other interested organisations to ensure that members' best interests are protected; and generally to do all such acts as may be conducive to the objectives of the Vintage Glider Club being met.

VGC News is published by:  
The Vintage Glider Club Ltd

### Editor

Margaret Shrimpton  
Fairfields, Fosse Road  
Oakhill, Somerset BA3 5HU  
Tel: +44 (01) 749 841084  
e-mail: [vgcnews@vintagegliderclub.org](mailto:vgcnews@vintagegliderclub.org)

*Front cover: Chris Wills and his beloved Kranich II during the the 2002 Kranich Meet in Langenlonsheim Germany. Photo: Seth Coulter*

*Back cover: CW in his Kranich II over Langenlonsheim. Photo: Seth Coulter*

### Notice to all members

Please forward details of any Vintage Glider rallies you may be planning to:  
International (non-UK): Klaus Schickling email: [klausschickling@web.de](mailto:klausschickling@web.de)

### Design: David Tarbutt.

**Printed by:** Opal Print, Unit 22, Third Avenue, Westfield Trading Estate, Midsomer Norton, Radstock, Avon BA3 4XD Tel: 01761 412260

### NOTICE

The executors of the Chris Wills estate requests that any archive material borrowed from Chris Wills is returned to the BGA. at:-

British Gliding Association Ltd  
8 Merus Court,  
Meridian Business park,  
Leicester  
LE19 1RJ

Copy date for the next issue is  
**15th October 2011**

Please submit material to

**Margaret Shrimpton —**  
**VGC News Editor**  
Tel/Fax: +44 (01) 749 841084.  
e-mail: [vgcnews@vintagegliderclub.org](mailto:vgcnews@vintagegliderclub.org)

### Wanted

Vertical Format Coloured Prints of vintage gliders if possible, in flight, for the **future covers of VGC News**. PLEASE send them to the VGC News Editor  
Margaret Shrimpton:- "Fairfields", Fosse Road, Oakhill, Somerset BA 3 5HU. UK Photos will be returned.

*The views expressed, and the contents of all material, in this magazine are the opinion of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the Vintage Glider Club Committee or the Vintage Glider Club membership. No responsibility is accepted by the Vintage Glider Club Committee or its Membership, for any safety related (or any other) technical advice, transmitted in the magazine or any document issued by, or on behalf of, the Vintage Glider Club. No responsibility is accepted by the Vintage Glider Club or its Membership, for any adverts placed in the magazine by individuals or commercial entities. Except as otherwise permitted under copyright, design and Patents act, 1998, this publication may only be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form, or by any means, with the prior permission in writing of the publisher*

Advertising rates are £35 per 1/4 page for commercial adverts and £25 per 1/4 page for others

## Officers of the Vintage Glider Club

### Vice Presidents:

Neelco Osinga, Prof C. Eykmanstraat 17 7415 EK Deventer, Netherlands email: [kranich@zonnet.nl](mailto:kranich@zonnet.nl)

Harald Kamper, Leyerstasse 161, 49076 Osnabruck, Germany

*\*Vice Presidents also vote on the International Council.*

### International Council

**Chairman:** Jan Forster, Peppelhoven 27, 6225GX Maastricht, Netherlands. e-mail: [jftandemtutor@hetnet.nl](mailto:jftandemtutor@hetnet.nl)

**Secretary:** Nell Dijkstra, Melis Blecklaan 61, 4634 VX Woensdrecht, Netherlands. e-mail: [knvvlpda@xs4all.nl](mailto:knvvlpda@xs4all.nl)

### Australia

Alan Patching, 22 Eyre Street, Balwyn, Victoria. 3103, Australia. e-mail [calbpatc@netspace.net.au](mailto:calbpatc@netspace.net.au)

### Belgium

Firmin Henrard, Rue de Porcheresse, B-5361 Mohiville Hamois, Belgium. e-mail: [henrard.f@belgacon.net](mailto:henrard.f@belgacon.net)

### Czech Republic -

Josef Mezera  
e-mail: [potkjozeph@postcz](mailto:potkjozeph@postcz)

### Denmark

Niels Ebbe Gjoerup. Seglen 69, DK-8800 Viborg, Denmark e-mail: [negjoerup@mail.dk](mailto:negjoerup@mail.dk)

### Finland

Göran Bruun. e-mail: [bruun.goran@gmail.com](mailto:bruun.goran@gmail.com)

### France

Didier Fulchiron. 333 rue Louis Blanc, 38420 Le Versoud, France. e-mail: [vgcfrance@free.fr](mailto:vgcfrance@free.fr)

### Germany

Peter Ocker, Am Anger 30, 85247 Oberroth, Germany. Email: [dakarpete@web.de](mailto:dakarpete@web.de)

### Netherlands

Neelco Osinga.  
[kranich@zonnet.nl](mailto:kranich@zonnet.nl),

### Poland

Zbigniew Jesierski.  
[jezierski@silesianet.pl](mailto:jezierski@silesianet.pl),

### Slovakia

Joseph Ott, Panska dolina 2, Nitra, Slovakia, SK94901. e-mail: [jozef.ott@zoznam.sk](mailto:jozef.ott@zoznam.sk)

### Sweden,

Ingvar Hyllander.  
Email: [i.hyllander@telia.com](mailto:i.hyllander@telia.com)

### Switzerland

Werner Rüegg. uf Rütli, CH-8498 Gibswil. e-mail: [w\\_rueegg@hotmail.com](mailto:w_rueegg@hotmail.com)

## Board

### Chairman – Jan Forster

Peppelhoven 27. 6225GX Maastricht. Netherlands. [jftandemtutor@hetnet.nl](mailto:jftandemtutor@hetnet.nl)

**Secretary – Bruce Stephenson**  
[stephensons@talktalk.net](mailto:stephensons@talktalk.net)

**Treasurer – (Acting) Grant Williams**

**Membership Secretary – Ray Whittaker (Co-opted)** [vgcmem@gmail.com](mailto:vgcmem@gmail.com)

**International Rally Secretary – Klaus Shickling**  
Schwalbenring 16, D-63834 Sulzbach. +49 6028 3557. [klausschickling@web.de](mailto:klausschickling@web.de)

**UK National Rally Coordinator/ EGU Representative/Technical Officer –**

**Graham Saw** [graham@servotechnic.co.uk](mailto:graham@servotechnic.co.uk)

**VGC Public Relations Officer – Stefanie Gester**  
[sgester@web.de](mailto:sgester@web.de)

**Website coordinator – Al Stacey**  
[al.stacey@btinternet.com](mailto:al.stacey@btinternet.com)

*assisted by*

**Archivist – Peter Hardman**

**Archives Assistants – Al Stacey, Laurie Woodage, David Williams**

**Sales – David Weekes** [sales@vintagegliderclub.org](mailto:sales@vintagegliderclub.org)

**Interim VGC Webmaster – Robin Willgoss**  
[robin.willgoss@electronicomical.co.uk](mailto:robin.willgoss@electronicomical.co.uk)

**VGC News Editor – Margaret Shrimpton**  
[vgcnews@vintagegliderclub.org](mailto:vgcnews@vintagegliderclub.org)

**VGC Historic Group – Francis Humblet**  
[Historicgroup@vintagegliderclub.org](mailto:Historicgroup@vintagegliderclub.org)

**BGA Technical Representative – Ian Patingale**

**COOPTED MEMBERS**  
**Ray Whittaker**



## CLUB NEWS

# Chairman's report

## The end of a life, the beginning of a flying season.

The sad news over these past few months was first of all the death of Bob Gaines, a long-standing and well-known VGC member; and now, this month, that of our founder, President for Life, but more of a friend, Chris Wills. Chris died the 4th of May in his sleep. Most of us knew that Chris' condition was not that good, but his death was nevertheless unexpected.

The funeral took place the 16th of May. It was planned as a small family ceremony. However, a small group of VGC officials was invited as well. On behalf of you all, I made a funeral address. The ceremony was simple and respectful to Chris. We understood that many of you wanted to take part, but we had to respect the family wishes for a private occasion.

There will, however, be two more celebrations in which we can participate. The first one will take place at Lasham, on the 25th of June, and will include a service of thanksgiving as well as a celebratory gliding weekend.

Secondly there will also be a special event at the International Vintage Glider Rally at Spitzerberg, in Austria. This commemoration is planned to take place before the official opening ceremony.

In this *VGC News*, you will find several more items which celebrate Chris' life.

First of all we owe a great debt of gratitude to Rebecca, since it was only with her assistance that it was possible for Chris to take part in our activities over the past three years.

Following Chris' death, the Club will inevitably undergo change. We have the enormous legacy of Chris, which he left us. Chris founded the Club to bring together so many friends worldwide, with the simple intention of flying our gliders and celebrating life. Our lives would indeed have been very different if there had been no Vintage Glider Club. That is also a legacy from Chris, and is what we will remember him by.

As Chris would say: "let's go and fly, find a good thermal and celebrate the enjoyment of flight". That is what its all about: enjoying new adventures and sharing them together.

I look forward to seeing you on one of our wonderful Meetings in the new season!

*Jan Forster*, Chairman VGC

## Contents

|                           |    |
|---------------------------|----|
| Chairmans report          | 3  |
| Diary dates               | 7  |
| Classified advertisements | 7  |
| Snippets                  | 10 |
| VGC Historic Group        | 11 |
| Book review               | 13 |
| Club shop                 | 18 |
| Model reports             | 38 |
| Obituaries                | 41 |

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

|                              |    |
|------------------------------|----|
| Germany                      | 9  |
| The Netherlands, New Zealand | 10 |

## FEATURES

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Chris Wills tributes and memories           | 19 |
| More Russian gliders                        | 35 |
| Vintage and classic gliders in Argentina    | 44 |
| A four year old girl test pilot named Jenni | 48 |

## RALLY ROUNDUP

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Nortel mountain airfield, Germany      | 14 |
| Third Vintage Nationals, Illinois, USA | 16 |

*A number of articles had to be held over from this issue due to the length of the Chris Wills tributes*

## EGU Congress 2011

by *Graham Saw*

This year's European Gliding Union Congress meeting was held in Spain and hosted by the Real Aeroclub de Espana, in Cuatro Vientos, Madrid. For us, this was a fitting venue as the airfield has been operating continuously since 1911. The VGC was represented by Jan Forster as an 'Observer' and me as a Delegate.

The EGU work closely with Europe Air Sports (EAS represent all air sports and recreational airspace users in Europe) to minimise the impact of any new regulatory matters in Europe. David Roberts, the EAS President also attended this meeting.

This coming year there is greater activity than any previous year in changing unworkable laws that affect our sport. The main focus is on 'Licensing, Operations, Airworthiness and, Airspace. Most of these subjects affect EASA and ANNEX 2 gliders equally, but there are

some that affect ANNEX 2 and the older EASA gliders far more than modern gliders.

### Training

The proposal given by EASA on every aspect of running a gliding club is unworkable. The EGU has developed an alternative proposal and presented it to EASA.

Licensing CRD on NPA 2008-17. The EGU have more or less what they wanted with NPA 2008-17, but want alterations to Check flights, 100km flight, and all aspects of Instructors.

### Operations

Documents and information to be carried on sailplanes flying cross-country on closed circuits. As it is impossible to carry all these documents in a cramped cockpit (especially vintage), the EGU wants it amended to carrying the information digitally. (Memory stick)

Flight Crew interphone system. (OPS.GEN.520). As there is no engine

noise in a glider, the EGU have suggested the wording to be modified so that sailplanes are excluded from this requirement.

### Airworthiness and Maintenance.

There are many complex issues that the EGU are working on, headed by Howard Torode (EGU Technical Officer).

EASA should allow Minor Installations to be managed by the National Authorities.

Part M Implementation. This is now accepted into European Law. This is causing serious issues on many levels.

We have all been affected by the massive increase in paperwork and audit validation causing high costs with no perceptible impact on safety.

### Airspace

Eurocontrol, the 'European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation', is currently consulting on its proposed Standardised European Rules of the Air (SERA).

**Once established, these rules will affect us all from 2012.**

Eurocontrol has posed one of the largest threats to gliding. It focuses exclusively on the needs of Commercial Air Transport !

These proposals are being fought by all bodies within light aviation.

**Transponders and Radios**

Mode S transponders are mandatory in some countries and there are different rules in each country of Europe, with exemptions for certain airspace. So far, it has been a very expensive waste of time and money! In Holland, for instance, Where they were forced to fit transponders in certain areas, they were then told to switch them off as it caused too much clutter ! This had been tried in the USA some years ago, with the same result.

Radios. There is a Draft Implementing Rule out for the frequency spacing of channels to come down from 25 kHz to 8.33kHz. From January, 2012, only the new frequency radios will be on sale, in 2015 25% of frequencies per country will be changed and by 2018 all radios will use 8.33 kHz spacing. This will affect all western European countries.

At the present time the cheapest radio is 1600 EUR and there are no hand-held radios with this spacing.

There may be an interference problem between today's 25 kHz spaced radios and the proposed 8.33 kHz spacing. At the EGU Congress, the USA delegate stated that in the USA they had found that there was interference between the 2 types. Does this mean that everyone must change over to a new radio on the same day ?

In general, the main problems of fitting these devices are cost, installation and maintenance, with complex annual testing and calibration by authorised bodies.

Jan and I pointed out to the other Delegates that to fit any extra devices into our vintage and classic gliders would be difficult, impractical or impossible with most of them. If you forget the relative cost of a radio or transponder compared to the glider (more acceptable with expensive modern gliders) then the added weight and space to fit them is the issue. Certainly in the UK there are some old gliders that have been allowed to fly with a higher maximum All Up Weight so it can be flown with a usable pilot weight. (Old wooden gliders tend to increase in airframe weight over the years, due to repairs and modifications). To add a battery (most old gliders do not currently have batteries) and



***Space in most old gliders is far more restricted than in modern gliders, so to find strong attachment points to fit a battery and transponder that does not restrict the pilot would be very difficult.***

transponder, say 10 kgs, would severely limit the pilot size.

Space in most old gliders is far more restricted than in modern gliders, so to find strong attachment points to fit this equipment that does not restrict the pilot would be very difficult.

Just before Jan and I went to this Congress, Jan sent out a questionnaire to all the VGC International Council. It was to find out what problems, if any, were encountered flying an ANNEX 2 glider in a different country to the one it is registered in. The answers ranged from country to country. Some countries required paperwork sent before the visit, some countries charged a high administration fee for processing the documents. Some countries just say they are pleased to see us –just come and fly !

What concerns us is that there are many 'grey' areas, so if there is an accident and a legal expert finds out that you did not have the correct paperwork or written permission to fly in another country, you are flying illegally, so the insurance will not pay out !

At the end of the Congress meeting, under 'Any other business' I raised the point about flying ANNEX 2 gliders in other countries.

I said that when we hold an International Rally, we ask the host club to obtain permission for us to fly, from their local authorities. This may result in the authorities requiring copies of the documents before the event. This is not a problem, time-wise.

The problem occurs when, on an individual basis, we want to fly our ANNEX 2 gliders in another country. Who do we ask? If we obtain permission from the authorities, it may cost a lot of money for the administration of 1 glider. Sometimes we have been told just turn up and fly ! Are we legal ? We don't know until there is an accident.

I asked if it is possible for the authority in each country to have a 'blanket' agreement with the other countries that any ANNEX 2 glider can fly in their country. The German Delegate said that this was already the case. Some other members thought that this was not so !

All this proved just how grey the grey areas are !

David Roberts (Europe Air Sports) said we should be careful when setting up this matrix of agreements with the authorities, as EASA must not be involved, just in case they want ANNEX 2 gliders under their umbrella !

The Congress meeting ended with the EGU agreeing to help with the challenge of removing the flight restrictions of the ANNEX 2 gliders in other countries.

It is important for the VGC to attend these annual EGU Congress meetings as they represent us when dealing with EASA and the other European bodies hell-bent on removing all freedom in the skies. They are a bunch of gliding enthusiasts who are effective in working with EASA to modify or minimise their rulings.

## **The VGC at Aero, Friedrichshafen** *by Peter Ocker*

After the successful participation of the VGC at the Aero 2010, it was clear that the 2011 vintage glider movement had to be represented there again. Last year's successful concept was developed in which not only a superbly restored exhibit was shown, but also one which shows how the restoration begins.

The fair was organized by the proven team of German VGC-members headed by chief organizer Gere Tischler and, this time, with our Swiss friends! They supported not only with personnel but also fantastic material. So, we changed into Swiss gliding history. In addition to the yellow Karpf Baby of the OSV Schänis, we saw the "naked" Hütter H-17 from Beat Huber and the stunning gull wing two-seater Spyr V by Silvio Polla. The short-term entrants Doppelraab to Friedrichshafen came, after all, from a region within sight of Switzerland.



The service crew was then in attendance for four days. Countless visitors came to the VGC, telling their own stories of oldtimers, told of aircraft that were stored somewhere or just curious and marvelled, with wide eyes, especially the non-fabric-covered Hütter. Some people were curious with their fingers, with one or two having to be reminded of the fragility of the delicate ribbed Hütter. But almost everyone was understanding and this was often the start of interesting conversations. Not only VGC-residents visited the stand, too many members, including some we had not met for years looked over (like Josef Kurz), and when the evening arrived, we were often surprised to find that another day of the show was over again.

Not only at the official booth in Hall B4 was the VGC present: in the foyer of the Messe Hall, the OSC Wasserkuppe had prepared the ivory-blue Habicht to



*Top left: How often do you see three Gullwings in one place?*

*Left: fragile "naked" Hütter H-17 from Beat Huber.*

*Above: Hartmut Sammet receives the VGC 2010 restoration prize Medal for the outstanding restoration of his L-Spatz 55*



catch the eye of visitors, flanked by two Gullwing-doors Mercedes. How often do you see three Gullwings in one place? VGC members also had their own stands: Klaus Fey (Publishing company Equip), Tilo Holighaus of Schempp-Hirth, Alfred Spindelberger (Cobra-trailer) up to Uli Schwenk, who had references to a Phoenix covered by Jaxida. We also took the opportunity to formally award to Hartmut Sammet the VGC 2010 restoration prize Medal for the outstanding restoration of his L-Spatz 55. Helmut, of Scheibe Aircraft, was showing the SF 25 Turbo-Falke and the SF 34 twin-seater glider.

The VGC booth was a great success.



Many visitors first heard of us, some of us already knew and are now planning to visit us at the Rendez-Vous in Aalen-Elchingen or filled in the application form immediately. A big thank you to the Aero Fair management, which has again made it possible for us to show to the many modern structures, how much has changed since the gliding of the timber era .

For more photos, please see [www.vgc-deutschland.de/Veranstaltungen/Aero2011](http://www.vgc-deutschland.de/Veranstaltungen/Aero2011)

## VGC archive

After many years as VGC Archivist, Laurie Woodage decided to step down from that position and devote more of his time to his love of Vintage Gliders. Laurie did a huge amount of work on the archive including identifying the archive contents, getting all the main drawings digitised and setting up a cataloguing system so things can be found. He also arranged for the Archive to be based in it's present location at Bicester.

Peter Hardman has now taken on the role of Archivist and is continuing Laurie's work.

Very soon after taking over, Peter realised that the Archive is probably the VGC's greatest asset, and needs to be more accessible to VGC members and other gliding enthusiasts and researches. The collection contains the complete history of Gliding UK and includes the production drawings and development details of nearly all gliders produced by British manufacturers together with personal archives kept by several glider designers and developers including people like John Sellers (Chief Designer - T53, Sigma and Torva sailplanes). A lot of this information is only available by physically visiting the Archive and looking at the papers themselves.

This was a job needing input from more than Peter himself so he decided to set-up a sub-committee. This was done and includes such Vintage Gliding luminaries as Al Stacey, David Williams, Laurie Woodage and as available Bruce Stephenson.

The Archive is owned by the VGC and the material in it needs to be accessible to members without the long trek to Bicester necessary for most people. With this in mind, it is our intention to make a start on putting the material on-line starting with the photographic archive (some 4500 photographs, archive film of International Rallies etc.). Eventually, we will make available a searchable data-

base of all the material in the Archive, which will be downloadable by members and requestable by non-members.

Last year, the BGA decided to move offices as we know and needed to rationalise their storage of paperwork. They decided that in future, all BGA aircraft information will be held digitally and that all the years of paper aircraft files were no longer needed so they firstly allowed owners to obtain these files for themselves, and when this exercise was finished, passed the whole lot to the VGC. We welcomed this as these files contain a huge amount of historical data and so now hold all the BGAs old aircraft files in paper format at Keevil. These files can be accessed by contacting the Archivist and copies are available for your information.

Peter is also very mindful of the state of the VGCs current finances (and indeed every ones) and has decided that in the long term, the Archive must be self financing and so has introduced a series of charges. These are as shown in the table below

It has also been decided to try and set-up a group of 'Type Specialist', these people will be the first port of call for anyone seeking information about a particular glider type. Obviously we cannot cover all gliders with this but the more common vintage gliders will have a specialist. Anyone who would like to volunteer for this or would like more details as to what the position entails or any

information on anything to do with the Archive should contact Peter via the Archivist email address.

## Olympian games project

Another bit of news is the announcement of the VGC Wenlock Olympian Games project....

We are delighted to announce that gliding is on the cusp of entering the Olympic family through its inclusion in the Wenlock Olympian Games. This unique opportunity sees the VGC playing a leading role in establishing gliding as a permanent feature of these historic Games.

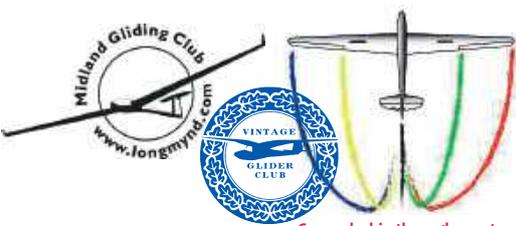
In 2012 VGC, in conjunction with the Midland Gliding Club, will stage a Vintage Olympian Gliding Competition and Demonstration at the Long Mynd Gliding Club as part of the 2012 Wenlock Olympian Games programme!

Members of the Games' organising Committee (Wenlock Olympian Society), will be among the spectators, with a view to adopting the sport of gliding as an event and permanent fixture on the Wenlock Olympian Games calendar.

Never heard of the Wenlock Olympian Society (WOS)?

Well, the roots of their Olympian Games go back as far as 1850, and it is these Games that the father of today's IOC, Baron de Coubertin, visited in 1890, and was so inspired, that he was to later set up what we know as today's Olympic Games. As a result, Wenlock is now recognised as the historic cradle of

| Copy of Drawings                             | Drawing Size | Members   | Non-Members   |
|--|--------------|---|---|
|  | A0           | £7.50 per sheet on paper<br>P&P at cost Minimum £2.50   | £10.00 per sheet on paper<br>P&P at cost Minimum £2.50  |
|  |              | £5.00 Digital Copy<br>P&P as above  | £7.50 Digital Copy<br>P&P as above  |
|  | A1 & A2      | £5.00 per sheet on paper<br>P&P at Cost Minimum £2.50   | £7.50 per sheet on paper<br>P&P at Cost Minimum £2.50   |
|  |              | £3.00 Digital Copy<br>P&P as above  | £5.00 Digital Copy<br>P&P as above  |
|  | A3 & A4      | £2.50 per sheet on paper<br>P&P at cost Minimum £2.50   | £4.00 per sheet on paper<br>P&P at cost Minimum £2.50   |
|  |              | £1.50 digital copy<br>P&P as above  | £2.50 digital copy<br>P&P as above.   |
| <b>For the other work</b>                    |              |   |   |
| Aircraft files from ex BGA Archive at Keevil |              | <b>Members</b> £25.00 inc p&p<br>(at Al's discretion but minimum £10.00 to cover P&P)         | <b>Non-members</b> £35.00<br>(at Al's discretion but minimum £10.00 to cover P&P)                 |
| Archive search                               |              | <b>Members</b> £15.00<br>(this is for upto 2 hours in the archive £10.00 per hour thereafter) | <b>Non Members</b> £25.00<br>(this is for upto 2 hours in the archive £15.00 per hour thereafter) |



Comradeship through sport...

the modern international Olympic Games, and WOS has been staging events in and around the borough town of Much Wenlock under the banner of "Wenlock Olympian Games", since their conception. Early on in their history, WOS lobbied the Greek Government to revive the Ancient Games at Olympia in Greece, but without success. Today the Society continues to hold one of the oldest Olympic-inspired Games in the world, so old in fact, that they predate the IOC by some 44 years, and our own Aeronautical Federation by some 53 years!

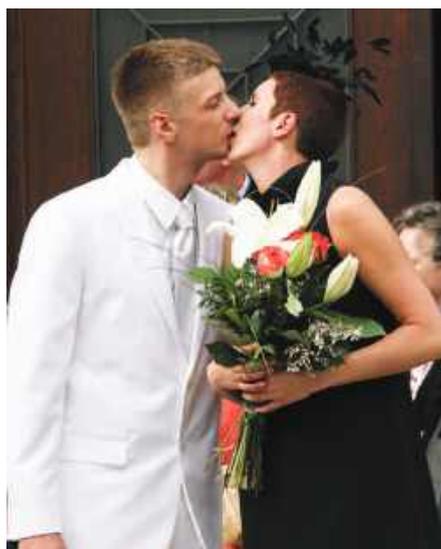
Such as their standing with the IOC and the British Olympic Association, that the 2012 Olympic Games mascot has been named Wenlock, in support and recognition of the role that the Wenlock Olympian Society's Games have played in Olympic history!

## Errata

I was reading VGCNews and read that the new owner of the Scud 3 was working on the Scud to make it even more beautiful than it already is. This is partially true since I (the owner) am working on it, however my name is not Justin van Geffen (it is Justin Steegh) and the Scud is not ex BGA 684 it still is BGA 684 and it will remain so. I hope you can correct this and try to prevent this for the future. *Kind regards, Justin Steegh*

## Congratulations

On a brighter note, may we pass on congratulations to Stefanie Gester and Dimi ..who were married on, none other, than the 1st of April.



## Diary Dates for 2011

Information on Vintage Rallies and Events are continually being received. For more up-to-date information on the events listed below, please visit the VGC website ([www.vintageglideclub.org](http://www.vintageglideclub.org)) regularly.

### 23rd - 28th July VGC Rendezvous, Aalen-Elchingen, Germany

The 2011 VGC Rendezvous will be held at Aalen-Elchingen (EDPA) airfield in Germany. For information about the airfield and fees kindly see the clubs website. Peter Ocker [weiheflieger@web.de](mailto:weiheflieger@web.de); <http://www.edpa.de>

### 23rd - 30th July IGC Gliding Grand Prix Final, Wasserkuppe, Germany

The VGC has been invited to display and fly vintage gliders during the event on July 24th and 25th (dates might change slightly), celebrating the 100th anniversary of gliding. This will be a tremendous chance to promote vintage gliding. For further information kindly contact Ulf Ewert. <http://gfs-wasserkuppe.de/>

### 29th - 31st July Vintage Weekend. York Gliding Centre, Rufforth Aerodrome, UK

An informal gathering of Vintage Gliders, come and fly in the Vale of York at one of the friendliest clubs around. We will be flying at the club all week, so feel free to come for the week, there will be plenty of people around. The choice of winch or aerotow available. Saturday night will be BBQ night. There is plenty of room for camping and being right next to the City of York there are plenty of B&Bs around. Contact Name Paul Darnbrough. Email [office@yorkglidingcentre.co.uk](mailto:office@yorkglidingcentre.co.uk), Tel +44 1904 738694 (club), Website <http://www.yorkglidingcentre.co.uk>

### 30th July - 10th August 39th. VGC International Rally 2011, Spitzerberg, Austria

The 39th VGC International Rally will be held in Spitzerberg, Austria, located between the cities of Vienna (Austria) and Bratislava (Slovakia). Contact: Andreas Baumann. Email see event website at <http://vgc2011.spitzerberg.at>.

### 3rd July - 13th August European Cup of the Two-Seater Glanders, Poitiers, France

For those not going to the International Rally in Austria, this Two-Seater Competition offers a Vintage Glider Class. Have a look at the website. Freddy Thery, Email [acp8.vav@wanadoo.fr](mailto:acp8.vav@wanadoo.fr).

Event Website <http://www.poitiers-planeurs.com>.

### 7th - 12th August Vintage Task Week, Lasham, UK

If Austria is too far to travel but you want fun vintage flying join us and enjoy cross country flying using the superb Lasham facilities. For all vintage performance levels. Cross country briefings every day. Tasks set for all skill levels. Daily and overall prizes. Special prize for the furthest point reached from Lasham. Piper Super cub slow tows available. Free entry (£30 week temp visitor membership). Richard Moyses. Email [richard.moyse@lasham.org.uk](mailto:richard.moyse@lasham.org.uk). Tel +44 1256 384904

### 26th - 28th August 15. Kleines Segelflugzeug- Oldtimertreffen, Anklam, Germany.

The Segelflug Club „Otto Lilienthal“ Anklam e.V. invites all vintage pilots and friends of vintage gliders to the 15. Kleinen Segelflugzeug-Oldtimertreffen. Early arrivals and flying are possible from Wednesday August 24th. Reginald Kasubeck. Email [reginald\\_kasubeck@web.de](mailto:reginald_kasubeck@web.de). Tel +49 39991 36146, +49 151 51950833. Website <http://www.fliegerklub-otto-lilienthal-anklam.de>.

### 27th August - 04th September Slingsby Week & VGC Meeting. Sutton Bank, UK.

The Yorkshire Gliding Club will be delighted to welcome friends old and new to this annual event. Not only for Slingsby gliders and owners, all types are welcome. Sutton Bank holds the promise of thermal, hill and wave conditions from a safe compact site with all the facilities for an enjoyable gliding week. See [www.ygc.co.uk](http://www.ygc.co.uk) for more details. Contact Name The Secretary YGC or Phil Lazenby. Email [enquiry@ygc.co.uk](mailto:enquiry@ygc.co.uk) or [phillazenby@onetel.com](mailto:phillazenby@onetel.com). Tel +44 1845 597237. Website <http://www.ygc.co.uk>.

### 1st October 2011. VGC Annual Dinner and Prize Giving

Will be held at Holiday Inn London, Elstree.  
Further details, on page 8

## Diary Dates for 2012

### 30th July - 09th September 40th. VGC International Rally 2012, Pociunai, Lithuania.

The 40th VGC International Rally will be held in Pociunai, Lithuania. Opening Ceremony will be on the evening of Monday July 30th, Closing Ceremony on Thursday August 9th. Contact. Lina Ivanauskiene. Email [l.jurkstaite@googlemail.com](mailto:l.jurkstaite@googlemail.com). Tel +370 671 09639. Website <http://www.pociunai.lt>

## CLASSIFIED ADVERTS

Small advertisements are free to members and are charged at the joining rate for non members. Send your adverts to The Vintage Gliding Club, address on inside front cover.

## FOR SALE

**Foehn M 200** 2 seater side by side Glider. Belgian registration, annex 2 with open trailer. Flies very well, best glide 32:1. Very good condition/restoration, can be seen in our site or other photos can be sent. See [www.faucheurs.com](http://www.faucheurs.com) or Contact: [henrard.f@skynet.be](mailto:henrard.f@skynet.be)

Quantity of magazines for disposal in part or whole including **Sailplane and Gliding, The Aeroplane** (mostly 1950's) **VGC News** (black and white). Full details Austen Wood 0161 487 4522. Small donation to VGC funds suggested and appreciated. Collect from Stockport.

**Grasshopper primary** (ex RAF) suitable for a restoration project. Complete with partly restored fuselage but flying surfaces in need of recovering. Property of the late Laurie Watts. Please contact Ron Davidson ([rondee44@hotmail.com](mailto:rondee44@hotmail.com)) or ring 01455 553362

# Vintage Gliding Club Annual Dinner Saturday 1st October 2011

**Venue:** Holiday Inn London Elstree,  
Jct 23 M25. WD6 5PU. England  
Tel: 44-871-9429071  
www.holidayinn.com

**Cost:** £30.00 (€35) per person

**Time:** 7pm for 7:30pm

**Payment methods:**

- 1) Via PayPal on the VGC website. Please mark your payment with your surname and email me [bantam\\_hen@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bantam_hen@yahoo.co.uk) with the name/s attending. Please put VGC dinner in the email subject.
- 2) Send cheque payable to VGC Ltd and booking form below to *Gayle Pearce, Elmers, Three Households, Chalfont St Giles, Bucks, HP8 4LW. UK.*
- 3) Sign up at the International Rally in Spitzerberg

**Note:** Internet prices do not include VAT and breakfast. VGC negotiated rates £69 for double and £59 for a single room including VAT and breakfast.

Please call +44 208 214 9900 or email [conf.hielstree@qmh-hotels.com](mailto:conf.hielstree@qmh-hotels.com) to book your room. Quote **VIN0110**

**N.B. it is your responsibility to book your accommodation**



**Name:**

**Name of partner:**

**Staying at hotel:**      Y      N

**Email address:**

Please ensure your email address is correct so that we can email details of museum visits and timings nearer the time – Thank you

# Vintage Gliding Club Annual Dinner Samstag, 1. Oktober 2011

**Ort:** Holiday Inn London Elstree,  
Jct 23 M25. WD6 5PU. England  
Tel: 44-871-9429071  
www.holidayinn.com

**Kosten:** £30.00 (€35) pro Person

**Beginn:** 7pm for 7:30pm

**Zahlung:**

- 1) Per PayPal über die VGC-Website. Bei Zahlung bitte den vollständigen Namen angeben sowie die Teilnahme inkl. Namen per Email an [bantam\\_hen@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bantam_hen@yahoo.co.uk) melden.
- 2) Scheck zur Verrechnung an VGC Ltd ausstellen und gemeinsam mit ausgefüllter Anmeldung unten an *Gayle Pearce, Elmers, Three Households, Chalfont St Giles, Bucks, HP8 4LW. UK.*
- 3) Anmeldung und Barzahlung während der International Rally in Spitzerberg.

**Achtung!** Die im Internet angegebenen Preise enthalten weder Frühstück noch Mehrwertsteuer. Die VGC-Kontingentpreise sind £69 (DZ) und £59 (EZ) inkl. Frühstück und Mehrwertsteuer. Für entsprechende Reservierungen bitte eine

email [conf.hielstree@qmh-hotels.com](mailto:conf.hielstree@qmh-hotels.com) senden. Zitat **VIN0110**

**Hotelbuchungen sind unabhängig vom Annual Dinner selbstständig und auf eigene Verantwortung vorzunehmen**



**Name:**

**Name des/der Parter/in:**

**Übernachtung Hotel:**      JA      NEIN

**Email-Adresse:**

Bitte sicherstellen, dass die Email-Adresse korrekt angegeben ist, so dass zeitnah weitere Informationen zur Veranstaltung (Museumsbesuche, zeitlicher Ablauf etc.) übermittelt werden können.

## GERMANY

### A Dream has come true

(by Werner Kalkhoff, Cloppenburg)

**I**n the late 1970's I was in Zell am See, Austria, to get my glider pilot's license. At that time I saw her for the first time: The SHK. I photographed it and I immediately fell in love with her. The years went by, my licence expired and my flying activities were limited to model aviation.

Then I began some years ago to fly again, got to know the VGC and stood in the summer of 2008 at the VGC Rally in Wels unexpectedly in front of the Danish SHK and its predecessor, the Standard Austria. And immediately I fell in love with the old lady again.

After brief discussions with the owners it was clear to me: I wanted to have my own one!

Back from Wels, I started searching - knowing that it could

take several years to find a SHK in good condition.

At the end of 2009 I was successful: A SHK was offered in southern Germany. Because of his age the owner wanted to give it to a good home. Erhard Pfrommer who knows the Standard Austria very well and me went there to have a closer look at it.

In the spring of 2010 I finally decided to acquire the very well-preserved SHK-1, D-8621 (ex CH-621), Werk-Nr. 47, built in 1967. Since the

previous owner was very attached to his SHK-1, he naturally wanted to know where it would find its new home. So in April 2010 he took it personally to me to Northern Germany. It was a moving moment when he was turned with it on our airfield Cloppenburg Varrelbusch.

last summer I already had many many great flights with it and I can't for the next season to enjoy taking this wonderful glider under the clouds.



## A RARE VINTAGE



If you have put a lot of time, effort and money into a vintage glider, you will want to safeguard your investment. We can help you by providing a reliable and competitive insurance policy together with a friendly and efficient service.



Contact: **Stephen Hill** or **Andrew Hatfield**

Phone: 01765 690777 Fax: 01765 690544 Email: [hillaviation@btconnect.com](mailto:hillaviation@btconnect.com)  
Unit 1A, Sycamore Business Park, Copt Hewick, Ripon, North Yorkshire, HG4 5DF.  
[www.hillaviation.com](http://www.hillaviation.com)

Authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority



## Teuge, not Tenge

Dear Margaret, I presume the pictures on page 34 of the Spring *VGC News* were not taken at Tenge or at Yenge as the captions say, but at Teuge (the airfield in between Apeldoorn and Deventer)?

The airfield at the time was home to one of the biggest Dutch Gliding clubs and a glider flying school. It was home of the N.V. Vliegtuigbouw Deventer that among other things built a batch of Baby's and the Snellen V-20 which was recently restored. After the war the factory itself was moved to the airfield and the Sagitta was built there. Today, a strong glider community still flies from the field that also houses a lot of general aviation companies.

Kind regards, Eric Munk

## NEW ZEALAND

news below

## THE NETHERLANDS



### The Sky flies again

We're pleased to report that our Sky is now flying again under its original Dutch registration. This is the one that Raymond van Loosbroek imported from the UK in 1999. He kindly donated his collection of gliders to the Aviodrome museum in 2003, and we have had the Sky under our care since then under a loan agreement. First flight after restoration was in 2005. This winter we switched from BGA marks to Dutch registration. It is the only Sky flying on the continent. The attached picture was taken late April at Lemelerveld following the annual inspection.

Eric Munk - Slingsby's over Salland



## Vintage Kiwi Digest

### Vintage & Personal Loss

The hardest part of editing a newsletter and magazine is deciding those deaths to cover, a far too frequent event in any field vintage interest. The hardest and saddest part is when your own friends are involved, like now, when two old friends, Bob Gaines and Chris Wills, are involved.

Chris Wills, Founder and President of "The Vintage Glider Club" that now spans the world, had long ago established his reputation but still helped expand our movement by his articles and international correspondence, his flying days having been over.

Bob Gaines, seen here, with his wife Alice, John Asford, had established a reputation, both in the US "Vintage Soaring Association" and internationally, but left us whilst, until recently, active with restoration and other VSA work.

It is up to all of us to build on Chris and Bob's achievements to continue to be the fastest growing segment of gliding, and help to reverse the decline in modern gliding by attracting non gliding aviation enthusiasts



## Snippets

### Ka6 useful info

Jenni and Dave Goldsmith sent us this info for all those interested in the Ka6

From: Jason P Hatton [hirondelle.k6e@gmail.com](mailto:hirondelle.k6e@gmail.com) Subject: Ka6 Site

Hi Everyone, I have put an initial version of the Ka6 owners/flyers site online for the time being at the following link; <https://sites.google.com/site/ka6sailplane/>. There are some general articles on the history and flying the Ka6. I would like to add features on individual Ka6's and related stories, so if you have anything you would like to contribute as well as photo's let me know. There is also a link to a Yahoo group can act as a forum for discussion and exchange of technical information. Best wishes, Jason

### Newark Air Museum News

Over the weekend the Newark Air Museum hosted a Canberra Model event, during which several visitors indicated that they were surprised that the event hadn't featured on several well known aviation event listing sites. As a result of these comments we have decided to send out another quick email to remind people about the forthcoming event on the 29 October 2011 – Indoor Aeroboot aviation and avionic sale. Further info can be found on Website: [www.newarkairmuseum.org](http://www.newarkairmuseum.org) or Email: [enquire@newarkairmuseum.org](mailto:enquire@newarkairmuseum.org). Telephone: 01636 707170

Regards, Howard Heeley, Secretary & Museum Trustee, Newark Air Museum. Registered Charity No. 256434. MLA Accredited Museum No. 551



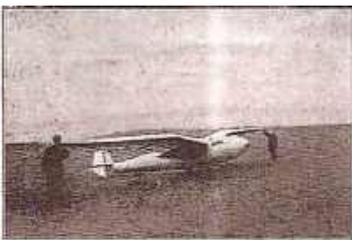
# VGC HISTORIC GROUP

By Francis Humblet

## No longer a UFO: The Mingo

The Mingo, a beautiful gull wing glider, was one of the many gliders acquired, in 1945, by the French forces in southern Germany. The machine was used during the following six years at La Ferte Allais and Cherence before ending its flying career at Montargis. Pilots who flew the Mingo were full of praise for its handling qualities but no one could tell us anything about its origins and who built it! So, the search went on for 55 years. The only 3 pictures available were widely circulated and a request in VGC News did not produce any satisfactory answers for five years. And, recently, totally out of the blue, a mail from Frits Ruth was received last month with the long awaited Mingo origins researched by Prof. a. D. Dr.-Ing. Dietrich Hummel and Dieter Mühlhahn.

In 1936/37, the Mingo was designed by Dipl.-Ing. Ernst Kennel who was a leader of the Hannover NFSK group.



Das Hochleistungssegelflugzeug „Mingo“, welches von NFSK-Hauptgruppenleiter Dipl.-Ing. Kennel konstruiert und von den Störmen 1/36 und 5/36 gebaut wurde.

Weiter wurden auf dem Boden der Vereinbarung zwischen dem Kommandeur des NFSK und dem Reichspostminister die Beseitigung der Errichtung von Werkstätten in Hannover, Braunschweig, Magdeburg und Göttingen durchgeführt.

Innerhalb des Jahres wurde das von Dipl.-Ing. Kennel konstruierte Leistungssegelflugzeug „Mingo“ in Gemeinschaftsarbeit der Störme 1/36 und 5/36 fertiggestellt. Die bisher ausgeführten Versuchsflüge zeigten zur vollen Zufriedenheit, sodass mit dem Einflug der Maschine für den Schleppflug in diesen Wochen gerechnet werden kann.

Above: Mingo Unique German Photo and text 1937

Below: Mingo in France 1947



Otto Mühlhahn started building the machine and the first flight took place in September 1937. During 1940, the Mingo and its genitors moved to the Ingenieurschule Konstanz. The machine was flown there until 1945 thus bringing us back to the beginning of the story.

Enclosed is the only known photo of the Mingo published soon after its completion with the original German text.

## More about a recent UFO: The blind flying glider

In a previous issue, the Blind flying glider had been recognized as a modified Grunau 8 two-seater. No other details were forthcoming on its origins. Now, thanks to the Lakes Gliding Club web site, old UK magazines Sailplanes are now available online. In one 1933 issue, D MacClement, tells us about a visit made to Darmstadt where the RRG was carrying out gliding experiments. In this case, the aim was to teach blind flying and the Grunau 8 airframe had been suitably reinforced to take the punishment

expected by the pupils under tuition. Dual controls and instruments were fitted in front and rear positions. A fore and aft inclinometer was also included. Aero-tow, flown by the instructor, was used to launch the glider early in the morning in order to ease the workload on the crew. The pupil had no outside vision and had to follow the instructor's orders to bring the glider down. Flying stopped around 0900H and resumed after 1700H.

## UFO of the month.

The caption written alongside the picture of this month UFO (*see below*) reads: 'The ornithopter was built by a Junker engineer at Neumünster and it flew.' Can anyone add details to this unusual machine?

## Feedback from 132.

Thanks to plans received from Wasserkuppe museum via Klaus Hayn and further information from Jorie and Erik Kuiper who recommended www.shulgleiter.de, the Spanish team led by Miguel Yael will soon start on rebuilding their SG 38. As there is currently no VGC members association in Spain, maybe this could be the right time to start one!

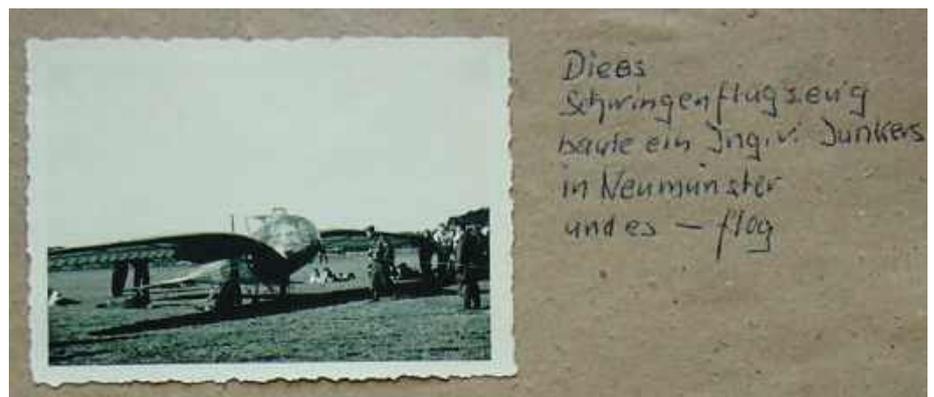
## About Belgian gliders

Comments were received from Bernd Diekmann and his Kronfeld research team. Recent research seems to indicate that three Drones were built in Belgium and not imported from UK or France. During 1938, the Kronfeld glider Austria III was sold to the Scheldemeeuw Gliding club in Antwerp. On 20th April



Above: the cloud flying glider, a modified Grunau 8.

Below: this month's UFO.



Diebs  
Schwingenflugzeug  
baute ein Ing. v. Junkers  
in Neumünster  
und es - flog



1938, Belgian major Damblon and German Dr Jancke made the first Belgian two-seater flight in Belgium lasting 28 minutes from St Hubert airfield. Does anyone know what happened to this glider after 1940 when it was stored in the Antwerp hangar roof.

IN THE MAY ISSUE of Aeroplane Monthly, there is an interesting article on the Festival of Britain that took place in London during 1951. Mention is made of the two gliders on display: An Olympus and another glider from Slingsby! Of course, it was an EoN Olympia 2 and the Slingsby machine was the new T 34 Sky. It looks as the aviation manufacturers were not pleased with the space taken by the gliders instead of their new products!

**ILA 1909**

Yet another UFO started an interesting investigation into the Aeronautical meeting that took place in Frankfurt in 1909. Gliders were launched from an expensive artificial hill, 10m high. Group members in four countries are currently trying to list the gliders that took part in this 100 years old event. Amongst the pilots, we find Ursinus better known as the Father of the Rhön. So far the glider shown on the photo sent by Gábor Fekecs remains a UFO but may have



Above: Photo of ILA 1909 UFO glider. (via Gábor Fekecs)

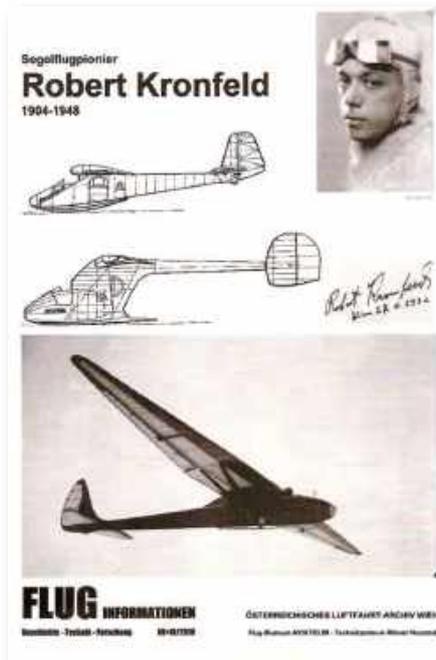
been a design from German Pioneer Euler. On the other hand, the caption could be wrong and it may not be an ILA glider after all! This research has also shown that very little is known about early German gliding experiments between Lilienthal unfortunate accident to 1910/1913 when the Darmstadt school boys designed and flew about 10 different glider types. The complete record of their activities can be found in the remarkable book by Watzinger called: Gedenke des Anfangs-Fluchversuche der Darmstädter Jugend 1909-

1913. Any additional material on ILA 1909 will be welcome.

**New publications.**

Rheinhard Keimel is the number one aviation historian in Austria. His book: Luftfahrt in Österreich covers Austrian aviation history and all aircraft and gliders built in the country. Rheinhard is also very much involved with the superb Aviaticum museum in Wiener-Neustadt. As this is not far from Spitzelberg, it is most likely that a visit to the museum will be organized during the VGC Rally. Recent publications from Rheinhard were received and should also be for sale at the rally.

**Segelfluggpionier Robert Kronfeld:** In German, this 50 pages study covers the life and work of the Austrian pilot. With plenty of photos and Rheinhard's own three-views of Kronfeld's remarkable



designs, this is a well produced addition to the Aviaticum series of publications.

**Segelflug am Spitzerberg und Hundsheimer Kogel:** Part of the series Bilder der Luftfahrt, is a pictorial survey of gliding in the Spitzerberg region. You do not have to understand German to enjoy



over 100 pages of photos covering many Austrian gliders and their pilots. (18.90€)

Most of the VGC Historic Group associates will be present at Spitzerberg. Anyone with interests in gliding and gliders history is most welcome to join this informal group. Bring your archives, old photos or your research work on a specific subject. Become a UFO killer and help us to trace about 50 gliders of unknown sources! See you there for an enjoyable week! ☐

**CRISPIN SPEERS and Partners Limited**  
**St Clare House, 30-33 Minories, London EC3N 1PE**  
**Tel: 020 7977 5700**  
**Official (UK) Vintage Glider Club Insurance Scheme**




Various types of coverages are available for Vintage Glider Club UK members. For competitive premiums matched with experience and reliability, please contact:  
**Graham Roberts, David Bacon or Darren Bourner**

Direct Line - 020 7977 5698  
 Fax - 020 7702 9276  
 email: [general@cpinsurance.com](mailto:general@cpinsurance.com)  
[www.cpinsurance.com](http://www.cpinsurance.com)



**Locomotive to Aeromotive**  
**Octave Chanute and the**  
**Transportation Revolution**  
 By Simine Short

Foreword by Tom D. Crouch  
 The first in-depth look at an influential engineer and aviation pioneer

*"An impressive, truly significant addition to the field of engineering and aeronautical history. Simine Short shows how Octave Chanute's personality and method of problem solving enabled him to make meaningful contributions in diverse fields such as railroad and bridge engineering, stockyard design, and the early phase of aviation." --Robert W. Jackson, licensed glider pilot and author of Rails across the Mississippi: A History of the St. Louis Bridge*

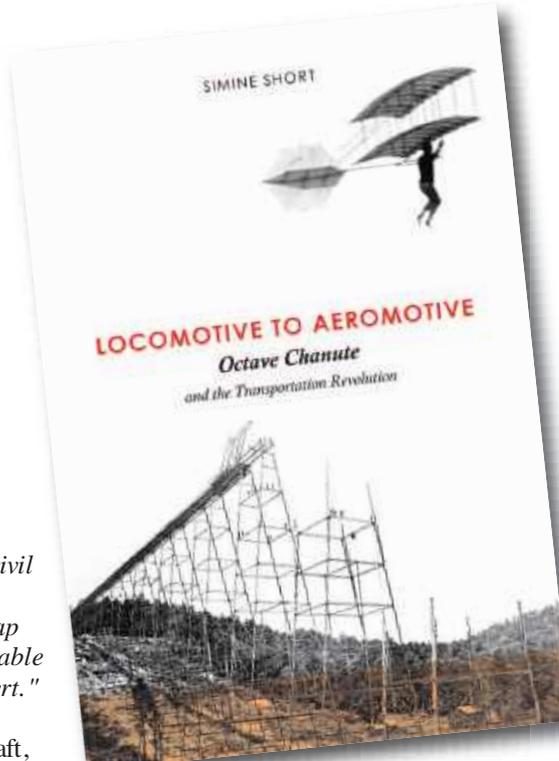
*"As the first detailed biography of civil engineer and aeronautic pioneer Octave Chanute, this book fills a gap in the existing literature and is suitable for both the lay reader and the expert." --Anthony M. Springer, editor of Aerospace Design: Aircraft, Spacecraft, and the Art of Modern Flight.*

*"We have waited a long time for a solid biography of Octave Chanute. Simine Short has given us a book worth waiting for. She succeeds in situating the details of Chanute's long life and extraordinary career squarely in the context of his time." -- Tom D. Crouch, Senior Curator, Aeronautics, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.*

French-born and self-trained engineer Octave Chanute designed America's two largest stockyards, created innovative and influential structures such as the Kansas City Bridge over what was commonly known as the unbridgeable Missouri River, and was a passionate aviation pioneer whose collaborative approach to aeronautical engineering problems encouraged several want-to-be aeronautical experimenters, including the Wright brothers. Drawing on a rich trove of archival material and exclusive family sources, Locomotive to Aeromotive is the first detailed examination of Chanute's life and his immeasurable contributions to the fields of engineering and transportation, from the ground transportation revolution of the mid-

nineteenth century to the early days of aviation.

Aviation researcher and historian Simine Short brings to light in colorful detail many previously overlooked facets of Chanute's life, in both his professional accomplishments



in multiple disciplines and his personal relationships as a respected mentor and friend to many civil engineers and aviation pioneers. In the latter part of the 19th century, few men were committed to the establishment of engineering as a profession on par with law or medicine, but Chanute devoted much time and energy to the newly established professional societies that were created to set standards and serve the needs of civil engineers. Though best known for his aviation work, he became a key figure in the opening of the American continent by laying railroad tracks and building bridges, experiences that later gave him the engineering knowledge to build the first stable aircraft structure. Chanute also established a procedure for pressure-treating wooden railroad ties with an anti-septic that increased the wood's life-span in the tracks. Establishing the first commercial plants, he convinced railroad men that it was commercially feasible to make money by spending money on treating ties to conserve natural resources. As a way to track the age and longevity of railroad ties and other wooden structures, he also introduced the railroad date nail in the United States.

A versatile engineer, Chanute was known as a kind and generous colleague during his career. Using correspondence and other materials previously not available to scholars and biographers, Short covers Chanute's formative years in antebellum America, as well as his experiences traveling from New Orleans to New York, his apprenticeship on the Hudson River Railroad, and his early engineering successes. His multiple contributions into the realms of railway expansion, bridge building, and wood preservation, established his reputation as one of the most successful and distinguished civil engineers in the nation. And instead of retiring, he utilized his experiences and knowledge as a bridge builder in the development of motorless flight. Through the reflections of other engineers, scientists and pioneers in various fields who knew him, Short characterizes Chanute as a man who believed in fostering and supporting people who were willing to learn. This well-researched biography cements Chanute's place as a pre-eminent engineer, pioneer, and mentor in the history of transportation in the United States and the development of the airplane.

Simine Short is an aviation historian who has researched and written extensively on the history of motorless flight. Her first book, Glider Mail, an Aerophilatlic Handbook, received numerous research awards world-wide and is considered a standard reference by aero-philatelists and aviation researchers. She lives with her husband outside Chicago, Illinois. □

**Vintage Sailplane Association**



Soaring from the past into the future!  
 The Vintage Sailplane Association is dedicated to the preservation and flying of vintage and classic sailplanes. Members include modelers, historians, collectors, soaring veterans and enthusiasts from around the world.  
 Vintage sailplane meets are held several times each year. VSA has a new and improved quarterly newsletter. Sample issues are US \$ 5.- Membership is US \$ 30 per year. For more information write to  
**Vintage Sailplane Association**  
 4673 Sapphire Drive  
 Hoffman Estates IL 60195  
 USA  
[www.vintagesailplane.org](http://www.vintagesailplane.org)





# Nortel mountain airfield

28th and 29th of May



by Peter Ocker

Starting to become a tradition, another vintage glider meeting was organised by VGC member Ralf Schnirch (Kranich III D-6018) on his lovely club's airfield south of Stuttgart in Southern Germany. There, the "Schwäbische Alb" mountains begins, a nice countryside with perfect gliding opportunities.

The meeting was held over the weekend from 28 and 29 of May and was open to all enthusiasts of vintage gliders. Surrounding aeroclubs joined the meeting with their "shadow-aircraft", which usually rests in the back of the hangar. Suddenly, we saw a huge amount of gliders never seen before: two Grunau Baby IIb (one in dark-blue and one in fantastic ivory color), a nicely restored Rhönlerche (once famous in the region for doing a 300 km triangle), a T21 from a nearby airfield, some Ka7 and Ka8s (getting more classic every year), a very nice Musger MG19a and even an open-cockpit ASK 13 joined us from Greven (Northern Germany).

Of course, VGC members were present:

Hartmut Sammet with his restoration-prize 2010-winning L-Spatz;

Heinz Bauer with his restoration-prize 1999-winning Bergfalke II

Erhard Pfrommer with his fantastic L-Spatz

Alexander Gilles with father Bernd Hurrle and their Standard Austria

Ralf Schnirch and Dr. Rolf Braun with their Kranich III

Rainer Strobel with his Grunau Baby III

Stefanie and Dimi Gester with Zugvogel "yellow bird"

Tilo Holighaus with his Minimoa (for a visit on Sunday)

and, suprisingly, Katrin Strobel with



Above: Katrin Strobel uses her 1959 Eicher tractor.

This photo: Hartmut Sammet with his restoration-prize 2010-winning L-Spatz.



Ka7 and Ka8.

another vintage equipment - former agricultural machine from Eicher company of 1959. This was found to be a perfect glider-tow-tractor in fine female hands.

As my gliders were still in the workshop, I was kindly invited by friends to fly their gliders, and so all of us had fantastic flights over the great countryside. Also, that organising-talent, Gere Tischler joined us, also having his gliders in the workshop.

Thank you to all members of the local gliding club, especially Ralf and Paddi Schnirch for hosting us during those fantastic days.

We were really impressed how the vintage glider movement grew in a local area during the last years. All of them were invited to join the Rendez-vous rally at the end of July at Aalen-Elchingen airfield ([www.edpa.de](http://www.edpa.de)) to meet international members of the VGC and to find out more on our movement, once set up by the unforgettable Christopher Wills. Probably, he saw us from above, having that unique gloss in his eyes by seeing vintage gliders in the air. *Viele Grüsse. Peter Ocker. Sprecher der deutschen Mitglieder im Vintage Glider Club. [www.vgc-deutschland.de](http://www.vgc-deutschland.de)* □



Above: Rainer Strobel with his Grunau Baby III.  
 This photo: Erhard Pfrommer with his fantastic L-Spatz.  
 Below: Heinz Bauer with his restoration-prize 1999-winning Bergfalke II.



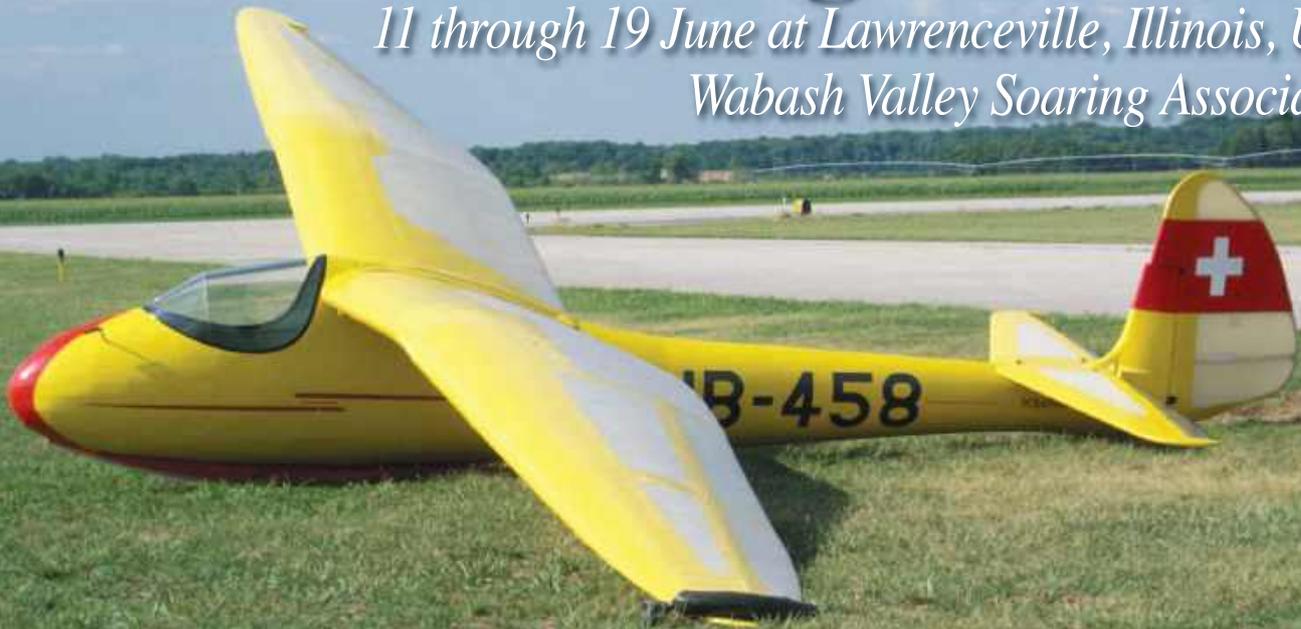
This photo: Tilo Holighaus with his Minimoa.





# The Third Vintage Nationals

*11 through 19 June at Lawrenceville, Illinois, USA,  
Wabash Valley Soaring Association*



*A report from Lee Cowie*

Every four years, half way between International Vintage Sailplane Meets at Elmira, New York the Vintage Sailplane Association designates one of its regattas as the Vintage Nationals. The Third Vintage Nationals were held from 11 through 19 June at Lawrenceville, Illinois, USA hosted by the Wabash Valley Soaring Association. This was also the fifteenth annual Midwest Vintage Sailplane Regatta and new for this year A Gathering of Schleichers. The Schleicher sailplane has always been popular in the USA and makes up a large portion of the old gliders flown by VSA members. This first Schleicher Gathering attracted all types of Schleicher gliders including a Rhonbussard, all types of Ka 6, Ka7, Ka 8, Ka 10 ASK 13 and ASK 18. Southern VP John Hardy organized several tasks for the gathering including a triangular course to be flown in the least time which was won by Neal Pfeiffer in his Ka 6BR and a duration contest won by Jon Slack flying the Wabash Club's Ka 8B. The longest flight of the entire event was a four hour plus flight made by Mary Cowie in her ASK 18.

This event attracted gliders and pilots from coast to coast and border to border. While there were a number of ships made by different companies from around the world the second largest one make group were the ships made by the Schweizer brothers in Elmira, New York. Without these gliders the USA soaring



**Top: Jerry Wenger's Spalinger S18 from Wyoming**

**Above: Mary Cowie had the longest flight of the regatta in her ASK 18. Photo: Lee Cowie**  
**Below: Art Babiarz instructs in his Slingsby Type 53, Phoenix. Photo: Mark Nankivil**





VSA president Jim Short lands Jerry Wengers 1944 Moswey. Photo: Mark Nankivil



Bob Humi brought his Schweizer 1-26A from Phoenix, Arizona. Photo: Mark Nankivil



scene would only be a fraction of what it is today. The Schweizer gliders at the event started with a 1-19 that VSA president Jim Short plans to rebuild in the next year or so. Jim was flying his 1-21 serial number 2 of two built. The Kramer boys made the first flights of their

recently rebuilt 2-22 at the regatta. Next came a pair of 1-23s which some people consider the production version of the 1-21. The Bonser family from Ohio brought their 1-23 built in May 1950 and Herb Robbins brought his 1-23 H15, one of the last built. The Schweiz-

er 1-26 was also represented from the first to the last with Bob Humi from Phoenix, Arizona with his red and white sunburst 1-26A through Peter Washburn's 1979 1-26E, just 9 ships from the last one built.

Long range weather forecast had mentioned a chance of showers on a number of days but they didn't arrive until Tuesday 14 June. Programs had been scheduled for each day and on this day no one wanted to leave and fly. On Wednesday the wind was out of the east and ships were walked to the western end of the airport and most of the gliders flew. Thursday was a nice late spring day with a shower in the late afternoon. After the flying, WVSA member Ray Hall gave a program of his flying in Antarctica during the Geophysical years in the 1950s. Thursday evening was the Bar-B-Q catered by the local Amish restaurant. Friday was another flying day but no one ventured far from the field. After flying the real gliders, in winds way too strong, a catapult model glider contest was held. Friday night a line of severe thunderstorms came through and it was still raining during the lectures the next morning. Neal Pfeiffer and Harry Clayton gave a great talk on rebuilding wooden gliders and showed what some previous owners had done in the way of substandard repairs. The moral of the story was look beyond the immediate damage. When the rain stopped many visitors disassembled their gliders and some started for home. A glider mail flight was made by Rusty Lowry in his daughter's Ka 10 when the rain stopped. Then the sun came out and flying started again only to stop for the steak cook out. Saturday night another line of thunder storms came through only to clear into another beautiful flying afternoon but all the visitors were on their way home. When an event is planned years ahead of time you cannot plan on the weather. □



Neal Pfeiffer takes off for another flight in his Schleicher Ka6BR. Photo: Lee Cowie  
Below: another Ka6 launches





# VGC Sales

**embroidered VGC badge on assorted clothing**



## Clothing with embroidered VGC badge

Available in **S, M, L, XL** and **XXL** and **many colour options!**

*Packing and postage not included*

|              | Price Pounds | Post UK Pounds | Post Europe Pounds |
|--------------|--------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Polar Fleece | 27.00        | 6.00           | 8.00               |
| Bodywarmer   | 17.50        | 4.00           | 5.00               |
| Cardigan     | 18.50        | 4.00           | 5.00               |
| Sweatshirt   | 15.50        | 4.00           | 5.00               |
| Polo shirt   | 15.00        | 4.00           | 5.00               |
| Tee shirt    | 9.00         | 3.00           | 4.00               |

## Tee shirt (white with printed VGC badge)

Available in **child, S, M, L, XL** and **XXL**

*Packing and postage not included*

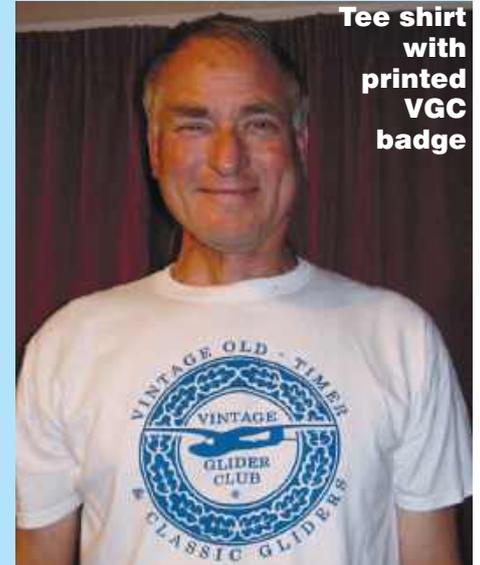
|           | Price Pounds | Post UK Pounds | Post Europe Pounds |
|-----------|--------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Tee shirt | 6.00         | 3.00           | 4.00               |



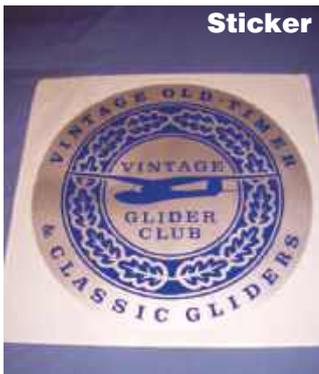
**Sweatshirt**



**Polo shirt**



**Tee shirt with printed VGC badge**



**Sticker**

## VGC stickers for your trailer and car

|   | Price Pounds | Post UK Pounds | Post Europe Pounds |
|---|--------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Front glued for windscreens, 80 mm diameter   | 1.60         | 0.80           | 1.00               |
| Rear glued, silver background, 80 mm diameter | 1.50         | 0.80           | 1.00               |
| Rear glued, silver background, 250 mm         | 4.50         | 1.50           | 2.00               |
| Rear glued, silver background 390 mm          | 6.20         | 2.00           | 3.00               |

## Books

|                                      | Price Pounds          | Post UK Pounds | Post Europe Pounds |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Slingsby Sailplanes - Martin Simons  | 35.00                 | 7.00           | 11.00              |
| Sailplanes 1920 - 45 Martin Simons   | <i>still at</i> 35.00 | 7.00           | 11.00              |
| Sailplanes 1945 - 65 Martin Simons   | 35.00                 | 7.00           | 11.00              |
| Sailplanes 1965 - 2000 Martin Simons | 35.00                 | 7.00           | 11.00              |
| German Air Attache - Martin Simons   | 12.00                 | 3.00           | 6.00               |
| A Glider Pilot Bold - Wally Kahn     | 11.00                 | 2.50           | 5.00               |

## DVD

|                    | Price Pounds | Post UK Pounds | Post Europe Pounds |
|--------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------------|
| T21 Technical Data | 15.00        | 1.00           | 2.00               |
| T31 Technical Data | 15.00        | 1.00           | 2.00               |
| Tibenham Rally     | 10.00        | 1.00           | 2.00               |

## VGC mugs!

|         | Price Pounds | Post UK Pounds | Post Europe Pounds |
|---------|--------------|----------------|--------------------|
| VGC mug | 5.00         | 2.50           | 5.00               |

**Skid suspension rubbers** suitable for T21, Olympia etc" £25 each plus P&P

*Note:- Where possible post & packing for more than one item will be charged at actual cost.*

*Please contact*

*David Weekes for an exact price. Payment in Euros welcome.*

*Payment by cash, cheques (to Vintage Glider Club) or via the VGC website*

*"donate" facility*

**For sales and details** contact David Weekes at [sales@vintagegliderclub.org](mailto:sales@vintagegliderclub.org)

# Remembering Chris Wills

## Curriculum Vitae - Chris Wills

(Transcription by Peter F. Selinger) (Amended by Stefanie Gester)

26 October 1985 FAI Diplome d'Honneur  
9 October 1996 FAI Diplome Paul Tissandier  
1 August 1999 Ehrenmedaille in Gold des DAeC  
17 Oktober 2001 FAI/IGC Diplom Pirat Gehringer  
29 April 2005 Certificate of Recognition (Ehrenurkunde), awarded at AERO Friedrichshafen in return for Outstanding Commitment  
2009 BGA Acknowledgement Certificate, awarded at VGC Annual Dinner Middle Wallop  
2009 Bronze Medal der Royal Dutch Association for Aviation for being President of the VGC since 1973, awarded at VGC Annual Dinner Middle Wallop  
2009 The VGC has about 1000 members; it has held 38 International VGC Rallies and sent out 131 VGC News letters.  
**It is the largest gliding Club in the world.**

1953 - 1955 He worked from 1953 - 1955 at Elliots of Newbury on 14 EoN bodies, on the first Olympia IV and K-I. PPL for 20 years

11 January 1958 New Zealand: 3 NZ national 2-seater records on one day in Slingsby T.42 "Eagle" with Jon Hamilton, take off at Simons Hill

Absolute Height 24,550 ft

Altitude gain

Distance and goal - 130 miles from Simons Hill to Christchurch not acknowledged Distance: Simons Hill via Hanmer to Christchurch (218 miles)

1955 - 1958 Honorary Secretary of the New Zealand Gliding Association

20 March 1958 in JS "Weihe" from Harewood NZ via Christchurch to Oamaru 250 kms and 23,000 ft

1951 A & B flights in Slingsby T.8 Kirby Tutor (without instruments) at Redhill (Surrey Gliding Club)

17 August 1951 first solo in the same plane at Redhill (Surrey Gliding Club)

27 September 1952 C-Certificate in Slingsby T.8 Kirby Tutor - ???  
6 March 1955 Silver C completed finally, in the same EoN Olympia on 3 different days from Lasham

1959 Gold C Distance 360 kms in Air 102 from La Ferté Alais (near Paris) to Angoulême (France)

4 August 1959 Gold C height on different days twice through storms in same EoN Olympia from Lasham

21 August 1982 Gold C Diamond height from Aboyne to Lasham in Glasflügel Libelle only (?) 21,000 ft. in wave

1 August 1970 Gold C Diamond Distance from Norwich to Devizes

## OBITUARY FOR CHRISTOPHER WILLS From Nick Newton

Christopher Wills, Founder and President for Life of the Vintage Glider Club, sadly passed away on 4th May 2011 at the age of 79, following a short illness.

Chris Wills was born in London on the 27th of August 1931, the eldest of four children of Philip and Kitty Wills. Philip Wills, his father, had been actively involved in the early gliding movement, not only as one of the founder members of the British Gliding Association, but also having become World Gliding Champion. As a consequence, Chris was exposed to the sport at an early age and retained an encyclopaedic memory of these early days of Gliding from all quarters of the world.

During the War, Chris and his younger brother were



evacuated to Australia for their safety, but after the Japanese threatened to advance on the Northern Territory their parents decided that the boys should return to England. They arrived in London only to experience at first hand the Blitz, watching the dog fights by day and the Doodlebugs by night.

After the War, Chris worked as an art teacher, but from 1953 -55 he also worked for a period at Elliots of Newbury, helping to complete the fuselages of some

14 EoN Olympia gliders.

Chris started Gliding in 1951 and made his first flights in a Slingsby Kirby Tutor at Redhill with the Surrey Gliding Club, undertaking his first Solo in August 1951. He completed his Silver C at Lasham in March 1955. He also had a Private Pilots Licence.

Chris then spent some time in New Zealand. Whilst he was there, he became the Honorary Secretary of the New Zealand Gliding Association from 1955-58, and in his final year there flew 250 km in a Weihe from Harewood NZ via Christchurch to Omarama, reaching 23,000 feet. In the same year, together with Jon Hamilton at Simons Hill, he established three New Zealand National 2-Seater records in a Slingsby Eagle, including an absolute height record of 24,550 feet.

Back home, following a successful meeting in 1972 at Itford, held to celebrate 50 years of Gliding in England, Chris organised another similar meeting the following year at Husband Bosworth. At this get-together Chris and his gliding friends assembled their pre-War wooden gliders and flew them together just for the fun of it!

The glider pilots had come from several countries including Great Britain, Germany and Switzerland and it was here that the decision was made to found the 'Vintage Glider Club' (VGC) with Chris Wills as their first President.

This first meeting of the VGC was followed a year later by a second one in Germany and the Annual Meetings have continued ever since in virtually every country throughout Europe, from Switzerland to France, Hungary, Holland, Belgium, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Finland and Poland. This year's meeting, in Spitzerberg, Austria, will celebrate the 40th such International Rally.

Over the years, Chris' shy but endearing personality attracted enthusiasts from almost every Continent. When the VGC was started the founder members had little idea that by 2011 the club would have around 1,000 members, and become the largest Gliding Club in the world (although it had no airfield of its own).

The Club now has, in flying condition or undergoing restoration, some one thousand old wooden gliders (as well as several replicas which have been built). Most of these gliders would, in time, probably have been consigned to the bonfire! The flying of these

Vintage Gliders has brought enormous pleasure to their

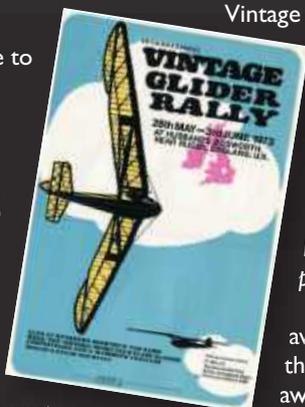
owners and families, and over the 40 years their safety record has been exemplary.

Chris Wills great achievement was to ensure that our Gliding Heritage would be preserved, although sadly his vision of a National Gliding and flying Museum was not to be realised in his own lifetime.

*\*\* Editorial: Chris Wills received several awards from the British Gliding Association for his work in founding and presiding over the Vintage Glider Club.*

He also received several prestigious international awards, including the FAI Diploma d'Honneur (1985) and the Paul Tissandier Diploma from the FAI (1996). He was awarded the Gold Ehrenmedaille from the German Aero Club (1999), and in 2001 the FAI/IGC Pirat Gehringer Diploma. During the Aero exhibition at Friederichshafen in 2005 he was honoured with an Ehrenurkunde Certificate recognising his outstanding contribution in fostering personal relationships between members throughout the European Community through gliding.

Finally in 2009, Chris Wills also received the Bronze Medal of the Royal Dutch Association for Aviation for his lifelong commitment as President to the Vintage Gliding Club.



## My Brother Chris

By Stephen Wills

In 1939 with the Germans about to bombard England Philip (Wills) decided to send his two small boys, in the care of their nurse, out to the relevant safety of relations in Australia. Chris at that stage was aged 7, Stephen 6, their nurse Kathleen had never left England in her life. The three of them were put on a cargo boat, the 'Perseus' which bravely set off across the Channel, wending its way between destroyers, U boats and possible air attack. (subsequently torpedoed in the Indian Ocean)

Stephen remembers playing a game of tag with Chris on deck, darting between cargo equipment, crates and cranes. Stephen fell and bashed his head on a cargo winch and remembers bellowing loud and long, until Chris said 'stop that screaming or the German navy will be down upon us.' That shut him up.

Somehow they eventually got to Adelaide to stay with Aunt Victoria who, on one occasion sent them down to the lobster pool to choose a lobster for supper. The boys being unable to decide the attendant fished one out and handed it to the inexperienced Kathleen, whose job it was to kill it and cook it. So she hopefully put it in a tub of cold water with a bread board on top. The two boys heard the unfortunate creature bashing about in the tub all afternoon. Someone must have rescued the situation, but there was no lobster eaten by Chris and Stephen that evening.

They next went to Bowral in New South Wales to stay with the Brocklebanks. At the time there was a severe drought in the area and many of the little flying foxes were dropping dead from lack of water. Two of these hapless corpses were picked up by the boys and pinned above the back door – gruesome prank -. Poor Kathleen came out of the said door to collect her charges and the dead foxes fell on her face.. She screamed and screamed. The two boys were completely mortified and slept beside her in her bed that night.

The boys went to Tudor House prep school in Bowral. They travelled there every morning in the local postman's van, tossing the letters and papers over the garden gates on the way. This versatile postman carried a pistol in his van which he showed to the boys. When Christopher asked what was it for he said "You never know. We might meet the relations of Ned Kelly"

After the Japanese threatened to advance on the Northern Territory Philip had his boys returned to England on a troop ship called the P&O Oronsay (subsequently torpedoed in the Irish Sea after having dropped them off in Liverpool). They arrived in London to the Blitz and they watched the dog fights by day and the Doodlebugs by night (they spent the night with Kathleen under the kitchen table), and there they stayed near White Walsham (headquarters of the ATA), apart from some gruesome prep school dramas, till the end of the war. At one stage during all this Vanessa was born, and Stephen remembers her, aged about 3 falling out of an upstairs window, landing safely in a rubbish bin.

Apparently Christopher was heard to say "that's good riddance to bad rubbish!" Quite a quick wit from one aged 10. Don't you think?

Stephen continues "Chris had a soft spot for the Germans as they were close friends of our father who, as C/O of ATA, after WW 2, was able to fly across to the Wasserkuppe, saw up a Weihe and bring it back to England for us to copy. Chris also had a soft spot for Russia, Czechoslovakia, Austria, but not necessarily the British!

His major dislike was for the DVLA, who after a report from an onlooker of a silly scrape, removed his Driving Licence (and by doing this his flying licence.). Chris's life was in tatters and it meant that he had to have a driver. Yet he still managed to visit both British and Overseas VGC competitions.

The VGC was a lifeline for Chris; when I visited him and phoned him, it all started off with the latest VGC news before

discussing his medical problems. He will be impossible to replace.

One thing we will all remember was his generosity, like my father who funded a trust for the gliding movement to obtain new sites. Chris also realised what the VGC wanted and he will be long remembered for it." Stephen Wills

### Vanessa (Wills) adds ...

"Chris was a remarkable and original person. Born with too high a sensibility and intelligence for his own good. He had absolutely no protection against the slings and arrows of Life. Perhaps he only reached some kind of equilibrium in his last years under the kind, constant and tactful attention of his Carer Rebecca Goldring."

### Some memories of Chris Wills

#### From Neelco Osinga

##### Obtaining the Kranich

When Marja and I visited the International VGC rally in Münster-Telgte in 1977 Chris immediately invited us to make a flight on his Kranich, BGA 1092. This was typically Chris: to make other people happy. We both were very lucky with this experience.

From that moment on we knew that the famous Kranich was the best historical two seater glider to fly with.

After some years we told Chris that we were looking for a Kranich. Chris was for everybody the source of information for everything concerning historic gliding. Of course Chris knew somebody who had a Kranich, but did not fly the machine, Günther Welzhofer at Günzburg, Bavaria. Günther did not want to sell the glider, but after some visits he gave us the two seater



for a long loan. Ben Schenk overhauled the glider during four years. In 1996 we bought the Kranich from Günther.

So we thank Chris for his knowledge of the history of gliding, that gave us the most magnificent vintage two seater glider.

I still regret the fact that Chris could not fly on our Kranich, for reasons of the Dutch system of Insurance. Once, in 2006, during the Kranich Rally at Hoogeveen, Chris made a flight with me in our Kranich, Chris in the back seat. But unfortunately the flight was not comfortable due to the center of gravity. I do not need to explain this. So the flight was a very short one. We had rather given Chris a nice thermalling flight. He deserved it.

##### Waiting for our Kranich

In 1993 we bought a nice trailer for our Kranich. David Schofield at Swindon made it for us. For this reason Chris Wills lend his Kranich to David for the measurements. So we had immediately a perfect trailer for our glider. This was typically Chris: no effort was too much for him to please other people.

Chris knew that we were waiting for our Kranich, because



restoration was not finished yet. So Chris decided that our family should fly his Kranich, BGA 964. We all four, Marja and I and our children Oedske and Hinse could fly his machine. At Lasham in 1994 we made some nice Kranich flights. An anxious moment was it when the right rudder pedal got loosed. I flew with Oedske and I did not know what happened. I had to keep calm because I did not want to make my daughter frightened. For Chris this was nothing to worry about: just tighten the butterfly nut. He was used to such events.

#### Main bolts

In 1982 the VGC Rally was at Montagne Noir. The weather was rather poor, rain and fog, so everybody was hoping for some sunshine. Then, suddenly the sun began to shine and all participants were in a hurry to rig their vintage gliders. So Chris did. He was rigging the Rhönbussard. Some people helped him, but at a certain moment, we stood with the wings high above the fuselage, Chris began to run to and fro from his car to the trailer and the Rhönbussard. After some minutes he told us why



he ran. He could not find the main bolts of the glider!

The bolts were forgotten in the neighbourhood of Paris, where the glider had flown, some days before.

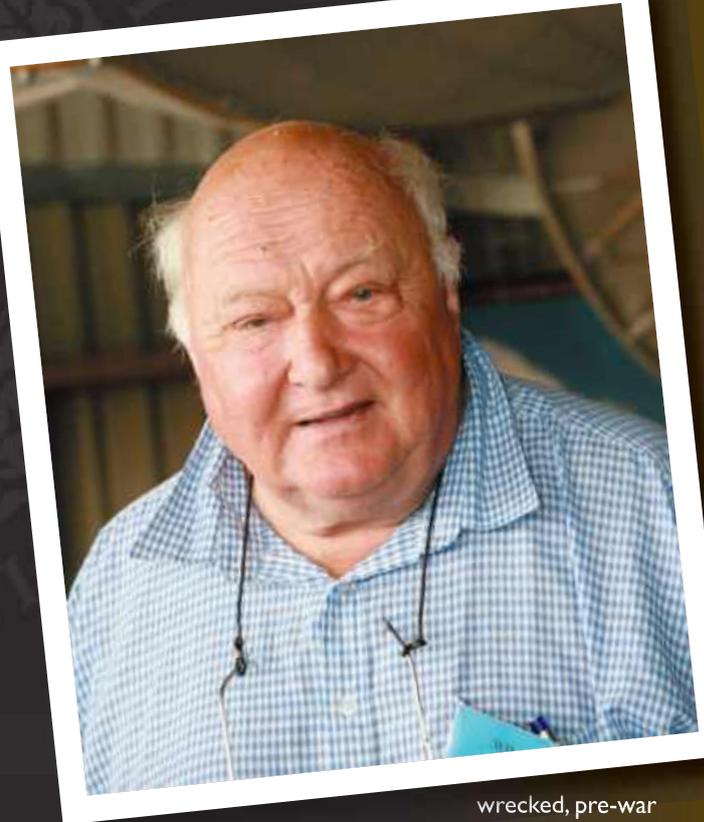
You can imagine how happy we were when we heard that the bolts had been found in the grass of the airfield!

### Margaret Drage remembers Chris

Christopher - as I came to know him, from the autumn of 1967 to an hour or two before his death - was the very embodiment of the legendary "ugly duckling". From the shy, awkward, diffident and extremely reserved young man whom I first met then, he developed, over the years, into the quietly confident leader of what, under his impetus, has become a worldwide organisation.

With the drive and courage of his forbears, who in their generations had scaled mountains, led armies into battle, or sailed to the Antipodes, he in his turn created the Vintage Gliders Club, and gave his whole life and energy and most of his waking thought to his beloved vintage gliders.

It began with one old,



wrecked, pre-war glider, which he stored in a barn and to which he slipped away, to work on, whenever he could. Later on, when freed from the shackles of paid work, and established on his own, he soon turned "Wings", his unpretentious house in Benson, into the information centre for the ever-expanding movement. Finding, rescuing, getting repaired, or - into safe hands of those fragile machines was to him as important as saving living creatures; it really hurt him to hear of one which had been put through flight stresses beyond it, or broken and not repaired, but simply left to crumble in a field.

Yet notwithstanding, he still remained himself: kind, courteous, sensitive to beauty, musical and a gifted linguist, and tender-hearted to all animals. But also, deeply resentful of any undue compulsion, or unnecessary restriction, either on them, or on himself.

But above all, he knew, and with inbuilt generosity wanted to share the glory of gliding - the thrill of the launch, of rising away from the dull, mundane earth, and once aloft, the freedom of the air, and the joy of it lifting the wings, the quick thinking and action needed to catch thermals and ride waves, and no sound but the wind singing in the rigging, and wide wonderful world spread out below.

It is very hard to lose him, but - his was a life well spent.

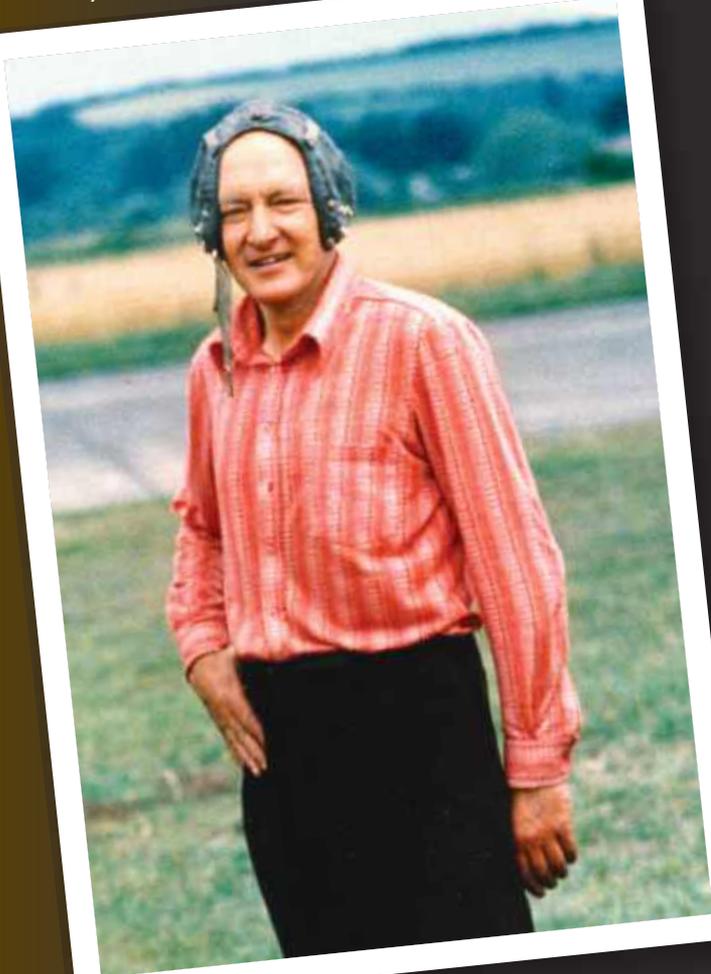
So long old friend ....

**Diffident, awkward yet totally dedicated.**

**From Bruce Stephenson**

Those were the three words that came to mind when I first met Chris Wills back in 1990. By this time, Chris's reputation within the club was of course, well...just colossal. (Or maybe this a better description of his gargantuan memory!) Chris was a walking encyclopaedia, yet he was like an iceberg. At first you only saw what was on the surface, gliding and the war dominated his conversations, but the more I got to know him, the more you found beneath the surface, and it was this that had commanded my respect. He was a naturally gifted person, and as many of us know, very musical, and very artistic at that. I always felt that Chris's mind soared in the realms of grace and beauty, not in a world governed by law and shackled by practicalities. So was it so surprising that the natural beauty of a slender gull-wing that so resembled the natural and poetic grace of flight that man has for so long has longed to emulate, was an outlet for Chris's sense of proportion, grace and elegance?

Practicalities never came into the equation with Chris. My first meeting of Chris was primed with many a tale of a man who just sort of blundered his way towards wherever direction he was heading. One thing was evident however, like his brothers, he was a natural in the air. From Chris's own stories of how he often scrapped his way out of some field from a ridiculously low height, to his tales of getting stopped in his old much-loved Beetle by gob-smacked German police whilst pulling his beloved Kranich along some immaculate German autobahn, (that was akin to a race track rather than a means of moving a nation from one point to another), defied all vestiges of common sense! I well remember Chris proudly telling me that he could maintain a steady, yet to him, entirely satisfactory 30 m.p.h on those well-travelled marvels, of what he referred to as the Reich! This he cheekily recalled was only possible in 3rd gear though! 4th was rarely visited when he had the stately Kranich in



tow behind the protesting derriere of Dr. Porsche's creation! (No doubt when going downhill or during a missed gear change!) My first visit to Chris's house soon had found me trying to coax this same tired "pack-horse" back to life one day, and I well remember his joy at my amateur efforts to produce a wheezing noise and a small cloud of smoke from its tired engine, still makes me smile today!

His home, ah yes his home! We all remember well what his home was like, but it was HIS home. It was the way Chris did things. A total mystery to all around him, yet completely logical and orderly to him, and that was the point, that was Chris. I often, (with a chuckle), wondered exactly what those that lived alongside Chris thought of their rather unorthodox neighbour? I do remember one day asking for directions to Chris's house with the local vicar. "Oh he replied, you mean the glider man"! Just as well, for so many times whilst either visiting, or in recent years staying at Chris's house, his avid interest in the war could be heard being broadcast halfway across the village even before you arrived, as his television set vibrated to the bawling tones of some objectionable Nazi newsreel at full volume, as it tiptoed across the room to the strains of "Bomben auf England", ..... but here of course was the dichotomy. He was not some sort of objectionable Nazi lover, but he loved adventure and deep down I think he liked a little bit of controversy. Even as a child he saw and knew what war was about, despite it probably being a great adventure too.

As a young child, both Chris and his brother Stephen, along with their nurse Kathleen, were packed off to far-flung Australia at the beginning of the war as evacuees. Running the gauntlet to Donitz's wolf-packs, the leaky old cargo ship that they were travelling on stopped to pick up 2 survivors from a life raft from a torpedoed minelayer, however they eventually got through to safer waters before finally arriving in Australia. Then the Japanese attacked Peel Harbour, and soon there were some very real fears of an imminent Japanese invasion of Australia, so Philip and Kitty fearing for their children's well-being, shipped then back to Blighty again. This time the U-boats did have their day, and the very ship they were travelling on, the P&O Oronsay, was torpedoed in the Irish Sea, luckily for us, just after it had dropped them off in Liverpool! From then on, daily life was sprinkled with endless raids and doodlebugs, as they sought to finish off what the Luftwaffe had failed to accomplish in 1940.....but I guess that only was part of the great adventure of life to Chris!

Although I maybe blundering into sensitive and uncharted waters here, but I often thought about Chris's diffidence, and the challenges that Chris had to contend with in life as he was growing up. Despite what anyone may say, it is clear that Chris and his siblings were brought up in a society that was very much different than that of today, and to boot, in a family that was both successful and well connected within English society. His father, Philip, enjoyed a phenomenally successful career. He was an accomplished author, gifted pilot, a World Gliding Champion, a founding and leading figure in British and International Gliding, not to mention a hugely successful war and business career.....Chris as the shy elder of his siblings, had an almost Churchillian figure to live up to. Big shoes to fill indeed.....yet in his own gentle, yet unorthodox way, he largely did.

Although there were many of you that knew Chris far longer than I, I did however try to find out more about this man, who was obviously intelligent, artistic, musical and also very talented...just what did make him tick? Despite what on the surface many would right off as "faults" however, he was a source of fascination to me. The more you looked below the surface, the more you learnt, not only of Chris, but of life as well. By far the biggest blow to Chris in the time I knew him, was when he lost his drivers licence after a road incident. This for him was akin to being a bird with a clipped wing, and all conversation for some time after revolved around various hare-brained, or quite frankly, hopeless schemes to circumnavigate the "enemy" at the DLVC! Alas, (or judging by his unorthodox way



of circumnavigating life, maybe thank goodness, I could never really answer that conundrum!), he was to never regain his freedom to go where he liked, when he liked, and days out became ever so much more bitter sweet. He often told me in wistful tones of how he wished he could take to the road again to visit some of the haunts in Europe that he so often frequented in his mind, where boots had trod, of sacrifices, of victories and defeats... battles every one of them.

But it was during this period that I probably came to learn more about his life, than in any other time I had known him. For it was during drives on our way to committee meetings or somewhere else, that I would steer him away from the ever present gliding tales or German based war stories, and gently steered him back to the fleeting comments he would often make when passing some historical English landmark. It was during these moments that a whole new world of English history began to open up. Chris was a real scholar, and was a far more an all rounded individual than I could have ever imagined; it was clear that this man had had enjoyed a classic English education. Despite his derision of English bureaucracy, or his almost inane pleasure at casually waving off the rules and laws of the land, despite his wicked sense of humour in deriding all things English, he was more English than he could imagine!

On a personal basis, Chris was often a challenge. Quite regularly I would receive calls where he would be frantic about the latest situation regarding one of his gliders, or the fate of another left to decay in some forgotten corner of England, Chris at times could be one of the most frustrating people I have ever had the pleasure to know. In describing dealing with Chris, I think the best way to sum the situation up is that I firmly believe it would have been easier to herd cats than try and get Chris to focus on a solution to a problem for more than five minutes! But Chris was a friend. Despite our relative age's spanning at least one generation, his attributes far outweighed his faults. He was easy to talk with, he was unassuming in his expectations, and shared his passion with all. He wasn't objectively generous or thoughtful, but those attributes flowed freely irrespective of who was in his realm at that time; it just didn't occur to him.

Like many of you, there is so much more that I could tell, all of it on a personal level, but this is not about me. Its about Chris, he was my friend, he was your friend. In short, he was everyone's friend. I was so grateful that our very last meeting was to be so pleasant. Despite being in pain, he greeted me as always, in a well

humoured, but this time pained, antipodeans accent; "Giddy Sport"! He was still the same old Chris that I will always, and do in fact remember. In closing, four days later, on the day he died, I had managed to steal, (which for me is rare these days), an enjoyable afternoons flying at my local club in my Mucha glider. Gayly soaring away under the clouds, I looked out to see one of our beautiful red kites on my left wing tip. I looked at him, and he at me. I glanced down momentarily to pick up my camera, but as if magic, he had vanished. For some reason at that moment I had a fleeting thought of Chris, and didn't think anymore of it. A few hours later, the telephone rang...so long my friend.

## Chris Wills: his part in my Downfall By Francis 'Lofty' Russell

Early in 1969, as an innocent K-8 pilot, I was lured into a syndicate to purchase the Weihe BGA-448 from a group at Lasham. Flying a Weihe seemed very different but I soon got to appreciate its qualities, especially after meeting Chris who wasted no time in telling me of the type's illustrious history, including many of his father's flights.

When, in 1972 Chris won a competition at Dunstable we therefore offered Philip, who was there to present the prizes, a chance to fly a Weihe again. This he did with much pleasure, before going on to the ceremony. There was, however, one small problem: with all the great and the good gathered on the platform for the prize-giving, where was the winner?

Chris had generously offered me a flight in his Libelle, which I flew thinking, 'This is nice, but I'd rather be in the Weihe'. I had therefore felt it right to offer Chris a flight in the Weihe too; so prize giving was delayed for at least half an hour until Chris returned. I am not at all sure that Kitty was pleased!

Interest in historic gliders was growing and Chris was quick to take a share in the Minimoa syndicate that we formed at Dunstable in 1972. At the first International Rally in 1973 when the Vintage Glider Club was formed, Chris was able to show me what historic gliders like the Minimoa and the Weihe really could do.

The following year Chris and I took the Minimoa to the Wasserkuppe Meeting: His linguistic skill was both impressive and reassuring as I spoke no German at all (and what a linguist he was! He astonished a fellow passenger on the journey back from the Hook with a phrase in Dutch, something he had acquired many years before in New Zealand).

These excursions with Chris got me into a pattern of regular attendance at vintage glider meetings where I made many friends and realised what pleasure could be had from flying for fun, rather than just for speed. Having been thus conditioned to take every thermal, real or imagined, it meant that I never did fly my Kestrel to the limit of its performance. So it's all Chris's fault that I never did make the British team or even win a day in a rated competition.



## Linked by music

### Ingrid Fritz

It was in 2005 at AERO Friedrichshafen when I first met Chris. We have been there to advertise the 33th International VGC Rally in Muencheberg-Eggersdorf. Many enthusiastic visitors gathered between the vintage gliders in the exhibition hall, pilots were teeming, pushing forward to have a word the man in the turmoil's midst: Chris Wills. It was hardly possible to have a word with Chris as so many people wanted to talk to him at the same time, whilst he was making notes in his pocketbook. The next evening, after the exhibition had been closed for the day, Chris was suddenly at my side whilst I was playing my accordion. He was belting out not only the first but all verses of songs I played, in fluent German, Russian or English. And if I was out of songs for moment Chris already had the next one in mind and pushed me from song to song. The crowd was soon joining the singing. If they didn't know the lyrics a simple "lalala" helped out.



The small A2 AERO exhibition hall with its wooden roof was a perfect sound arena for our music. What a mood! When saying Good Bye Chris asked me to organise a harmonica for him in Eggersdorf to play in duet with me. A harmonica? Back at home I made up my mind and came to the conclusion that he might have thought of a concertina. I wasn't easy to get it but the gliding community's network was again of help and we managed to dig out a concertina from someone's attic. Thus the concertina was ready-to-play at Eggersdorf airfield for the 33th International Rally but so wasn't Chris. Just by that time he seriously fell sick and wasn't able to make it. As far as I could think that was the only Rally Chris missed. It was a real pity as especially in Eggersdorf we played a lot of music ourselves at the fireplace and in the superb pavilion. The year after in Angoulême Chris was back to the Rally scene. However, we couldn't manage to organise any accordion. That didn't prevent us from singing together. In 2007 at the 35th Rally in Nitra I proudly presented the concertina to Chris. However, it turned out that he originally had an accordion in mind. Fortunately I was able to later on make the concertina a present to a very happy student of mine. In Nitra the British had finally organised an accordion for Chris. But he was very sick already and the instrument simply was too large for Chris to play as his fine motor skills had meanwhile suffered severely. Thus I kept on playing the accordion in solo mode but always with Chris at my side. Again we had a great time singing together. It was Werner Brombacher who told me that music reflects a human being's soul. That exactly was the case with Chris. When he was singing it had so much heart, enthusiasm and passion in it that it felt like he was gaining fresh buoyancy out of it. And the spark ignited the crowd. At the Achmer Rally in 2009 we intoned a song of each attending country at the Opening Ceremony. In the later evening of that day Chris continued singing much more international country



songs, of course each in its original native language. We made music until late night: Werner Brombacher with his "music leave", myself playing the accordion - and Chris was aglow with happiness. Last year at the International Rally in Tibenham we again moved the masses by playing our music. Later in the evening I was running into Chris who caught some fresh air outside the pavilion. Along with us stood a German pilot thanking us for having sung songs he last heard during his childhood. He was asking me for a particular song but I didn't know it. That moment Chris started singing exactly that song what made the German tear up. I will miss Chris achingly. I will miss our affinity of music. Unfortunately, I cannot attend the Rally in Spitzerberg and I must confess that it would have been difficult for me to jauntily sing there. But I am sure we will again all sing together in the future and Chris will always be part of it in the depths of our hearts.

(Translation Support: Stefanie Gester)

## Uns hat die Musik verbunden

### Ingrid Fritz

Ich habe Chris vor sechs Jahren auf der Aero in Friedrichshafen kennen gelernt. Wir haben dort für die 33. Rallye des VGC in Müncheberg-Eggersdorf Werbung gemacht. In der Halle waren die Oldtimer-Segelflugzeuge aufgestellt, die viele Besucher anlockten und ins Schwärmen brachten. Und mittendrin saßen und standen die Piloten, die sich immer wieder um einen Mann drängten, Chris Wills. Mal schrieb er in seinem Notizheft, mal skizzierte er etwas auf einen Zettel, den er dann weiterreichte. Ständig war seine Meinung gefragt, und es war schwer, an ihn heran zu kommen. Als ich am nächsten Tag nach Messeschluss



mein Akkordeon auspackte, war er plötzlich an meiner Seite und sang aus voller Kehle alle meine Lieder mit, nicht nur etwa die erste Strophe, sondern bis zum letzten Vers – egal ob in Deutsch oder Russisch, auf Englisch damals freilich noch völlig ohne mich. Und wenn mir kein Lied mehr einfiel – er wusste immer schon das nächste und trieb mich förmlich von Lied zu Lied. Die anderen fielen schnell in unseren Gesang ein, wenn auch oft nur mit „lalala“. In der kleinen Messehalle A2 mit dem Holzdach klang das richtig gut. Es war eine tolle Stimmung! Zum Abschied bat mich Chris, ihm für die Rallye in Eggersdorf eine Harmonika zu besorgen, damit wir im Duett spielen könnten. Eine Harmonika? Zu Hause überlegte ich, dass er sicher eine Ziehharmonika meinte, denn ein Akkordeon hatte ich ja, sogar zwei, aber das wusste er nicht. Es war nicht leicht, eine Ziehharmonika aufzutreiben, aber auf dem Flugplatz kennt einer den anderen und der wieder andere - so fand sich irgendwo auf dem Dachboden noch so ein altes Instrument. Die Harmonika war also zur 33. Rallye auf dem Platz, aber leider nicht Chris Wills, denn ausgerechnet zu dieser Zeit erkrankte er sehr schwer. Ich glaube, es war die einzige Rallye, die er verpasst hat. Das habe ich auch deswegen sehr bedauert, weil wir damals besonders viel Musik gemacht haben, am Lagerfeuer, aber auch im schönen polnischen Festzelt.

In Angoleme war Chris wieder da, aber dort konnten wir kein Akkordeon aufzutreiben, weder für ihn, noch für mich. Das aber hinderte uns nicht daran, zusammen zu singen.

Zur 35. Rallye in Nitra überreichte ich Chris endlich stolz die Ziehharmonika. Aber es stellte sich heraus, dass er doch ein Akkordeon gemeint hatte. Zum Glück konnte ich damit später einem Schüler eine große Freude bereiten. Die Engländer hatten für Chris

jedoch ein Akkordeon mitgebracht. Aber Chris war schon sehr krank, das Akkordeon zu groß, und es fehlte ihm offenbar nun die Kraft und die Feinmotorik, darauf zu spielen. So spielte ich weiter allein, aber immer mit Chris an meiner Seite, und wieder war es ein wunderbares Gefühl, wenn wir abends alle zusammen sangen. Werner Brombacher sagte mir einmal sinngemäß, dass man mit Musik die menschliche Seele widerspiegeln kann - ganz so war es bei Chris. Wenn er sang, dann mit viel Herz, Begeisterung, Leidenschaft - laut und kräftig oder leise und verhalten. Als ob ihm die Musik neue Lebhaftigkeit verlieh - er steckte uns alle damit an.

In Achmer haben wir aus jedem Teilnehmerland ein Lied angestimmt und Chris sang mir danach noch mehr Lieder aus anderen Ländern vor, natürlich in Originalsprache. Wir musizierten noch bis spät in die Nacht, Werner mit dem musikalischen Blatt im Mund, ich mit dem Akkordeon und Chris strahlte und war glücklich.

Das letzte Mal im vergangenen Jahr in Tibenham auf dem Flugplatz – wir hatten im Zelt wieder einmal gemeinsam Stimmung gemacht, traf ich ihn danach draußen auf dem Platz – er hatte sich ein wenig erholen wollen. Da kam ein Deutscher, dem ich hier das erste Mal begegnete, und bedankte sich bei uns dafür, dass wir Lieder gesungen hätten, die er seit seiner Kindheit in Deutschland nicht mehr gehört hatte. Und er fragte nach einem alten deutschen Lied, das ich nicht kannte. Und schon begann Chris es anzustimmen - dem Deutschen standen die Tränen in den Augen.

Ich werde Chris unsagbar vermissen - diese Seelenverwandtschaft, die uns in der Musik verband.

Bei der nächsten Rallye in Österreich werde ich leider nicht dabei sein. Ich glaube, es wäre mir auch schwer gefallen, wieder so unbeschwert meine Lieder anzustimmen. Aber wir werden wieder gemeinsam singen, versprochen, und Chris wird tief in unseren Herzen immer dabei sein!



### *From Eliah Passerini*

Although only recently joined the club and VGC during meetings I attended I had the pleasure and honor to have met Mr Chris Wills and share the passion for gliders, with him, who knew a few words of Italian, during the feasts of the meeting we also had the opportunity to play. (picture below, are made in Wels in choir singing "O sole mio" famous Italian song). Please, if you can fit make my deepest condolences to the family.

*Elijah cordially Passerini, Italy*



## Chris at Aboyne. From Martin Breen

I first met Chris when I started gliding at Booker in 1971. I had bought a Slingsby Tutor and Chris couldn't resist showing an interest. We soon became firm friends and shared similar views on the preservation and flying of vintage gliders. Chris told me of his experiences flying his father's old Weihe in New Zealand and he mentioned the time when he achieved diamond height. Chris had a quaint disregard for authority, explaining how the New Zealand officials in charge of gliding at that time had refused to sanction his diamond height on the grounds that the landing had to be normal. Chris explained that the wind was so strong when he landed, that it was quite normal in those circumstances that the glider was damaged! In 1982 both Chris and myself were somewhat smaller than we became in later years and even though it was a tight fit I owned a Libelle which I took every Autumn to Aboyne in Scotland. Knowing how much Chris wanted his Diamond height I invited him to join my wife Irene and myself on our holiday that year.

A holiday with Chris isn't completely straight forward, you see he was never truly domesticated. It was more like having an overgrown teenager with you. He didn't exactly pack for staying away, it was more a case of closing the door behind him. If he had a change of clothes or anything he might need it was fortuitous rather than planned. Some time in the past Chris had owned a Libelle but it had been at least ten years since he had flown one. But here we were assembled at the up-wind end of the runway with five knots of wind down the strip and gentle thermals rising from the heather fires which had been deliberately set to provide new growth for the grouse. Chris was encouraged to climb into the glider, not an easy task as first he wanted me to fly and second he was rather a tight fit, but I found the best thing to do was not to listen, so I shoved the canopy down on his head, attached the tow cable and sent him off to re-acquaint himself with glass gliders. It was four hours later that he returned full of the joys of flying in the HighLands and even the landing was almost normal, only the last fifty yards were off the runway.

Nevertheless we deemed the flight a success. The following day was a complete contrast, twenty turbulent knots of wind down the strip, lenticulars piled one on top of the other in classic style and Chris and I leaning into the wind arguing as to who was going to fly. As yesterday, I chose not to listen but I did notice that he wasn't exactly dressed for the Stratosphere. He wore his blue jacket, a pair of thin trousers, some light shoes and a Rupert Bear pullover. He retrieved a pair of pyjamas from his



bag, borrowed my hat, scarf, gloves and sun glasses and was finally persuaded to get in the glider.

An hour later Chris was on the radio "hello Martin, Chris here, I'm at seventeen thousand feet, it's awfully good I'm coming down to give you a go" I replied "Chris under no circumstances are you to come down, if you do you are going straight back up again, do you understand? Any way Irene and I are going to the Bal-Na-coil. Don't come down until you have got your diamond height." A good hour and a half later we returned to the airfield so I called Chris on the radio "Chris, Martin here how are you doing". "Hello Martin, Chris here I'm at twenty four thousand feet and I'm dreadfully cold, can I come down now please." The landing was perfect and Chris was beaming. That evening the wee drams were on Chris, he truly was a happy man. The next day was the best wave day I have ever had the pleasure to see from the seat of a glider, as for Chris - he didn't stop smiling all week.

## From Vincenzo Pedrielli

My interest in flying two-seater vintage sailplanes is surely well known by many VGC members, as I rarely miss the chance to jump into the passenger seat of one of those machines to enjoy my other passion of air photography. Actually, I have also been fortunate in flying in two-seaters outside of VGC meetings, when visiting many foreign countries including Japan and Australia.

Among all my experiences in a two-seater (I have no chance



Chris and Vincenzo

to fly solo as I do not have pilot's licence), one of my fondest memories is of flying with Chris Wills.

It was during the 25th VGC Rally of 1997 at Bar Sur Seine in France, when Chris attended with the Steinadler MG19A marked BGA2903. I had never flown with a gull wing sailplane and this was really too good a chance to miss.

Chris kindly accepted my request to fly with him and we were soon in-line to take off. However, the weather was not perfect for gliding, as many black clouds were scattered around the airfield sky. Also a strong wind was moving them here and there, but we decided to go up anyway. After all, I was with Chris!

After being released from the tow-plane, we started climbing and despite some minor turbulence, we climbed without moving too far away from the airfield. I quickly started taking pictures as many sailplanes were in the air at the same time, giving me good subjects for air-shots.

Suddenly, the cumulus nimbus moved over the airfield and the sky became completely dark with some rain-drops appearing on the canopy. I started feeling a bit uncomfortable and I asked Chris whether we should continue flying or was it better to land.

He said it was sensible to try to land while we were over the airfield, but in the meantime the rain drops turned into hailstones and we heard the noise of the hail hitting the whole



sailplane. Now more than uncomfortable, I was becoming scared and checked with Chris to see how he was reacting to this unexpected situation.

Quickly perceiving his total calm, I felt reassured and just prayed for a safe landing. Chris did a superb job and in a few long-lasting minutes, he skilfully placed the Steinadler on the wet grass of the airfield. Then the hail changed to heavy rain and we remained on board the glider to shelter until the storm was over and we could be rescued.

That was an unforgettable experience for me and over the ensuing years, whenever we met at other VGC rallies, Chris and I always spoke about our stormy flight at Bar Sur Seine.

A great memory with a great friend, whom I will miss!

## ***Alan Patching***

Just a few words about my involvement with Chris who as we all know was the prime mover in getting VGC going. My memory does not recall when I first met Chris, however there had been a close relationship with the Wills family and Australian glider pilots. Phillip, his father, frequently visited the Iggulden family when in Australia and after WW2 both his sons flew gliders in Australia. Chris was a member of the Waikerie Gliding Club, South Aust. and had many stories about their

members and his flying, while Stephen was a member of my club, the VMFG, at Berwick, Victoria, where he joined the syndicate flying the ex Tony Goodhart LO-150.

I always stayed with Chris on my visits to England in order to enjoy flying with him and to view his great collection of photos and videos. His stories of early gliding were endless, but so interesting. I must admit that after Kitty, his mother, died I cut back on staying with Chris for two reasons, firstly Kitty had put a notice on the bedroom door 'No Dogs in this room' and secondly I found it hard having breakfast with two Greyhounds, who at every opportunity tried to share the meal. Chris was an excellent host feeding and entertaining me the whole time.

His house was of course given over to the production of VGC News, the dining room table was permanently covered in articles and photos for the next edition.

Chris shared with me the view that our gliding heritage must be preserved and available for future pilots to fly. I am sure that I speak for every Vintage pilot in Australia when I say that there will never be another Chris Wills. *Alan Patching, President, Vintage Gliders Australia*



*Chris at the Wasserkuppe*



What follows are fond memories of Chris Wills from Peter McLean and Seth Coulter, two friends who have owned and flown vintage gliders together for over 20 years with the Mohawk Soaring Club in North Adams, Massachusetts, USA.

### *Peter's thoughts:*

My first meeting with Chris occurred at the 1995 International Vintage Soaring Meet at Elmira's Harris Hill. I was very inspired by the fact that Chris had transported his beloved Kranich II to the U.S. I was enthralled by the beauty of this unique and famous glider and the history of that class of glider. I completed a watercolor painting of the plane tied down in front of the National Soaring Museum. The height of the excitement of that week had to do with Chris's sustained ridge soaring flight in the Kranich II along the north ridge of Harris Hill just above the tree line. On tow, he had mistakenly pulled the release knob instead jettisoning his wheel dolly. He probably flew for about 45 minutes trying to reach enough altitude to make a safe landing at the field, to no avail and he eventually landed on the auxiliary field below in the valley. During that week, I also made preliminary sketches and photos of Chris sitting in the Kranich II talking with pilots and admirers. Another photo and study resulted in a painting of Rudi Opitz in the front seat of the Kranich reviewing the controls prior to a flight with Chris. My son Peter Jr. asked Rudi when it was that he last flown the Kranich II and his response was 1939!

At the 2000 IVSM, again at Harris Hill, Chris came to Elmira to open the ceremonies with his famous cowbell ringing. He did not bring the Kranich II on this occasion, and I offered him the opportunity to fly the "Bluebird" - a Schweizer I-23 H, which he was happy to accept. He had never flown a Schweizer glider and I went over the basics with him. In his dark suit, and with a little difficulty climbing into the cockpit he was ready to "give it a go". I was a little apprehensive at this point, even though I realized how many aircraft he had flown in his life. My apprehension got worse, when shortly after release I lost sight of him and he was gone for close to two hours! After a successful landing, he informed me that he had flown to the Finger Lakes about 25

**Below:** Seth Coulter's photograph taken during the 2002 Kranich Meet in Langenlonsheim Germany. This meet was held to commemorate the 50th year since the first flight of the Kranich III. There were several Kranich III's and Kranich II's at this meet, including Chris with his Kranich II. Peter McLean and I had the true pleasure of crewing for him for the week. Photo shows Chris and his accordion and Peter McLean at a Langenlonsheim gasthaus enjoying a few beers and some German folk songs one night with the rest of the gang from the meet. **Right:** a wonderful photo taken by Peter McLean of Chris Wills and the son of Hans Jacobs, the designer of the Kranichs.

miles to the north! He enjoyed the flight immensely and was very thankful for the opportunity.

Over the years since 2000, we communicated off and on concerning soaring. He was surprised to hear that I was a Professor of Fine Arts, and I learned that he had attended art school as a young man and he very much enjoyed the subject of art. During the 2000 event, Seth Coulter and I had met Klaus Heyn of Germany. Over dinner one night we inquired as to whether he knew of any Kranich III's that might be available for sale. He knew of one located in Germany, so Seth Coulter and I traveled to Germany the following spring to meet its owners and eventually purchase the Kranich III. Others in our Mohawk Soaring Club in North Adams, Massachusetts were so excited about this that three fellow members also agreed to join in its ownership. One year later Seth and I traveled back to Germany to attend a Kranich meet celebrating the 50-year anniversary of the first flight of the Kranich III. Chris was planning to attend it with his Kranich II. In our correspondence, I asked him if he needed a crew and that Seth and I would join him in Mainz. He thought that was a good idea. In addition, I had mentioned that I was a guitar player and perhaps we could also do some music together in Germany. I found out that he was a very good accordion player and that he loved playing folk songs - especially German ones. He could speak German fluently. He sent me a number of folk songs so that I could accompany him with guitar at the evening pilot's parties. It was especially memorable when along with several German glider pilots, we partied at a local "gasthaus" with Chris and me playing and the Germans singing into the wee hours of the evening. This resulted in a large charcoal drawing that will be sent to the European Vintage Association or Lasham Club.

It must be obvious that we all realize Chris's brilliance and vast archival knowledge of our beloved sport. He will be sadly missed by the international soaring communities.



### *Seth's thoughts:*

I first met Chris at the 1995 IVSM at Harris Hill in Elmira, New York, and while the meeting was brief, I was well aware that he was the "patron saint" of the global vintage glider community. I was able to spend more time with him at the 2000 IVSM, and I was totally taken by his warmth, humor, and endless well of information on everything vintage gliders. As anyone who knew Chris knows, however, a few days was not nearly enough time to bask in his endless stories of flying so many historic gliders, and telling tales of others who did.



Above: Seth's photo from the back seat of CW's Kranich II on tow over Langenlongsheim.

Above right: at the 2000 IVSM at Harris Hill in Elimira, New York. Chris standing in front of a Weihe.

Bottom: Chris and Peter McLean standing in front of Peter's Schweizer 1-23H ("Bluebird") taken after Chris' flight in this glider. This may have been Chris's only flight ever in a Schweizer glider.

In 2002, I had the opportunity and honor of crewing for Chris and his Kranich II at a Meet in Langenlongsheim Germany, which was held to celebrate the 50-year anniversary of the first Kranich III. Spending the week with him – crewing, flying, listening to more stories and history over meals, and joining in late night song and revelry with him, his accordion, and fellow Kranich pilots – was and is the highlight of my flying career. Right from the opening ceremony, where Chris fluently addressed the multi-lingual audience in several different languages, I knew it was going to be a special week.

It is especially meaningful to me to have had the opportunity to fly back seat with him (with the back canopy off) in his Kranich II during that week. The soaring weather was not particularly good, but Chris easily outperformed other glass ship that would join us in the weak thermals only to leave in frustration as he out-thermaled them. After about an hour of Chris slowly moving downwind of the airport in light thermals and considerable haze, I had lost track of where the grass strip was. Just about that time, Chris asked about our location and it became clear to both of us that we were delightfully lost and



that a land-out in one of the abundant fields below was a possibility. Chris's internal compass was able to get us back to the gliderport, however, and the land-out adventure was averted.

Chris was a selfless, gentle, warm, talented, and generous man. I consider myself to be a lucky man to have known him, call him friend, and to have been able to fly with him in his beloved Kranich II. He is largely responsible for the thriving vintage soaring movement around the world and the preservation of so much soaring history. The world is a poorer place without Chris, but the many riches that he passed on to all who knew him will endure. I know that every time we climb into our vintage gliders and head for the top of the nearest thermal, he'll be there with us showing us the way.

## Quelques mémoires avec Chris Wills From Firmin Henrard

C'est en 1985 que nous nous sommes rencontrés pour la première fois.

Chris savait déjà les efforts que je faisais à l'époque pour tenter de développer l'intérêt des planeurs anciens en Belgique.

Il m'a invité le jour même au comité international et m'a toujours témoigné toute sa confiance.

Depuis lors, il m'a toujours été reconnaissant et me prenait dans ses bras que nous nous retrouvions au début des rassemblements internationaux.

Il m'a écrit des tas de lettres gentilles et toujours remplies de détails historiques car ses connaissances étaient très poussées.

Il est venu me visiter à la maison et a passé quelques jours avec nous comme un membre de la famille, le recevoir était un grand honneur !

En 1989, il m'avait invité à bord de son Kranich au dessus de Budapest et j'avais pu constater à quel point il volait admirablement bien!

Depuis toutes ces années, l'équipe et moi ,nous nous retrouvions et il a toujours laissé pour nous tous le meilleur

souvenir, tel le Papa.

Le Papa du VGC, c'était lui.

Personne ne le remplacera.



Right: a photo from Firmin

## Ron Davidson remembers

Following my reading of Phillip Wills's 'Where no Birds Fly' which took my breath away, I booked myself on a two weeks ab-initio course at Lasham in 1968.

We course members slept in old and rickety wartime billets but put up with it just to be there. The first weekend saw a lot of



Chris watches his father Philip prepare for flight in his Slingsby Skylark.

club members arrive and join us in our hut and that was when I first met Chris Wills who turned up with a dozen or so schoolboys from a school he was teaching at. Boys will be boys and there was a pillow fight which resulted in Chris's down pillow being split. The following morning I looked down from my top bunk to see Chris below, still asleep but gently blowing down feathers all around him. And that was my introduction to my hero Phillip's son, Chris!

Then as my gliding career advanced I got to see him more frequently, especially after acquiring my Petrel in 1971 and by 1972 Chris was busy getting us vintage glider owners to go along with him to Itford Hill in the South Downs to celebrate the 50th anniversary of British gliding. The upshot of all this was the first Vintage Glider rally at my own club; Husbands Bosworth, in 1973. Chris was proclaimed Chairman and we all stood in line to become founder members and I remember my CFI at the time, Lou Frank, standing alongside me saying that this could be an historic moment and the start of a new and exciting gliding movement -- and how right he was!

New friends from home and overseas were made and there was Chris at the centre of it all, translating for the different peoples visiting and always coming up with interesting facts and figures of often obscure aircraft as well as photos of historic aircraft and central characters in the gliding world. His memory and background knowledge was prodigious.

In later years as the movement progressed, Chris was always around at various National and International Rallies. At times he occasionally seemed a little lost when things were very busy and I well remember, at Thun I think it was, when as we sat down to our evening meal, Chris wandered by once or twice and when I called him over and asked what the problem was, it appeared that he had lost his cutlery and mug and was looking for them. My girl friend, Pat, sat him down and fed him and he opened up a little to tell us some of his problems. After he left us, Pat made the cynical comment that perhaps he should not be let out on his own. But that was Chris and the vast majority accepted him for what he was and there were always willing hands around to help him. Chris Wills, an eccentric perhaps but with more than a touch of genius when it came to historic gliding. And the world is a better and more interesting place for us with eccentrics like Chris.

## The Weihe

### From Nick Jaffrey

I didn't know Chris well, in fact I only met him once, in October last year, when I visited him to talk about the Weihe that I have acquired, the sister glider to the one of which he had a model hanging from his living room ceiling. I attach a (not very good) photo of Chris and the model taken at that visit. As readers will probably be aware, Phillip Wills brought back 2 complete Weihe's, and enough bits to make 3rd, from the Wasserkuppe by Dakota in 1945. I believe that the bits were amalgamated into a glider that went to the USA, one complete glider went to NZ (only the fuselage now remaining), and one went to Surrey Gliding Club at Redhill, where it was flown extensively by Lorne Welch, including the 1st post-war cross-Channel flight, among other adventures.

It ended its flying career in Thun in 1979 in a ground accident (a whirlwind as noted in the log book), and eventually ended up in the care of Derek Phillips, who I am sure was known to many. Unfortunately Derek never progressed with the intended restoration due to apparent glue failure, and it languished in his workshop until his death, when I managed to unearth it and discover more of its history.

I submitted an article about it to S&G, which Chris obviously saw, and from then on we were in regular contact, it being clear that Chris was desperate to save it from the bonfire (which some said was the only thing to do with it!) - I tried to reassure him that as far as I was concerned, that would never happen, and that I would continue to look for a good home for it, which I am still doing, with several interested parties, but so far no commitment!

I spoke to Chris about it on the phone quite often, though I frequently got lost when he went off at a tangent about other gliders that had featured in his past, which as a relative newcomer to gliding I cannot even picture! The Kranich seems to have loomed large in his past, and I now know what one of those looks like!

As I mentioned earlier, I only visited him once, but had great hopes of visiting again, to go through the fantastic archive that he kept, not only of Weihe's (my main interest), and to hear more of his gliding stories, however rambling.

He showed me the original Weihe panel that he had, and which I believe he would have donated to any restoration of the one I am hoping to rescue.

My last contact with him was a couple of weeks before he

Below: Nick Jaffrey's Weihe





Above: Chris and the model Weihe, photo taken during Nick Jaffrey's visit

was taken ill, and following which he sent me some drawings - unfortunately I was too late to call him to thank him. I am sure that it was close to his dying wish that the Weihe should be saved - I would be pleased to hear from anyone who can help in that task - it is in poor condition (port spar snapped, tail broken off, glue failure, just to start with) - please contact me on 44 (0)1926-843302 or e-mail [nick.jaffray@btopenworld.com](mailto:nick.jaffray@btopenworld.com) for more details. Nick Jaffray, Stratford on Avon Gliding Club.

### From Daniel Steffen

After a long break I took part on the VGC International Meeting at Tibenham last year. I have not seen Chris Wills for ten years and I was sure that he wouldn't know me after such a long time. Therefore I did not introduce myself to Chris Wills. However Chris recognized me immediately and asked me about my girlfriend. He remembered that she has a perfect sense of direction. I married my girlfriend 11 years ago and we have two children, 10 and 13 years old.

It was in the summer 1997, when we came across to Chris on a secondary road in France. We were on the way from the Rendez-Vous at Pont Saint Vincent (nearby Nancy) to the VGC Meeting in Celles sur Ource (en Champagne). Satellite navigation systems did not yet exist for ordinary people at that time. It was necessary to have a good map and to be a good map-reader. Chris tried to find a French country road on his map of Europe (scale 1 to 3'000'000). It was a hopeless undertaking. Our map was sub-optimal too.

However, my girlfriend has a good sense of direction and she guided us through France. I had just



Left: Daniel Steffen is re-acquainted with CW at Tibenham, 2010

to drive our car with trailer. Chris followed us in a good mood with his car and trailer. He was still smiling when we had to turn on a narrow road. Once he honked. We waved back, without stopping. In Celles sur Ource he told us that we have passed the summer residence of General de Gaulle. He stated this for him notable fact in the VGC News No. 92 Winter 1997/8 (page 14) as follows: 'Some of us passed through Colombey Les Deux Eglises which was the home and final resting place of General de Gaulle, former President of the French Republic.'

Chris Wills had an immense knowledge about the international gliding history including Switzerland. He knew so many details about Moswey, Spyr and Spalinger. He was for me a person in authority. I will never forget him. The first chapter of the history of the international vintage glider club ends with the death of Chris Wills.

Nach einem langen Unterbruch besuchte ich letztes Jahr mit meiner Familie das internationale VGC Treffen in Tibenham. Ich war mir sicher, dass Chris Wills mich nach so langer Zeit nicht mehr kennen würde und ging deshalb nicht direkt auf ihn zu. Doch Chris erkannte mich sofort und erinnerte sich vor allem an meine Freundin, welche einen so guten Orientierungssinn hätte. In der Zwischenzeit bin ich mit meiner Freundin verheiratet und wir haben eine bald 14jährige Tochter. Es war im Sommer 1997, als wir Chris Wills in Frankreich auf einer Nebenstrasse antrafen. Wir waren unterwegs vom Rendez-Vous in Pont Saint Vincent (in der Nähe von Nancy) zum VGC-Treffen in Celles sur Ource (en Champagne). Damals gab es noch keine billigen Satelliten-Navigations-Geräte und man suchte sein Ziel mit Hilfe von Landkarten. Chris versuchte auf einer Europakarte eine französische Nebenstrasse zu finden. Ein hoffnungsloser Fall. Auch unser Kartenmaterial war suboptimal.

Doch ich vertraute dem Orientierungssinn meiner Freundin. Chris folgte uns gut gelaunt mit seinem Auto und langem Anhänger. Auch ein notwendiges Wendemanöver auf einer engen Strasse nahm er gelassen hin. Einmal hupt er. Wir winkten zurück,

ohne anzuhalten. In Celles sur Ource erzählte er uns, dass wir an der Sommerresidenz von General de Gaule vorbeigefahren seien. Diese für ihn bemerkenswerte Tatsache hielt er in den VGC News No. 92 Winter 1997/8 (Seite 14) wie folgt fest: 'Some of us passed through Colombey Les Deux Eglises which was the home and final resting place of General de Gaule, former President of the French Republic.'

Agrund seines immensen Wissens über die international Segelfluggeschichte (inkl. Schweiz) war Christopher Wills für mich eine Respektsperson, welche ich kaum anzusprechen wagte. Mit dem Tod von Chris Wills endet das erste Kapitel der Geschichte des internationalen Vintage Glider Clubs.

## Chris – our friend and colleague *From David and Margaret Shrimpton*

From the early days of the VGC the club was always run successfully on goodwill and mutual co-operation so when I took over as Chairman my attempts to bring organisation and governance to the club was anathema to Chris; he didn't approve of being organised; this was not in his makeup. However organisation and governance had become necessary as the club grew in numbers and popularity throughout the world. Chris would sit patiently through committee meetings showing little interest until he could offer some pertinent gliding fact that he felt everyone should be reminded of.

My first personal encounter with Chris and his own unique style was when he invited me to fly the Rhoenbuzzard at the VGC rally in Kiehueval. Just as the launch cable was taking up slack, Chris hurriedly ran to the cockpit and said quietly "don't worry about the rudder; I think it's alright". After which the cable went taut and I was gone before I had time to query him further. With Chris's words very much in my mind, I brought the glider quickly to earth, which must have been one of the shortest ever flights logged by the Rhonbuzzard! I never did find out what he meant!

Margaret and I shared many hours with Chris at our house preparing the VGC News when he would turn up complete with car full of his beloved greyhounds from which he was



inseparable. Chris's car would arrive packed with not only the three dogs, but also his collection of photo albums.

Sometimes when having turned in for the night, the phone would ring. Without hesitation we would both say out loud "that's Chris.....". Sure enough it was; he would 'suddenly' have remembered some detail which had great significance for VGC News – which was usually just about to go into print and sometimes requiring another visit to the printers to make one more change.

Chris's dream led not just to saving old gliders but resulted in the formation of a club which created for us the opportunity to travel to places we would otherwise never have visited, made friends with people we would otherwise never have met, had adventures we still talk about. We hope that we all continue to have as much fun and achieve much more out of Chris's vision. Producing VGC News will now be a very different experience for us ... we will both miss him, as a friend and a colleague. Thankyou Chris - for being you.....



## *From Chris Duthy-James, via Barbara Reed*

I did not know Chris as well as I would have liked. However, every time we met he was his natural charming and friendly self and I always felt I was being especially welcomed to the VGC meets. Probably that sort of welcome combined with his immense enthusiasm and knowledge of gliding history was a very significant factor in the growth of the VGC to what it is today.

His father, Philip, was one of my heroes when I started gliding in 1950. As I grew older I could more seriously appreciate the great freedom this group of enthusiasts gained for the British gliding movement. I would say that Chris was a worthy son of his father in the work he and his team have done to build up an international fellowship of vintage gliding enthusiasts. I am sorry I can't come with Chris this weekend (*25th June Memorial, at Lasham - Ed*). Please believe that I will be with you in spirit. Best wishes, Barbara.



## *Well maybe I can help you with a little story: From Thomas Bircher*

How I first met Chris Wills:

Rene Comte and his SUPER-ELFE wanted to do some "Wandersegelflug"

That was very new in the early sixties.

We reached Paris, then the Weather turned bad and we decided to go to the movies.

Chris came along.

On the road to the town, an opposite car started to slide, turned around and crashed into our front.

The driver an officer of USAF, crawled out of the car said: hello what happens here? (He was obviously pretty drunk)

Then came the Police: They said: This is not our Business.

Then came the gendarmes: They said: That is not our business.

Then Came Air-Force Police.: How they took him away, would be a story of its own.

So I met Chris Wills, and always appreciated when I could see him.

Thomas Bircher

Präsident of EFF

Entwicklungsgemeinschaft für Flugzeugbau.



# Chris Wills Memorial Day, Lasham 25th June 2011

by Richard Moyse, Lasham Gliding

Soon after I received the sad news of Chris's passing away, I was approached by Bruce Stevenson with a view to holding a memorial day for Chris at Lasham.

During recent years Chris had been a regular at the club where he could see the MG19 and other vintage gliders flying and chat to everybody about his passion.

The day started with a service in the briefing room on the airfield presided over by the Rev. Ben Flenley from Lasham Village Church. Nick Newton rang the original VGC bell to start



proceedings. Chris's favourite hymns were sung and there were addresses from Jan Forster, Glyn Bradney and Justin Wills. Around 80 people attended the service including many of the Wills family. The service was closed with another ring of the bell.

The weather started badly but after lunch began to improve, if a rather windy. The first to fly was Gary Pullen's primary which was bungee "hopped" aided by some enthusiastic runners. By mid afternoon the sun came out and winch launching proceeded with the T21 flying members of the family. The Sky, Swallow and two Olympia 2b's braved the wind. At around 5.30pm Chris's took his last launch in the T21 and his ashes were scattered over the airfield.

A large gazebo had been erected over the patio to provide extra space for the lunch time diners. During the afternoon the Roke and Benson Brass Band (Chris had been a long term



member) played Chris's favourite tunes under the shelter of the Gazebo. The jolly music could be heard all around the airfield and made a perfect background for those watching the gliding from outside the clubhouse.

At 7.00pm there was a flypast in close formation of two pairs of vintage gliders, these Petrol with the MG19 and the Sky with the Weihe. First they made a close formation low level pass on tow then having released from tow made another gliding pass and landing in formation. The very skilled tug pilots were; Brian Smith, Pete Kinsey, Gordon McDonald and Chris Garton. The Glider Pilots were Graham Saw, Gary Pullen, Richard Moyse and Mark Wills. Sadly the conditions were a little too windy for Justin to fly the RhonBussard. We were then treated to some aerobatics with Colin Short in his Pilatus B4, and finally Gary managed a short flight in the Grasshopper.

Everybody then enjoyed a splendid dinner from Gerald Hill the Lasham Chef who is also rapidly getting involved in the VGC. It had been just the kind of day Chris would have enjoyed; flying, fun and friendship.



A contribution to Chris Wills 'Russian Gliders from 1908-1987' article

# Some Russian high performance gliders in 1935-1937

By Gábor Fececs

In spite of information about Russian gliders being scarce during Soviet times, certain record breaking gliders became known around the world because of the outstanding performances Soviet glider pilots had achieved flying them. Now more information is available on Soviet gliding and gliders. Here some information on a couple of high performance gliders is presented from the early years of those great times when world gliding records were broken nearly weekly by Soviet pilots. Of these only the G N°7 is widely known, others are not so well known or even never heard of by the gliding community west of the countries once belonged to the Soviet Union.

## G N°7

This single seat high performance glider was designed by G. F. Groshev. The aim of the designer was to create a glider which would be capable of flying great



The G N°7

distances in cloudy frontal weather conditions. For this reason the wing was stressed for a safety factor of 10. The glider was not a 'greenfield' venture as the design was based on its predecessor, the successful G N°6.

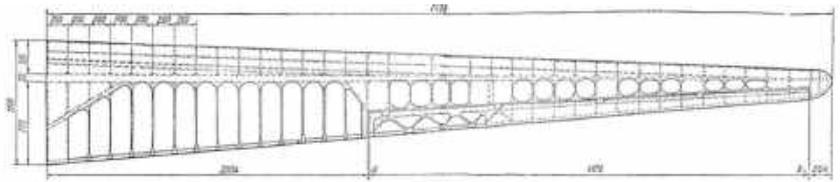
## The G N°6.

The G N°6 was built at 1935 in the Glider Factory at Moscow. The cantilever,



The G N°6

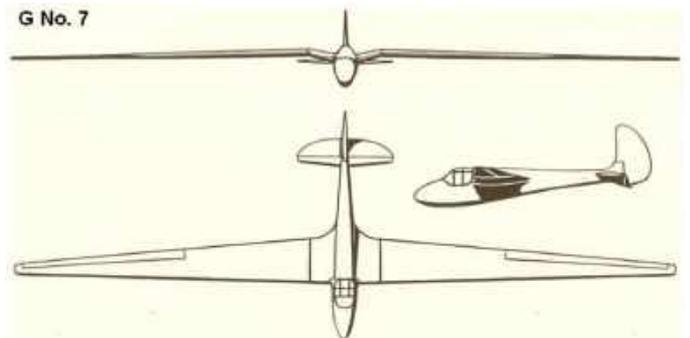
## G N°7 wing



single spar, high positioned wing in front of the spar was covered with plywood. The wing consisted of three panels: a slightly gulled centroplane with 2 m span and two outer wing panels. The cockpit was covered with a celuloid canopy. All control mechanism run on ball-bearings. The all-flying elevators were connected to the tail assembly by axial ball bearings making adjustable the control forces as well as the displacement of the elevator movement. The glider was equipped with night flying fittings. On 14 September, 1936, I. L. Kartashov established a new Sovjet distance record of 501 km flying this glider.

The G N°7, based on this successful glider had a mid-positioned, cantilever wing of great aspect ratio. The wing consisted of a gulled centreplane integrated into the fuselage and two outer panels. The pilot seated in a closed, plexiglas canopy covered cockpit. Though the G N°7 was heavier then its predecessor its sink was only slightly more then that of the G N°6. Its aerodynamic performance was increased among others by such structural elements as the sophisticated wing-fuselage joint fairing and the very low and well streamlined skid. The single spar wing was covered with plywood. This glider was also fit-

ted with night flying fittings. This glider got the first prize in the category of single-seat sailplanes at the XII. All-Union Gliding Contest held at Tyoply Stan airfield in the vicinity of Moscow in 1937. The prototype was built by the Glider Factory, Moscow, in 1936, and a batch of 15 gliders followed in 1937. With one of the production gliders V. L. Rastorguyev broke the international distance record 3 times in succession: 5 May, 1937 of 539.6 km; 15 May, 1937 of 602.2 km; 27 May, 1937 of 652 km.



|               |                     |               |                        |
|---------------|---------------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Wing span:    | 16.8 m              | Empty mass:   | 200 kg                 |
| Length:       | 6 m                 | Takeoff mass: | 305 kg                 |
| Height:       | 1.54 m              | Wing load:    | 23.8 kg/m <sup>2</sup> |
| Wing area:    | 12.8 m <sup>2</sup> | Wingsection:  | Modified Göttingen 549 |
| Aileron:      | 1.2 m <sup>2</sup>  | L/D:          | 28                     |
| Aspect ratio: | 22                  | Crew:         | 1                      |

## G N°7 3-view drawing



The G N°7 which found her way to Hungary during WWII.

ted with night flying fittings.

This glider got the first prize in the category of single-seat sailplanes at the XII. All-Union Gliding Contest held at Tyoply Stan airfield in the vicinity of Moscow in 1937.

The prototype was built by the Glider Factory, Moscow, in 1936, and a batch of 15 gliders followed in 1937.

With one of the production gliders V. L. Rastorguyev broke the international distance record 3 times in succession: 5 May, 1937 of 539.6 km; 15 May, 1937 of 602.2 km; 27 May, 1937 of 652 km.



**EF-2**

This single-seat high performance glider was designed by P. Goryachev and S. Belyayev, both of them students at the Military Aviation Academy. The glider was built by the Academy's experimental workshop in 1936. It was presented at the XII. All-Union Gliding Contest and because of her high quality construction and finish she was one of the best gliders at the contest.

This glider also has a predecessor, the EF-1 designed by the same twosome.

The EF-1 was built in 1935 by the Academy's experimental workshop. It was a cantilever high wing glider with a gull form centroplane and all-flying wingtip ailerons on the outer wing panels. The fuselage had 18 frames connected by two main longerons and covered by plywood. The horizontal stabilizer was statically adjustable. The cockpit was closed by a celluloid canopy.

The EF-1 was flight tested in Moscow and was towed by a P-5 aeroplane from Moscow to Koktyebel to participate at the XI. All-Union Gliding Contest. When one day she was towed by a U-2 the EF-1 disintegrated. Her pilot escaped by parachute.

On the EF-2 the all-flying wingtip ailerons were abandoned and normally arranged slotted and mass balanced ailerons were fitted. The wing-fuselage joint fairing was smaller then on her predecessor. The wing had two main spars. The plywood covering run back up to the rear main spar. The fuselage had 20 frames and was covered by plywood. The control surfaces were moved by cables. The glider had a fixed landing skid.

On 26 July, 1936, K. I. Ovchinnikov established a new Soviet altitude record of 3400 m flying this glider.

**AG-1**

This single-seat high speed glider was designed by O. K. Antonov and G. F. Groshev as a derivative of the G №7. It was a high-wing glider with great aspect ratio having a gull-wing centroplane. Because of her very thin wing double-spar structure was applied. The whole centroplane and most of the outer panels were covered by plywood. To increase the approach gliding angle and to reduce the landing speed flaps were fitted. The cabin had a celluloid canopy. The wing



*The AG-1*

was stressed for a safety factor of 13 allowing the glider to perform any kind of aerobatic manoeuvres.

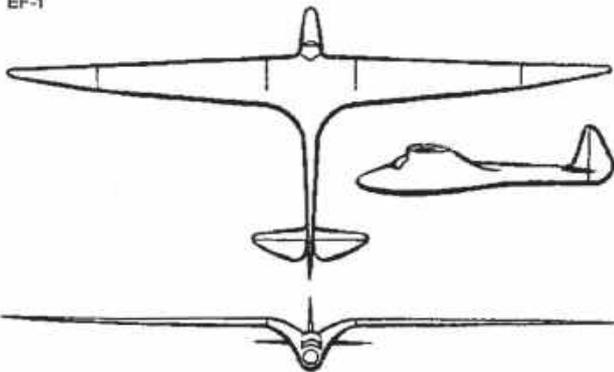
Two AG-1s were built. One of them was named 'KomSoMol' and with this glider V. L. Rasrorguyev made a number of distance flight at the XII. All-Union Gliding Contest.

**RV-1**

This high performance single-seat glider was designed by V. I. Yelmelyanov for high altitude flights. It was built by the Glider Factory, Moscow, in 1937.

The cantilever wing had a gull-winged centroplane and had a high aspect ratio. The wing structure was a single-spar construction with lattice ribs. The glider had flaps which were located between the ailerons and the wing root. The fuselage was a monocoque structure. The wing

EF-1



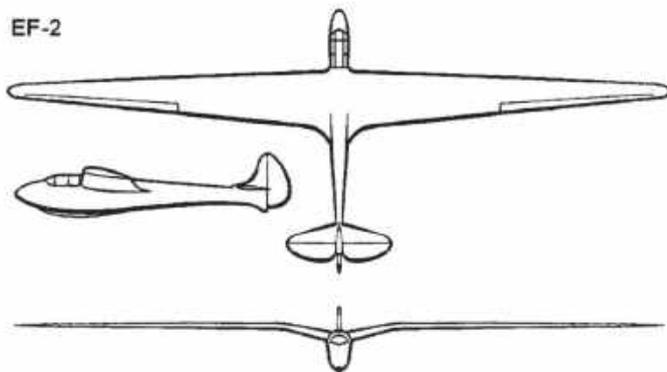
|            |                     |               |                        |
|------------|---------------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Wing span: | 17.1 m              | Aspect ratio: | 19                     |
| Length:    | 7.12 m              | Empty mass:   | 178 kg                 |
| Height:    | 1.65 m              | Takeoff mass: | 260 kg                 |
| Wing area: | 15.5 m <sup>2</sup> | Wing load:    | 16.8 kg/m <sup>2</sup> |
| Aileron:   | 2 m <sup>2</sup>    | Wing section: | CL-IV                  |
| Elevator:  | 2 m <sup>2</sup>    | L/D:          | 23.5                   |
| Rudder:    | 1.5 m <sup>2</sup>  | Crew:         | 1                      |

*The predecessor, EF-1, 3-view drawing*



*The EF-2*

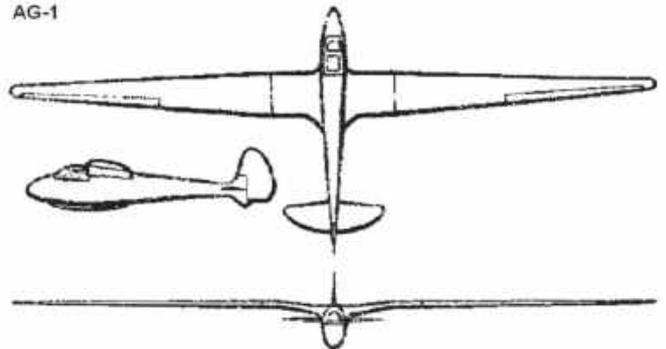
EF-2



|            |                     |               |                      |
|------------|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Wing span: | 17.2 m              | Aspect ratio: | 20                   |
| Length:    | 7.05 m              | Empty mass:   | 263 kg               |
| Height:    | 1.6 m               | Takeoff mass: | 343 kg               |
| Wing area: | 14.9 m <sup>2</sup> | Wing load:    | 23 kg/m <sup>2</sup> |
| Aileron:   | 1.6 m <sup>2</sup>  | L/D:          | 28                   |
| Elevator:  | 1.6 m <sup>2</sup>  | Min. sink:    | 0.6 m/sec            |
| Rudder:    | 1.2 m <sup>2</sup>  | Crew:         | 1                    |

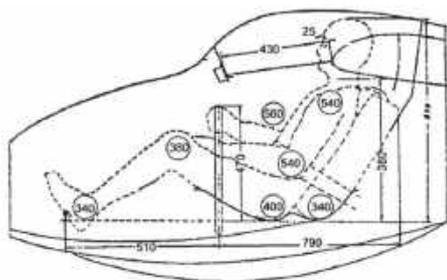
*The EF-2 3-view drawing*

AG-1



|            |                     |               |                      |
|------------|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Wing span: | 15.2 m              | Aspect ratio: | 21.8                 |
| Length:    | 5.8 m               | Empty mass:   | 265 kg               |
| Height:    | 1.2 m               | Takeoff mass: | 350 kg               |
| Wing area: | 10.6 m <sup>2</sup> | Wing load:    | 33 kg/m <sup>2</sup> |
| Aileron:   | 1.12 m <sup>2</sup> | Wingsection:  | Göttingen 549        |
| Elevator:  | 1.1 m <sup>2</sup>  | L/D:          | 27                   |
| Rudder:    | 0.77 m <sup>2</sup> | Min. sink:    | 0.9 m/sec            |
|            |                     | Crew:         | 1                    |

*The AG-1 3-view drawing*



The RV-1

centroplane and the tail unit was integrated into the fuselage.

Designing this glider great efforts were made to reduce the cross-section of the fuselage. Because of high altitude flight were planned the cockpit had been closed with a jettisonable celluloid canopy on which cut-outs were applied to prevent icing and misting its surface. Behind the pilot seat a small compartment for 10-12 luggage was formed. The landing skid was fixed.

### Sergo Ordzhonikidze-2

This single-seat high performance glider was the development version of the *Sergo Ordzhonikidze*. Both gliders were designed by the students of B. V. Belyanin, who was an aerodynamicist at the Aerodynamic Laboratory of the Industrial Institute at Novocherkassk. Both gliders were built in the workshops of the Institute's Aeroclub and of the Laboratory.

The *Sergo Ordzhonikidze* were built in 1935 and the *Sergo Ordzhonikidze-2* in

1936. The first appeared at the XI. All-Union Gliding Contest held at the Klementyev Hill in the vicinity of Koktebel in 1936, the second appeared at the XII. All-Union Gliding Contest held at Tyoply Stan airfield in the vicinity of Moscow in 1937.

The cantilever, single-spar, mid-wing *Sergo Ordzhonikidze* had a gull centroplane. The outer wing panels got a 4 degrees aerodynamic washout to have a nearly elliptical lift distribution. The fairings of the wing-fuselage joint extended



The *Sergo Ordzhonikidze*

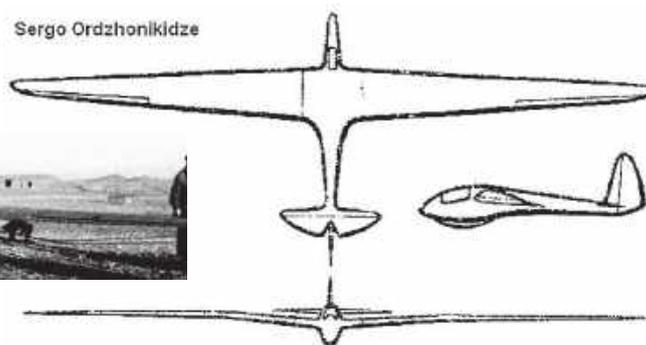
along the fuselage to nearly the tail unit. The wing leading edge was covered by plywood to the main spar. Other surfaces were covered by fabric. The nicely streamlined fuselage had a combined plywood-fabric skin and the canopy fitted nicely into the fuselage outline. The vertical tailplane was integrated into the fuselage, the horizontal tailplane was joined at three points and was supported by struts.

The *Sergo Ordzhonikidze* demonstrated excellent climbing capability at the Contest, however it was tiring to fly her because of the unsuitably fitted rudder pedals.

### The Sergo Ordzhonikidze

On the *Sergo Ordzhonikidze-2* the aspect ratio and the wing load were increased. The canopy fitting into the fuselage outline was changed to a conventional canopy.

- It is interesting that for many of the high performance gliders of that era gull-wings were selected. The reason to select this more expensive solution



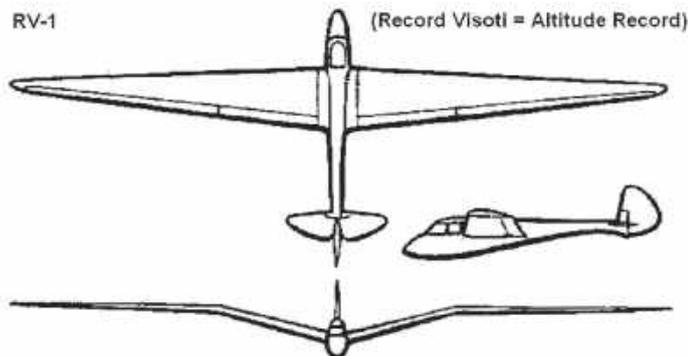
|            |                     |               |                        |
|------------|---------------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Wingspan:  | 16 m                | Aspect ratio: | 19.7                   |
| Length:    | 6.2 m               | Empty mass:   | 150 kg                 |
| Height:    | 1.5 m               | Takeoff mass: | 230 kg                 |
| Wing area: | 13 m <sup>2</sup>   | Wing load:    | 17.7 kg/m <sup>2</sup> |
| Ailerons:  | 1 m <sup>2</sup>    | Wingsection:  | Göttingen 535          |
| Elevator:  | 1.25 m <sup>2</sup> | L/D:          | ?                      |
| Rudder:    | 1 m <sup>2</sup>    | Crew:         | 1                      |

The *Sergo Ordzhonikidze* 3-view drawing

probably was that it give good opportunity to form better wingroot-fuselage joints. However Antonov abandoned this concept with the RF-5, RF-7 and his later high performance gliders.

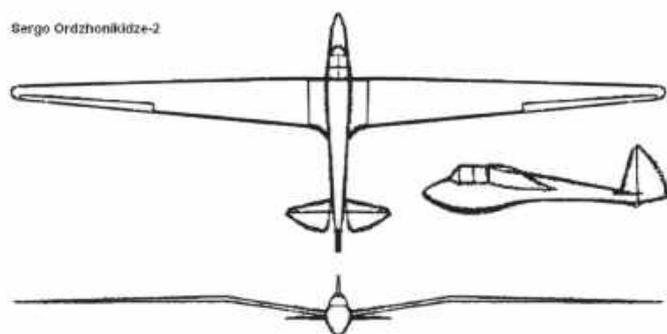
### Sources:

- P. Krasilshchikov: *Entsiklopediia Planery Rossii*. Polygon Press, 2005
- Sostevich V. V. Shushirin: *Atlas Konstruktivnykh Planerov*. Gosudarstvennoe Uzdatselstvo Oboronnoi Promislenosti, 1938.
- Gerhard Wissmann: *Abenteuer in Wind und Wolken*. Transpress VEB Verlag für Verkehrswesen, 1988. □



|            |                     |               |                        |
|------------|---------------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Wing span: | 16.5 m              | Aspect ratio: | 17.1                   |
| Length:    | 6.28 m              | Empty mass:   | 178 kg                 |
| Height:    | 1.32 m              | Takeoff mass: | 264 kg                 |
| Wing area: | 16.8 m <sup>2</sup> | Wing load:    | 15.7 kg/m <sup>2</sup> |
| Aileron:   | 2.3 m <sup>2</sup>  | Wingsection:  | R-III                  |
| Elevator:  | 1.5 m <sup>2</sup>  | L/D:          | 26                     |
| Rudder:    | 0.95 m <sup>2</sup> | Crew:         | 1                      |

The RV-1 3-view drawing



|            |                     |               |                        |
|------------|---------------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Wingspan:  | 16 m                | Aspect ratio: | 21.3                   |
| Length:    | 6 m                 | Empty mass:   | 173 kg                 |
| Height:    | 1.3 m               | Takeoff mass: | 260 kg                 |
| Wing area: | 12 m <sup>2</sup>   | Wing load:    | 21.6 kg/m <sup>2</sup> |
| Ailerons:  | 1.2 m <sup>2</sup>  | Wingsection:  | Göttingen 685          |
| Elevator:  | 1.25 m <sup>2</sup> | L/D:          | 29.5                   |
| Rudder:    | 0.83 m <sup>2</sup> | Crew:         | 1                      |

The *Sergo Ordzhonikidze-2* 3-view drawing



# Model report



*Gary Parker's Wien at the Siege Cross aerotow event  
Below: Steve Fraquet's Windspiel at White Sheet*

*by Chris Williams*

Despite its windy nature, the 2011 scale soaring season got off to a healthy start, with plenty of new vintage model sailplanes to gawp at in wonder. At the first event of the season at Siege Cross Farm, Thatcham we got to see Terry Holland's magnificent Wien in action, now in the hands of Gary Parker.

Up at White Sheet, Wiltshire there were several impromptu sessions, despite the ever-present strong winds, and Steve Fraquet's Windspiel, now repaired after a slight re-kitting sometime earlier, once again took to the air. Steve and I also tried our hand at some simple formation flying to see if one aircraft could be photographed from another with the excellent little GoPro camera. The camera was mounted on my Minimoa, the other glid-

er being Steve's Petrel. Formation flying from the ground in a strong wind requires industrial strength undergarments, and we were lucky to get the shot that we did! Next up was the TVSA crew's flagship event at Middle Wallop, and it was there that we saw Ian Davis's efforts over the winter, in not just one, but two models. The Berlin was featured in my last report in the uncovered stage, now here it was, maiden ready. The other model was





Steve Fraquet's 1:3.5 scale Petrel creeps up on Author's Minimoa at White Sheet.



equally as rare, being the Jacht 71, a very peculiar beast indeed. It's not difficult to understand why flying boat gliders never caught on, but if you look at the documentation on the Scale Soaring website you can see that they gave it a golly good try, even using a winch on a raft. <http://www.scalesoaring.co.uk/VINTAGE/Documentation/Jacht-71/Jacht-71.html>

In the event, despite the ever-present wind, both maidens went off successfully, and Ian is to be congratulated on bringing two such interesting projects to a happy conclusion.

I have one more maiden flight to report, that of my own 1:3.5 scale

Ian Davis prior to the maiden flight of his Berlin  
Right: the Berlin in flight



Ian Davis' Jacht 71, also on its maiden flight. (Made by the Rhön-Rossitten Gesellschaft (RRG) in 1931, later to become the DFS.)



Lots of Vintage action at the Middle Wallop aerotow event.





*Left: maiden flight of the S25a. (Steve Fraquet pic)  
Above: author with the newly-completed Spalinger 25a.  
Below: view of the White Sheet slopes from the Spalinger.  
Bottom: an evocative pic of Vince Cockett's 1:3.5 scale Weihe over the old German fortifications on the Isle of Guernsey.*

Spalinger S25a. The genesis of this project lay in the front cover of a VGC News, where the full-size, based at the Aero Clube Bauru in Brazil, was prominently featured. Calculating the Centre of Gravity proved more complicated than I had thought, the consequence of which was that its first flight at White Sheet in a strong wind was the CG a little too aft for comfort. Later flights with more weight in the nose proved that the S25a was a very nice model to fly indeed. Should you be interested, you can see her in action by putting SPALINGER @ WHITE SHEET into the YouTube search box.

Finally, a photo from Vince Cockett, who administers the SSUK website and forum, showing a very evocative picture of his 1:3.5 scale Weihe flying over the old German fortifications on his home turf on the isle of Guernsey.

In spite of the inclemency of the elements, the scale soaring season has got off to a good start, and hopefully there will be plenty more action to come... c\_williams30@sky.com





## Bob Gaines

It is with great sadness that I have to report the sudden passing of Bob Gaines. Bob was certainly one of the most active members of the world's Vintage Soaring Community and he will be greatly missed by all of his soaring friends from around the world. Bob began his soaring career in 1959 learning in Schweizer TG-3s while he was flying B-47s in the U.S. Air Force. As Bob advanced his flying career he left the Air Force ending up at Delta Airlines where he retired as a Senior Captain and Check Airman just a few years ago. Over the past fifty plus years Bob has been involved with vintage sailplanes. In the mid 1960's he acquired his famous Weihe (N1900M) and made many memorable flights with it earning his Silver "C", #1418, and making his first attempts at his Gold "C" in it.

Eventually Bob completed his Gold "C", #880, in a Phoebus. He was an

*Right: at the time of his death, Bob was restoring a Slingsby Petrel. Here he tries Graham Saw's Petrel for size in 2002. Bottom: Bob in his award winning Kirby Kite.*

active competition pilot in the south east winning the Region 5 Open Class Championships in 1980s with his DG 202/17. For a while Bob was the Glaser Dirks sailplane dealer here in the United States.

Over the years Bob has owned an amazing collection of vintage sailplanes, winning several restoration awards. There are probably too many to list, but I'll try: A Cinema, two Weihe's, Eon Olympia, Mu-13D3, K-2, two Condor 4s, Kirby Kite, LO-150, two Baby Albatross', and I am sure there were several more. He was just about to complete the restoration of his Slingsby Petrel at the time of his sudden passing.

Bob's dedication to the soaring movement was endless. He served as the Vice President of the Soaring Society of America as well as the chairman of their Publications and Safety Committees. Bob was also active on the the Boards of the National Soaring Museum and the Vintage Sailplane Association, serving as President of both organizations. Most recently he was serving as the current USA delegate to the VGC's International Council.

It is hard to imagine the vintage soaring world without Bob. I considered Bob one of my very best friends and I

am sure that everyone who knew him feels the same way. Vintage Soaring and Soaring in general will always be better off because of Bob. *Jeff Byard*

*Jeff has sent us a copy of an article written by Bob on one of his Gold "C" attempts in his Weihe. The photo of Bob flying N1900M. was taken by Bob's son, Paul.*

## Another Gold Attempt in a Weihe

*By Robert Gaines*

The Strategic Air Command 380th Bomb Wing was deactivated when we delivered the last of the old Boeing B-47's Stratojet bombers to the Arizona desert. It was winter 1965 and we were moving to the great Northwest. We loaded two little kids, a Cairn Terrier and hitched the old wood trailer to the Ford. The trailer for the J.S. Weihe was almost twenty years old and was made in England. No brakes, no fenders, no

problem. The temperature was just above freezing as we headed up through Montreal, Canada turned west and down into the top of Michigan and that's where we lost the left wheel of the trailer. It was close to Ishpeming, Michigan where we searched for and found a replacement wheel in a big junkyard. Next day, we continued west across the top of the US into the Rocky Mountains and across the Continental Divide. As we drove, compacted snow was tossed from the trailer tires to the aft end of the trailer causing the CG to shift to the rear. The added weight to the rear would cause the tongue to become light and lift the rear wheels of the Ford. Poor traction, no problem. We arrived in eastern Washington and Spokane where we were to be stationed at Fairchild AFB. The trailer was gladly dropped off and we continued the drive south to Merced, California and Castle AFB for KC-135 training.

In a few short months, we were back in Fairchild and we finally had time for the Weihe. That's when we found that





the old fabric covering would not pass muster. The base had an active Aero Club near the alert facility and it looked as though there would be room for the long wings inside the club hangar. My new copilot was active in the club, so we became club members the next day and found it was no problem in finding space in the club hangar. We spent many days at the club hangar while sitting on Strip Alert. Always near a Klaxon horn, we started the recovery. Ceconite was the latest and greatest fabric and the light-weight grade went on pretty quickly. To finish it off, wings and tail feathers were painted in Daytona White (cream) and the fuselage became an aqua blue-green.

We flew for the first time in July 1967. The '67-'68 winter was busy with a short tour at Eileson AFB in Fair-



banks, Alaska, then longer times in South East Asia. Big gaps in the soaring logbook indicate "other" duty thanks to JFK, LBJ and friends. The military and Viet Nam really started to mess with my hobby. Late May and early June can be very nice soaring almost anywhere and Washington State is no exception. Our very first cross country was made from Felts Field in Spokane north to Sandpoint, Idaho. Distance of about 50 miles. Two weeks later, the next flight was 140 miles to Felts Field from Wenatchee, Fancher Field in the middle of the state.

Fancher was part of early flying history in 1931. "Upside-Down" Clyde Pangborn and Hugh Herdon, Jr. were in an unsuccessful around the world flight that stranded them in Siberia. Facing arrest and with nothing else to do, the decided to go for a \$25,000 price offered

by Japanese newspaper for first flight across the Pacific from Japan to USA. Just like the Weihe, the Bellanca could jettison the landing gear. After the launch from a beach in Japan, the gear would not release. Clyde crawled outside and was able to dislodge the wheels and the flight continued to Fancher where the Bellanca airplane made a belly landing.

It was now one week later, July 6th, 1968 and the locals at Wenatchee were having an informal competition and we once again launched from Fancher. We declared Bonners Ferry at the very top of Idaho as a Diamond Goal and off we went. Our crew retrieved the dolly and headed east to Idaho. The Super Cub towed us north along the Columbia River then southeast along the long ridge where we released in the house thermal. Using shallow bank and keeping the string in the center, we climbed with ease in the big thermals. The open farm areas and apple orchards were really cooking all the way up to form perfect cumulus clouds. All we knew was best L/D and sunset so our indicated cruise speeds never exceeded 40 mph.

**TWO MILES UP**

The Weihe has many virtues and climb is one of them for sure. There was never any doubt about getting high and staying high. Soon after release we passed 10,000 MSL for a steady climb to 13,400 feet. The Crossfell vario liked the top half of the scale. Our heading was about 080 on the Airpath Compass as we cruised north of Ephrata and south of Grand Coolee Dam. As the day wore on we were north of Fairchild AFB. The 14,000 foot concrete runway could be seen with ease as we neared the city of Spokane. But, it was starting to get late in the afternoon and the thermals were not so vigorous. The lift was still big and wide but the wonderful climbs we enjoyed earlier were no longer happening. Passing Mount Spokane ski area, we could see that Bonners Ferry goal might not be possible, so we made a call on the new Bayside radio and we advised our faithful crew to expect to find us at Sandpoint, Idaho.

It was a quiet hour in final glide that ended at Sandpoint Airport. We decided it would be best to land on the grass taxiway since we had no dolly to help in moving the Weihe after we slid to a stop. It really wasn't necessary to move the Weihe since nobody was there to greet us. No dancing girls or band. All hangars were closed and the small office was locked. By now, it was dark and

insects were everywhere and since I don't like mosquitoes, it was back to the cockpit. We sat and thought. Where is the crewman? The chap was a fine fellow and friend but he did have a fondness for "Demon Rum". I began to have visions of him sitting in some pub while enjoying the ladies and forgetting about me. We were not mad. Maybe jealous?

**BENT AXLE**

It was several hours and almost tomorrow when my friend arrived. Seems that the trailer had a wheel bearing fail. This was a real problem since all the stores were closed. However, he was able to find an auto supply store and locate a replacement bearing for the English built trailer. Amazing! In the process, he had done a 180 on a narrow road and the trailer axle was bent in the process. Fortunately, it was not bad so he continued to Sandpoint and the two of us got the Weihe in the box for the drive home. The distance was near 182 miles. A few short of Gold Distance and no Diamond Goal. We didn't care.

*Taken from the The Times, 22nd April 2011*

**Rear-Admiral  
Nicholas Goodhart**

Hilary Charles Nicholas Goodhart was born at Inkpen, Berkshire, on September 28 1919, the son of a patent engineer. He was educated at Miss White's, Kintbury, and Connaught House, Weymouth, and entered Dartmouth in the Hawke term of 1933, before studying at the Royal Naval Engineering College at Keyham, Devonport.

Goodhart enjoyed a career in naval flying and engineering, in which he rose through key staff and sea appointments to be a rear-admiral and, in his last appointment, military deputy to the head of defence sales. By then, however, he had established himself as one of the world's best glider pilots. He had started gliding at Cambridge University in 1938, but his



**Right: Nicholas Goodhart at Lasham in 2007.**  
*Photo: Geoff Martin*



progress was interrupted by war service. In the late 1940s, British gliding was blessed with a number of outstanding pilots who challenged for world honours. Amongst this select group were Goodhart and his older brother, Tony, and they soon made an impact on the national and international gliding scene. Together they won the 1950 national team championships at Camphill, Derbyshire, and came first and second in the same event the following year. Goodhart finished first in the American Championships in 1955. In the same year he climbed to 30,500ft over California and later broke the British altitude record, climbing to 37,050ft. He was a member of the British world championship team seven times and was placed in the first ten on four occasions. In 1956 he and his co-pilot, Frank Foster, won the World Gliding Two Seat Championship at St Yan in France. He was also British single-seat champion on three occasions (1962, 1967 and 1971), and was placed second four times. During the 1959 British National Championships, held at Lasham in Hampshire, Goodhart declared the Scottish gliding site at Portmoak in Kinross as his goal. He climbed in cumulus, cumuli-nimbus and wave clouds and, on leaving a thunder cloud at 18,000ft, received a severe electrical shock. He landed in the early evening after a 6½ hour flight, having covered a distance of 579.36km at an average speed of 90.7kph, a new distance record. During his gliding career he held eleven British gliding records. Between 1966-71 Goodhart also demonstrated his technical skills in his design work for a new glider type, the Sigma, which (with modifications), still flies. Goodhart received a number of national and international awards for his gliding achievements. He was the first Briton to win the coveted international Diamond Badge. He was awarded the Silver Medal of the Royal Aero Club in 1956 and, in 1972, received the Paul Tissandier Diploma by the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale. On retirement from the Royal Navy in 1973 he was appointed CB, and started on a project to develop a man-powered flying machine. He and his team developed the two-seater Newbury Manflier with a wingspan of 138ft. The aircraft's pilots sat 70ft apart, each in his own fuselage, and the team achieved man-powered flight in 1979. Nicholas Goodhart, who died on April 9, married, in 1957, Lydia Sward, and, secondly, in 1975, Molly Copsey, who survives him along with two daughters and a son.

**Nick Goodhart** by Wally Kahn  
*As an addition to the obituary of Nick Goodhart in 'The Times' of 14th April (a copy is on the board at Lasham), my follow up letter has been published to-day 19th April.*

**"Rear Admiral Nicholas Goodhart – Walter Kahn writes:**

When in 1951 Nick Goodhart (obituary, April 14) arrived at Pont St.Vincent, a French gliding centre near Nancy, in order to complete his international gold gliding badge, he was told to fly to Moulins, a goal flight of some 315 km (196 miles). Lacking a map he borrowed one from a French pilot, unwrapped his packet of sandwiches, noted a few salient places on the grease-proof wrapping, returned the map and duly completed the task. He was only the ninth Briton to win his Gold C. When I flew there the following year the French still spoke in awe of "ze brilliant Englishman".

Another page would be needed to do full justice to this remarkable man. He

was 35th in the 1951 Monte Carlo Rally, aged 84 he abseiled down from the 120ft-high tower of Cullompton Parish Church, Devon, raising thousands for charity. His last major project was designing a firefighting aircraft of very large span with more than 100 water nozzles.

Lastly, John Sproule was very much RN, not VR, and carried out his raid to steal German gliders without the Goodhart Brothers. Nick's elder brother, the late Lieutenant-Commander Anthony Goodhart, RN, won the King's Sword at Dartmouth, was the creator of the Royal Navy Gliding and Soaring Association".

*Sandy Sproule, John Sproule's son has sent VGCNews the following.*

**More on Nick Goodhart**

Ref. Nick Goodhart, I thought you might be interested in the attached scanned from Dad's logbook (*below*) from summer 1947, looks like they enjoyed flying the Kranich! Kind regards, Sandy Sproule . □



| YEAR | AIRCRAFT |            | PLACE, OR 1st PRIZE | Crew PILOT, PNR. OR PASSENGER | DUTY (INCLUDING REHEARSAL REMARKS) | GOLD BADGE AVERAGE             |     |      |
|------|----------|------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----|------|
|      | Type     | No.        |                     |                               |                                    | TIME                           | NO. | TIME |
| 1947 |          |            |                     |                               |                                    | 1.15                           | 10  | 1.10 |
| JUNE | 1        | Amelia 100 | 4-280V              | Solo                          | 3 hrs                              | Shedden - 1st flight           |     | 1.20 |
|      | 1        | "          | "                   | "                             | "                                  | Shedden - 2nd flight           |     | 1.35 |
|      | 10       | "          | "                   | "                             | "                                  | 9-1st - Bowden                 |     | 1.20 |
|      | 10       | Tr-P       | "                   | "                             | "                                  | 2 hrs                          |     |      |
|      | 10       | Amelia 100 | 4-280V              | "                             | "                                  | Bowden - 2nd flight            |     | 1.20 |
|      | 10       | "          | "                   | 1/2 hr                        | "                                  | 9-1st - 1st time & net         |     | 1.30 |
|      | 11       | "          | "                   | "                             | "                                  | 9-1st - 2nd time               |     | 1.25 |
|      | 15       | "          | "                   | "                             | "                                  | 9-1st - Shedden                |     | 1.50 |
|      | 15       | "          | "                   | "                             | "                                  | Shedden - 2nd flight           |     | 1.35 |
|      | 15       | Kranich I  | 16-200              | 1st Charles                   | "                                  | various local 2nd flight       |     | 3.5  |
|      | 17       | "          | "                   | 1st G Goodhart                | "                                  | various - 1st flight - Bowden  |     |      |
|      | 18       | Amelia 100 | 4-280V              | Solo                          | "                                  | various - 1st flight - Bowden  |     | 1.10 |
|      | 19       | Kranich I  | 16-200              | 1st G Goodhart                | "                                  | various - 1st flight - Bowden  |     | 1.15 |
|      | 19       | "          | "                   | "                             | "                                  | various local                  |     | 1.25 |
|      | 22       | "          | "                   | 1st G Goodhart                | "                                  | Bowden - 3 flights             |     | 1.10 |
|      | 23       | "          | "                   | 1st G Goodhart                | "                                  | Bowden local 2 flights         |     | 3.30 |
|      | 24       | "          | "                   | "                             | "                                  | Bowden - 2nd time              |     | 1.15 |
|      | 25       | "          | "                   | "                             | "                                  | Bowden - 1st flight - 1st time |     | 4.45 |
|      | 26       | "          | "                   | "                             | "                                  | Bowden - 1st flight - 2nd time |     | 1.40 |
|      | 26       | "          | "                   | "                             | "                                  | various local - 1st flight     |     | 3.5  |
|      | 28       | "          | "                   | "                             | "                                  | Bowden local                   |     | 1.25 |
|      | 28       | "          | "                   | 1st G Goodhart                | "                                  | Bowden local                   |     | 2.20 |



# ARGENTINA

## *Vintage and Classic gliders*

By Francis Humblet

For the past fifteen years, Argentina made gliding news by the profusion of world records flown over the Andes. However, all the records were flown by visiting pilots because, surprisingly, very few local pilots are equipped to fly in their home wave. As World Gliding Championships (WGC) are due to take place in Gonzalez Chavez during 2013, renewed interest will be focused on the country and its tremendous gliding conditions already discovered by the many pilots who took part in the 1963 WGC in Junin.

Having sold, last summer, a Janus C to the gliding club at La Plata, close to Buenos Aires, an invitation to go and have a flight in it in its new home was difficult to refuse. The barbecue and welcome will long be remembered but the biggest surprise was that a Grunau Baby III was still being operated by the club. The ensuing discussion with club members led us to talk about the VGC and

the idea to have an Argentine section is progressing actively. So, maybe this is the right time to review the local gliders history which, in some ways, is linked with the rapid development of civil aviation started in the nineteen twenties. This was partly due to a poor road and rail infrastructure and building a local airport was an easier way to link large towns to the capital. La Ligne was the famous French connection between France and South America, with its heroes like St Exupery, Mermoz and Guillaumet. Surprisingly, the gliding club at Bariloche, close to the Andes, still utilizes the original Aeropostale buildings, now listed as an historic monument.

In 1895, Pablo Suarez built and flew a Lilienthal type glider in the region of Buenos Aires. In 1923, the Hungarian engineer Biro built a copy of the Akaflied Hannover Vampyr, which was a star of the 1921 Wasserkuppe meet. It was called Regina and first flew in November 1923. Sadly, one month later, the pilot Otto Ballod hit the hill after a

sandow launch and thus became the first gliding fatality in Argentina. Fifteen years later, Biro reutilized some of the airframe to build a light aircraft! Next came two German residents: Bichler flew a hang glider in 1926 and Barth built a glider in 1927. In 1929, the magazine Ciencia Popular published a set of plans of an American primary. A group was soon working on the real thing that flew in 1931 under the name of Pampero. Up to 1954, other such groups of pilots will continue to build Zögling and Grunau 9.

Gliding really started in 1930 with the creation of the Association de Vuelo Jorge Newbery (an historic figure in early Argentine aviation) and the first primary built was called Newbery! Soon the club was amalgamated with the Club Argentino de Planadores Albatros, also founded in 1930 and soon becoming the focal point of the Argentine gliding movement. Home designs were the primaries Albatros 3E2 in 1931 followed by an improved model in 1938 as well as two more built by Giannoni in 1938. Looking more like a sailplane,

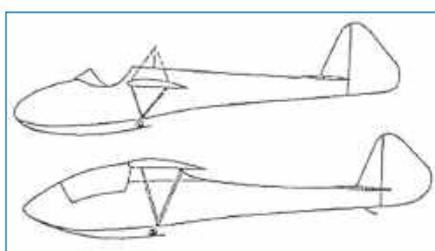


Top: this Grunau-9A is still flying.  
Above: the Jorge Newbery 8R1 flew in 1936  
Left: the gliding club at Bariloche, close to the Andes, still utilizes the original Aeropostale buildings, now listed as an historic monument.



conceived for aero-tow and aerobatic, the Jorge Newbery 8R1 flew in 1936 and L/D claim was 19. However, to meet the demand from the club pilots, foreign types were built in quantity: RRG Prüfling, Anfänger, Hols der Teufel, Zögling 35, Kassel 12A, Schneider Grunau 9, SG 38, Babies IIA, Rhönbussard and Hütter. Later, in the forties modern types will be built: Olympia, Spalinger S-III, Hütter 17b, Grunau Baby III and participation in Condor IV and Fauvel programs. A few independent designers like Degasperri and Descole produced training gliders. Apart from the Bussard, already mentioned, the only high performance glider, built in 1935 by Teischmann and others, was a Dittmar Condor I. Soon, this glider became known for the best performances achieved in South America for duration, height and distances. From 1935, the club at Mar del Plata, under its president Toso, started a building program: Toso A1 & A2, Zögling 35, Kassel, Mainene I based on French Avia 32E as well as a motorized Grunau Baby II. In Cordoba, Yaktas started designing the Halcon series, The Halcon I did not fly but the Halcon II flew in 1945 and the Halcon III in 1946. The number of imported gliders was relatively small due to high taxation and transport costs. The Minimoa unusual story that arrived via Brazil on the Hindenburg was fully described in *VGC news* 132.

During the period 1940-1945,



Above: Halcon II & III

Argentina was a neutral country but with more affinities towards Germany than the allied nations as we shall see. There was a need to produce more pilots and based on the German model, it was decided to produce training gliders locally. From 1944, Aero Talleres Argentina produced 50 SG 38. FAASA started production of 50 Grunau Baby IIA in 1945 followed by 150 Grunau 9 in 1946. IMPA SA started with 27 Grunau Baby IIA in 1944, 50 SG 38 in 1945 with a final batch of 53 Grunau Baby III during 1954. The Fabrica Militar de

Table 1: the Condor IV built by Marsden

| Kit No | Reg    | Date     | First owner        | Observations                             |
|--------|--------|----------|--------------------|--|
| 1      | LV-EHU | 21.09.67 | Ceres G/C          | Crashed San Francisco 05.03.84           |
| 2      | LV-EFY | 31.12.58 | Punta Alta G/C     |  |
| 3      | LV-DDT | 13.05.59 | Paraná G/C         |  |
| 4      | LV-DDS | 13.05.59 | Azul Association   | Now at Tehachapi with Jeff Byard         |
| 5      | LV-EGC | 21.11.59 | Tandil G/C         |  |
| 6      | LV-EGD | 02.02.60 | Condor G/C         | Crashed Villa Maria 06.02.94             |
| 7      | LV-EGG | 26.02.60 | Rafaela G/C        | In Museo Nacional de Aeronautica         |
| 8      | LV-EGF | 26.02.60 | Bolivar G/C        | Crashed Corrientes 02.06.74              |
| 9      | LV-EGE | 23.02.60 | Mar del Plata G/C  |  |
| 10     | LV-EGO | 25.08.60 | Rosario G/C        |  |
| 11     | LV-EGP | 25.08.60 | Aviation Ministry  | Gift to Uruguay 1963, to A Wyaux 2001    |
| 12     | LV-EGR | 25.08.60 | Cordoba G/C        | Gift to Peru 28.01.63                    |
| 13     | LV-EHB | 13.12.60 | Junin G/C          | To J Kruse in 1992 now Achmer as D-6043  |
| 14     | LV-EHE | 15.05.62 | Morteros G/C       |  |
| 15     | LV-EHI | 11.10.63 | Los Caranchos G/C  | To DINFIA as fuselage for IA-54 Carancho |
| 16     | LV-EHX | 30.07.68 | Military Av School | New military registration                |
| 17     | LV-EHY | 18.04.69 | Pehuajo G/C        |  |
| 18     | LV-DHV | 13.09.71 | Cordoba G/C        | To J Kruse in 1992, reg BGA 4905/JZD     |
| ??     |        |          |                    | One of above given to Paraguay1966       |

Avion (FMA) also built 3 Rhönbussards in 1940 and 11 SG 38 in 1945. So, in a short time, the country fleet was boosted from very little to 261 primaries and 130 Grunau Babies. Then, during a review of the gliding activities at the Congreso de vuelo sin motor in 1951, it became clear that there was a need for two-seater training if progress was to be made. The country finances were in a better shape and a purchase plan was agreed as follows: 10 Schweizer 2-22 (a demonstrator was flying in Argentina

since 1947), 5 Scheibe Specht, 5 Slingsby T 31 and 10 AISA Kranich 2 from Spain. It looks as these were damaged during the boat trip and may not have been used? The Condor IV program called for gliders to be built by clubs and the ensuing fiasco was described in *VGC News* 129. Table 1 lists the Condor IV built by Marsden.

From 1945, there was an influx of German engineers fleeing Europe. Reimar Horten, of Flying wings fame, went to work in Cordoba where the main

Table 2: gliders produced in Cordoba

| FMA and Horten designs        |                | FMA was Fabrica Militar Aeronautica                |  |
|-------------------------------|----------------|--|--|
| I Ae 25 Manque (not Horten)   | 1945           | Copy of Waco CG-4A; proto only                     |  |
| I Ae 34a (HXVa) Clem Antu     | 1949           | Flying wing Advanced two seater ( 4 off )          |  |
| I Ae 34b                      | 195?           | one of above converted                             |  |
| I Ae 34m (HXVb)               | 1951           | Flying wing performance proto (2 off)              |  |
| I Ae 37 and I Ae 37P          | 1954           | Research delta glider for jet fighter concept      |  |
| I Ae 41/41b Urubu (HXVc)      | 1953           | Flying wing two seater ( 4 off )                   |  |
| I Ae 54 Carancho (not Horten) | 1964           | Performance two seater based on Condor IV fuselage |  |
| I Ae 58 Pucara (not Horten)   | 1967           | Single seater glider proto of Pucara aircraft      |  |
| I Ae 58 Pucara (not Horten)   | 1968           | Two seater glider proto of Pucara aircraft         |  |
| Clubs and Horten designs      |                |  |  |
| H XVI Colibri                 | Condor Club    | 1952   | Flying wing. Crashed on first flight ( Scheidhauer ) |
| H 1b                          | Dekker         | 1954   | Flying wing based on Horten's first design.          |
| H Xa Piernifero               | Los Unidos     | 1953   | Foot launched ultralight flying wing                 |
| H Xa Piernifero               | by Scheidhauer | 1954   | Built as above but did not fly                       |
| H Xc Piernifero               |                | 1954   | Project only   |
| INAV and Horten designs       |                | INAV was Instituto Argentino de Vuelo a Vela       |  |
| INAV-1A                       |                | 1954   | Training glider proto                                |
| INAV-1B and 1C                |                | 1954   | Training glider projects                             |
| INAV-1C and 1D                |                | 1954   | Performance glider projects                          |

FMA aeronautical factory and research centre was located. Initially, he was involved in aircraft and glider designs with FMA. Later, he was involved with the local club in glider construction and, finally, with the Gliding Technical Institute. For more details on his Argentine contribution, the definitive work on the subject remains *Nürflugel* from Peter Selinger. Table 2 (*previous page*) shows the summary of the gliders produced in Cordoba up to the glider versions of the ground attack aircraft Pucara that made the headlines during the Falkland war. The two Horten machines H XV b, now called I Ae 34m (m for mono plaza) were entered in the 1954 World Gliding Championships in Spain but the results did not come to expectations. One glider was destroyed during the practice week and the other one was seriously damaged during the fourth contest day. This would also be the first and last occasion that Argentine built gliders would be entered in a WGC. However, Argentinian pilots will be competing in



the following WGC and in 1960, in Germany, Rolf Hossinger, flying a Skylark 3, was the winner in the Open Class and this could have been one of the reasons for having the 1963 WGC in Junin, Argentina. World championships pilots who flew there, came back with fantastic stories. Many of them obtained their Diamond distances flown in superb conditions. Retrieves were by aero-tow and an unverified story is that, on an occasion, a helicopter had to retrieve one tug! Otherwise, in view of the poor road network, it would have taken days to retrieve pilots who flew over 750 km on free distance tasks!

In 1951, the well known Italian pilot Mantelli came to Argentina and together with Marsden produced and flew the first motor glider in the country: the AM-11 powered by a 25Hp Mc Culloch engine. Marsden also completed 6 Hütter 17b kits during 1953. During 1955, four gliding groups bought plans of the AV-36 flying wing from Fauvel in France. All four gliders were completed by 1957. Charles Atger, world duration record holder for life, was amongst the

lucky pilot as well as Aimar Mattano. Aimar told us that he was a tug pilot at Junin in 1963 and also a copilot in an EB28 in the WGC in Hungary in 2010. Is this a record?

Importing second hand gliders has, apparently, never been allowed in Argentina and this is still valid today. However, second hand motor gliders with or without engine are accepted and quite a few of those are flying in the country! The 1963 WGC was a unique occasion to improve the country fleet by importing new gliders that were to be rented to competitors for the duration of the championships before finding their way into the gliding clubs. In addition, some gliders imported by competitors



**Above left: Mantelli-AM11 the first motor glider in the country.**  
**Above: Fauvel AV-36 of Aimar Mattano built from plans in 1957.**  
**Below: Grunau Baby III at La Plata.**



also became available for sale. This is the case of the Foka flown by a polish pilot and still operational at the Bariloche Gliding club. The choice of gliders was based on the previous winners at the WGC in Butzweiler: three Skylark 3 were imported and one was destroyed by a Dutch pilot who must have been exceeding the red line during a start as well as large number (up to 20) of Ka 6 which, once again would be the winner in the standard class flown by Heinz

(der Lange) Huth.

During the sixties and seventies some American kits were built by individual pilots: two HP-14, Woodstock and Tern. A Grunau Baby III was completed at the Club Rio Cuarto in 1974. This is surprising as the first plastic glider built in Argentina was already in production. Aerofibra built 14 TA-4 Lenticular fom 1971 following a prototype called AB-1 Super Albatross in 1969. Unfortunately, the glider was not a success. A few more attempts to built performance plastic gliders were made by a few individuals and no series production followed. For training, Blaniks and IS-28s were purchased and distributed amongst the clubs. This still left a gap in the training

program where there was a need for a medium performance single seater. Hoping to meet a large demand, Planar Industria Aero, obtained the licence from Schleicher to start producing Ka 18-AR (AR for Argentina). At least five were built and registered and three others were also registered and maybe built at a later stage.

As a result of poor sales the company had to cease trading. The Beretta RRB-1 flew in 1976. It was a single seater also aiming at the club market, but, like the Ka 18-AR, it came too late. An L/D of 36 was advertized, however, looking at the picture of the glider in flight, this seems unlikely.

At present, there is no Vintage organization in Argentina. However, by default, there are interesting vintage gliders still flying in several clubs until a replacement is found. There are known Condor IV, Foka, Grunau Babies and probably many others gliders flying or abandoned in the corner of a hangar awaiting either a new lease of life or hoping not to be the next one stored in the hangar roof. At Bariloche, there is an early Schweizer 2-22, the one without door or rear canopy, complete and in reasonable condition awaiting to become a Rotax powered motor glider! On the restoration side, Diego Roldan made a tremendous job restoring the Flying wing Horten H1 b built in 1954 and conceived initially in 1933. It flew without incidents until 1973 when it was stored at the back of the hangar. The



restoration and test flight can be found in Bungee Cord summer 2008. So, the final message to our Argentinian friends, led by Alejandro Ferrareso, is the following: Please start quickly a Vintage Glider club that will be able to look after the lovely gliders in your possession and more important, do not let other pilots destroy those gliders abandoned in the hangars as it has been, too often, done in



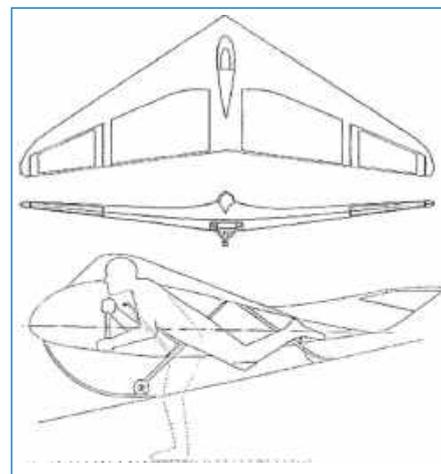
other countries.

The best references on Argentine gliders can be found in History of Argentine aircraft manufacturers where production details and registrations are provided.

In South America, Brazil has the largest aeronautical industry including glider designs and production, which started in the mid thirties. It will be reviewed in a future issue of *VGC news*. Sandwiched between Argentina and Brazil, Uruguay only saw one homebuilt glider and relied entirely on a few imported gliders for the few clubs in operation past and present (two in 2011). The Museum Rats, that is the team of volunteers working week-end at the super Aircraft museum in Montevideo have renovated a SG 38 which is now on display at the International Airport. Across the Andes, in Chile, some individuals designed and built five gliders between 1923 and 1936. During



**Above left: Beretta RRB-1, an advertised L/D of 36 seemed unlikely.**  
**Top: H 1b-Horten in 1954.**  
**Above: I Ae 34 & I Ae 34m.**  
**Above right: H 1b restored by Diego.**



1946, Casa Nacional del Nino built 10 ESG 9 and Santiago Gliding club built 3 primaries and 3 Grunau Babies during the fifties. For training, Blaniks L-13, L-23 and L-33 Solo have been used by the clubs. In 2011, an unusual sight of five Pilatus B-4 could be seen at the launch point in Santiago. □



**Above: a Cordoba design was the H Xa Piernifero Los Unidos foot launched ultralight flying wing of 1953.**  
**Below: I Ae 37 research delta glider for jet fighter concept produced in Cordoba.**



**Left: an early Schweizer 2-22 at Bariloche.**  
**Above: ASK18-AR at La Plata.**  
**Below: Foka imported for the 1963 WGC at Bariloche gliding club.**  
**Bottom right: will this be the birth of an Argentinian VGC?**



# When there were no limits to flying freedom



*By Daniel Stefan, translated and edited by Francis Humblet.  
First published in AeroRevue, March 2011.*

Throughout the history of gliding in Switzerland, there has been a lot of interesting stories, many of which have been published in AeroRevue. Some others are still waiting to be told and this is the one of Eugene Jenni, from Bienne, written by Daniel Steffen and translated by Francis Humblet.

At the beginning of this story: one photo dated 1931, shown on the web site of the 'groupe de vol à voile de Bienne'. It shows an antique biplane glider ridge soaring. In the absence of a name, Francis Humblet called it a UFO (Unidentified Flying Object) and this was sufficient to call his friend Willi Schwarzenbach who was then put in charge of the research into this glider history.

**Bitten by the flying bug.** Spring 2010,

Willi and Hans Hebeisen went to visit Eugene Jenni (85 years old), a gliding pioneer in Bienne. Yes! Said Eugene after the salutations, the glider was built in this house, in the cellar, by my father Eugen, Otto Hulliger and Willy Salzmann. It was a glider conceived for ridge soaring. Eugen was my father. The three friends had a strong desire to fly and this was their second glider. The plans were obtained from Germany. Eugen, still at school at the time could not remember the correct glider type. So, still being a UFO, the picture was emailed to Peter

**Above: Eugen Jenni dares a flight. It was very difficult to control weight shifts.  
Right: the Hängegleiters structure in front of the house, the aircraft was in the basement.** Archive Eugene Jenni





**Top: was Eugen Jenni's thoughts in the air, standing with his wing**  
**Above: construction in the basement of the house of Eugen Jenni on the rue CHANTE-Merle 52, Biel. Archive Eugene Jenni**

Selinger in Germany who quickly led the team onto a successful trail. During the nineteen twenties, the Editor Hermann Beyer Verlag of Leipzig had published a complete set of building instructions under the title "Wie baue ich mir selbst?". This work contained details of how to build dynamos, electric

motors, fire extinguishers, electric watches, steam engines, folding boats, aircraft models and many other things. In issue number 243 from A Keutzer, this time, the subject was a simple glider. This was a known type that had flown and won a prize during a previous Rhön meeting at Wasserkuppe. The under title was: A contribution to the promotion of air sports as well as manual dexterity within the family!

All the plans and instructions received were generally in complete harmony with the Bienne glider but photos of the



basic structure showed some modifications made by the three friends. As an example, the ribs were made in a professional manner instead of a curved piece of wood and this made it possible to



have a fabric cover intrados. According to the instructions, the fabric could be obtained from any cloth shop. Eugen also recalled that a moving vertical fin was added to the glider but that it did not perform as expected.

**Willy Pelzner: success thanks to assiduity.** The construction plans designed by A. Keutzer was based on the ridge soaring glider on which Willy Pelzner had won the 1920 Röhn competition. A victory obtained not by his remarkable flying machine but mainly due to his own zeal. In fact, after each

landing, he went straight back to the launch point for another flight. As a result of this high launch rate, he obtained the maximum flight time achieved during the competition. Pelzner tried the same tactic during the 1921 Röhn contest, showing the same assiduity but this was not enough against the other competitors now flying the newly introduced three axis gliders. Robert Gsell employed Pelzner as a gliding instructor for the first ab initio gliding course in Switzerland that took place at Gstaad between 15th February and 15th of March 1922. The final test was won by the Vaudois, Francis Chardon, flying a Pelzner type glider rapidly built during the course!

**Children became test pilots.** It took two months to build the glider, said Eugen Jenni. Some of the parts came from the first glider built. He then stood up from his armchair and went to collect a photo album from a cupboard. Yes, he said, the neighbors were very surprised when the airframe was assembled in the garden and he showed his guests a picture taken at the time. The camera had been lent for the occasion by Willy Moser who was the employer of the three friends. Of course, the Federal Air



*Top: The hang glider ready for the test flight. A dangerous adventure can begin.  
Above: the photo of unknown Flugobjektes.  
Below: a seemingly successful landing. It took great skill and practice.  
Bottom: for the interested audience, flying was an adventure in 1930 and still is today.  
Right: the Bieler flying families. Archive Eugene Jenni*



Bureau did not hear about the new flying machine in Bienne! Initial flying tests started during the Pentecost week-end 1930. The site was the only flat grass field in Jorat, one kilometer west of Orvin. Eugen called it a dangerous site. At the time, he was five years old and his sister Mimi was four. Their father used to place them in turn in the glider. Men were holding the wing tips and used to run down the field's gentle slope. Two boys were also pulling the glider forward with a rope. And then, miracle, the two wings provided the lift necessary for the glider to rise in the air. Eugen had a fright at first when he saw that the wing assistants no longer held the wing tips and noticed that the glider





*Left: the father, Eugen Jenni infected his children Mimi and Eugene early with the flight virus.*

*Below: the small Eugene Jenni with a self-made wireless. Sometimes it worked...*

*Lower: Eugene Jenni, at 80, ready for launch. He has seen many beautiful gliders. Archive Eugene Jenni*



was between one and two meters above the ground flying for a few seconds above their heads. Eugen feared that he could no longer get down! On the other hand, his sister Mimi was very happy with the situation, the higher, the better! This would have been an unbelievable story had it not been for the pictures shown by Eugen to convince his guests.

**Difficult handling.** The three would be pilots followed the children and took turn to have a go and pursued the test flying. The weight shifting procedure was difficult to achieve. Most of the tests ended up with some damages to the glider and occasionally to the pilots. Repairs were made during the week in order to have the machine ready for the following week-end. The longest flight achieved by Eugen's father was estimated at 200 meters. Good landings were eventually achieved after the test period. The end of the Jenni glider active life was probably during 1931 when Eugene Jenni and Willy Salzmann founded the Groupe de Vol à Voile de Bienne. A

Zögling was obtained and the pilots also found out that the three axis machine was not easy to fly either, needing a lot of endurance and enthusiasm to succeed but in the end Eugene Jenni obtained his pilot licence. Both, his son Eugene and his grand-son would also become pilots. On one of the album photo, the three generations can be seen sitting in a Ka-4 Rhönlerche II just before setting off on a distance flight. During the flight, little Manfred is said to have suggested to his father: daddy, please don't climb any more, we are high enough! Later, both Manfred and his father would achieve long distance flights and following the family tradition would also become para-glider pilots.

**1:10 Scale model.** Willy Schwarzenbach, having very much enjoyed the Jenni glider story, utilized the plans provided to produce a 1:10 scale model of the machine. He knew, due to illness, that this would be his last project. On the 16th of August 2010, Willy handed over the model to Eugene, an emotional moment



for both of them! Today, the model is hanging from the ceiling of the same house where the original Jenny glider was built in the cellar, 80 years ago. □



*Left: Willi Schwarzenbach (left) and Eugene Jenni study the plan of Hängegleiters.*

*Daniel Steffen*

*Above: the model built by Willi Schwarzenbach in 1:10 scale is hanging from the ceiling of the same house where the original Jenny glider was built in the cellar, 80 years ago. Willi Schwarzenbach*

