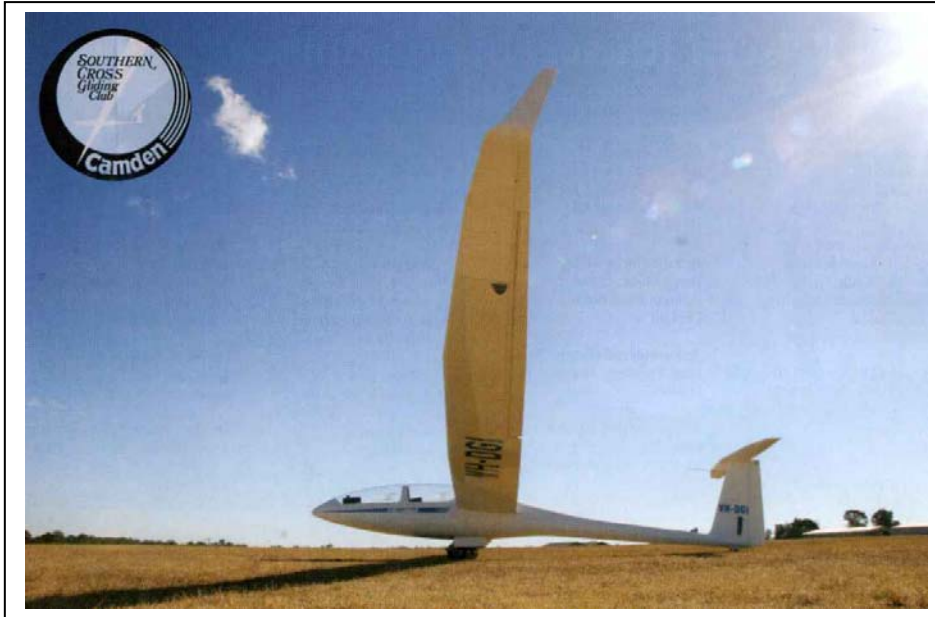


The Southern Cross Journal *March - April 2007*



NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHERN CROSS GLIDING CLUB

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The President's Thermal

To paraphrase somebody famous: "Don't think what your Club can do for you, think what you can do for your Club!" Your Club needs you.

- If you want your Club to continue to have new gliders every few years.
- If you want to have great trips away to country areas with fantastic flying and like minded friends.
- If you want your flying to improve, and be the best pilot you can.
- If you want to spend more time flying and less time "waiting" on the ground?

Talk to me.

If you are new to gliding you will learn in the future that SCGC is one of the BEST clubs for facilities and closeness to a city in Australia. If you are a long timer you may have forgotten that 90% of the Clubs in Australia would like to be as blessed as SCGC.

We are facing a crisis. The crisis is in the form of help with running the Club day to day. Some of our members are not getting any younger. Some are young but feel prematurely "old" at present.

Let's look at some facts:-

Our average membership is 160, and the Club's Income is around \$270,000 per year

The heading photograph of our DG 1000 was taken by a Swedish visitor and published in the Swedish gliding magazine Segelflyg.

We do some of our own aircraft maintenance, where sensible, but outsource the rest. Outsourcing means somebody in the Club has to coordinate and be the contact. With maintenance schedules happening on all aircraft and dealing with damage from accidents this is a lot of work. This is the Tugs and the Gliders.

Our Ground equipment also needs constant maintenance. Tractors, tugs, pie-cart, trailers, hangars, and clubhouse, all these need work, care and love.

Our computers, websites, loggers, radios, printers and cameras, all of our technology equipment needs maintaining and members need to be trained.

Our finances have been traditionally our strength in the new plans for glider replacement and club equipment improvement. We need people to do the book transactions in MYOB, we need payments made to suppliers, we need payments from members for flying and camps all handled well. This takes a dedicated team as well.

We also have the Membership renewals, 10 flight packages and the bookings for AEFs for the weekend.

Lastly we have a large threat that if we don't fly 7 days a week, weather permitting, we could and most likely will lose the use of our grass runways at some stage.

When we fly seven days per week, we become a bigger business. Yes, we are a club but at the size of income we are dealing with we are past normal Club mentality.

We have to start looking in the future:

1) We have to have members willing to learn the tricks and traps off the older club members in running the club. Refer to my first sentence.

2) We need to start looking at paying people to manage the club for the 7 days per week. Clubs like Lake Keepit have professional managers, (I have heard all the past stories on this and if you have NEW insight on it I would love to hear it, but times are different, people are different than in the Club's previous professional days). Today we pay a few people to look after things on a part time basis. This is still okay. It is the management, the coordination, the running of a \$350,000 small business that requires focus.

Lastly, I need to solve the "No Treasurer Problem", now that Bryam Hayhow is vacating the position, and I need to do it now. I will not risk the Club's progress to this date. If you have a background in finance, have a think about this and call me with a solution.

I have a solution but I would prefer to hear others first. Please call me 0417 705 997 and preferably email me with your idea first so I can read it. daveboulter@boulterassociates.com.au

Till next time fly safely please.

Congratulations To:

John Jurotte on becoming a Level 2 Instructor after being assessed by Werner.

Also to John Penfold on making his first solo flight, and to Leo Port for his first solo flight with Southern Cross, though I understand that he has done quite a lot of solo flying in earlier years. John has since made a two and a half hour flight in the Yellow Peril.

If anyone has recently made a first solo which hasn't been reported in the Journal please let me know so that it can be included in the next issue. And by the way, the first solo certificates are kept in one of the drawers in the pie-cart.

Paul Milstead

Paul recently had a fall while working on his house and sustained quite serious injuries which will put him out of action for some time. I'm sure that everyone will join me in wishing him the speediest possible recovery. Paul would no doubt be pleased to hear from some of his old mates while he is out of action.

Bryan Hayhow

By Dave Boulter

I would like to formally pass on our thanks to Bryan for all of his hard work he has done, and the support he has given the Club over the last few years.

Bryan has retired from the post of Treasurer and it is open to anybody who would like to volunteer. Financial experience is, of course, an advantage.

Bryan has carried the role under a lot of personal pressure since the last AGM, as he had recently started his own business.

I wish him and family all the best, and personally thank him for being a good friend and great support in helping the Committee to guide our Club to the heights we have attained.

Most of the other clubs in Australia would love to have our fleet of aircraft, our proximity to a major city and our great source of revenue that this provides. It is people like Bryan, and others in the Club, who never lose sight of these advantages and strive to make SCGC the best it can be.

From our Aircraft Maintenance Officer.

DG 1000 undercarriage.

There was a minor problem with ensuring that the undercarriage was locked when in the UP position. This has been dealt with and the problem solved.

DG 1000 Airbrakes.

There was an instance at camp when one of the airbrakes partially opened in flight. Not a major problem but one which needed attention. There doesn't seem to be any problem at present, but as a safeguard our AMO suggest that when the aircraft is DI'd the brakes should be opened and the brake lever held firmly with the brakes in the mid-open position. The up and down play in the brakes should then be checked. This play should be minimal, and should be the same both sides.

If the person carrying out the check has any doubts, he should consult the duty instructor.

Aircraft Captains.

We are still short of a couple of aircraft captains. The duties are not onerous, you don't need to have heaps of hours in your log book, and the only qualification required is a DI ticket.

If you are interested please discuss it with our AMO Bill Kirkham.

Flying hours 2005 /06

In the year to 30/4/06 club aircraft made 3905 flights giving a total of 2449 hours.

Thought you'd like to know. We'll have a review of flight statistics for the past few years in the next issue of the Journal.

Easter camp

Too few members put their names down for Cootamundra to make it possible for the Easter camp to be held there, so Don is drumming up support for the camp to be held at Goulburn. If you are intending to go to the Easter camp please notify Don without delay. For those who haven't seen it Don's e-mail to members is as follows:

Easter is not far away and we nearly have enough takers to make it happen for Goulburn again this year. So if you want to have a great flying 4 day break along with a fantastic group of pilots then consider this, If you have gone solo recently, if you need a bit of more excitement, if you are an average kind of pilot that likes to get away from the rat race, then join us. You don't have to be a cross-country pilot, we accommodate flying for all levels. Goulburn is just another site that you can do what you want, local flying or try a mild sneak away from the area, or for the super serious then get away for a cross-country flight. The only things are, you need to be able to tow a small glider, and obviously Reply ASAP *Regards Don*

Coming events

- April / May (date to be announced). Radio procedure course. This will be on a Saturday morning.
- 9th and 23rd June. DI course to be organised by Jim Kent.
- June (date to be announced). Working bee with Geoff Croy on club equipment.
- Saturday 14th July. Barbecue and Presentation Night.
- August (date to be announced). Ridge soaring camp at Gloucester and Bunyan wave camp.
- October (date to be announced). Family and Friends weekend. Members family and friends will be able to fly at club rates.

Safety matters:

Mea culpa

The Junior was about to be launched, the pilot indicated that he was ready for the tow rope, but as he pulled the release handle it came off in his hand!! It had become unscrewed. He screwed it back on and the launch went ahead. No further problem, though one can imagine that it might have caused some concern had it happened on reaching release height.

On my way home it occurred to me that although it had been screwed on firmly, so that it wasn't likely to come off in a hurry, this was a matter which should have been reported as a Minor Defect. It could then be checked by subsequent pilots until the defect was cleared. It should also be reported to the Aircraft Captain &/or the Aircraft Maintenance Officer, So after arriving home I reported to Bill and he made arrangements to have the handle secured.

The pilot and I were remiss in this instance, and I hope that others will ensure that if they encounter a defect which could possibly recur they will report it in the appropriate way.

Accident at Lake Keepit

You will probably have read about the recent tragic accident at Lake Keepit. The information which we have so far is that during the early part of a launch the tug pilot realised that he might not clear trees on the boundary, so he pulled the release. The glider while attempting to land was unable to stop before going through the boundary fence.

This prompted one of our members to wonder why the pilot didn't make a ground loop. No doubt the same question entered other people's minds, but without having the full facts it is not possible to say whether this was an option available to him.

However, before discussing that, let's look again at the general question of launch failures. These are fortunately rare, but when we come to Options in our CHAOTIC check do we just recite a mantra of possibilities, or do we really weigh up the situation on the day and mentally prepare ourselves accordingly?

It was suggested some years ago that we should start our Options by thinking something along the lines of "Today the rope will break. ", and then review the options at every stage of the launch, having regard to the wind on the day - the idea being to focus the mind. Werner made a similar comment to me in discussion on this subject. He pointed out that a delay of a second or two in taking the appropriate action could in some circumstances be crucial.

However, back to the subject of ground looping. Firstly a word of explanation to newer members. In the normal course of events, once we are firmly on the ground the stick is held back to help ensure that we run straight as we slow down. However if, for instance, we landed in a small paddock, and despite full air brake and wheel brake there was a risk of overshooting and going through the boundary fence, we would clearly need a plan to minimise risk, not so much to the glider as to ourselves. This is a very unlikely circumstance but we should nevertheless be prepared for it.

The generally accepted wisdom is that a ground loop would normally be the safest option.

As stated in e-mails from Kevin Wilson and Derek Ruddock, the technique is as follows:

When at least 40 metres from the fence and obviously unable to stop in time:

- In the case of tail-wheel gliders, stick forward to raise the tail. Put a wing onto the ground, and full rudder. The aim, if possible being to turn into wind.

- In the case of gliders with a nose wheel or nose skid, as above but stick fully back to hold the nose skid off the ground.

A ground loop will be quite likely to cause damage to the glider, so it isn't a manoeuvre that you'd want to attempt unless it was really necessary.

It has been suggested by some members I have spoken to that they would aim at a fence post, the idea being to knock it over, flattening the wire in the process. I discussed this with one of our senior instructors. He said that some gliders don't ground loop easily, so if the glider didn't respond immediately to an attempt to ground loop, steering towards a fence post would reduce the risk of running under a wire. One would hope that there was time to do this, and that the post wasn't too solid.

Repairs to the pie cart.

The aluminium stays supporting the shutter to the end window have been in a bad way for some time. However, Geoff Croy has now manufactured and fitted new stays which are much more robust than the old ones. Once again Geoff, thanks for the work you have put in this and so many other jobs to keep our equipment in good shape.

Radio endorsement

Seven people attended the course on Saturday 3rd March. Somewhat surprising that there weren't more, and again I wonder whether all our other members have log book endorsements? Those attending and receiving an endorsement were Jeremy Dibben, Mark Barnfield, John Hickey, Bernie Baer, Steve Bourke, Lean van Lien and Abel-John Buchner.

Radio Procedure

I recently discussed our radio procedure with one of the Air Traffic Controllers at Camden and he made a couple of comments which should be noted. Firstly, when we call downwind, Make sure that we preface our call with "Glider..." (I think we all do that already). Secondly, to avoid causing any possible confusion to visiting power pilots, please use the term "Glider 06" or whatever. We should not say "Glider runway 06."

While on the subject of radios, Bill Kirkham informs me that there is an XCom radio in the pie cart – the same as fitted to the DG303. He suggests that members should use it to familiarise themselves with the radio before using the one in the DG. There is a card in the pie cart showing the various radio control functions. Use it but please don't take it away.

Quiz.

Here are a few questions for you to argue about.

1. There was a programme on TV recently about the BA 747 which lost power on all four engines over Indonesia. Fortunately as they were making a glide descent they were eventually able to re-start them. If the engines hadn't re-started would the aircraft's glide ratio be improved by dumping their fuel to reduce weight, (assuming the pilot flew at the speed for best glide)?
2. The Vne for your aircraft is given as 120 knots. Is this in any way affected by altitude?
3. You are going to outland at the Oaks. What frequency would you use and what calls should you make?
4. When carrying out a DI how do you know whether the free play in the aileron is excessive?
5. The Borgelt averager shows your average climb or descent, but over what period?
6. Why is the weak link at the tug end of the rope?

7. The weak link has a metal protector with a slot at one end. Which way should the slot be facing, fore or aft?

8. The slack has been taken up and you are all set to go. The tug begins to roll but you haven't heard him make a radio call. What, if anything should you do?

Answers to the Quiz.

1. Jumbo jets are presumably subject to the same physical laws as our gliders. Perhaps surprisingly the *glide ratio* is independent of weight, though the speed at which this will be achieved differs according to the weight. For instance, the Jantar at 320kg, has a speed for best glide ratio of 51 knots. At 535 kg it achieves *the same glide ratio*, but at 66 knots. The best glide speed for the DG 1000 (20m) increases from 50 knots solo at minimum weight to 65 knots at max. weight, again with the same best glide ratio.

If you aren't clear regarding the implications of this in our flying and how the wind comes into the picture, have a chat to an instructor, or one of regular cross-country pilots.

2. The speed as indicated on the ASI is less than the true air speed as you gain altitude. The difference is about 1.5% per thousand feet. The true airspeed for Vne doesn't change, so the indicated airspeed for Vne will be lower at altitude. Note: the glider will still stall at the same indicated air speed.

3. The Oaks operates on the CTAF frequency of 126.7, (though it is not listed as a CTAF). It is vital therefore that your call is prefaced with 'The Oaks traffic' and that 'The Oaks' is repeated at the end of your message. An inbound call should be made before reaching the airfield, and also the usual call on Downwind. Base leg is normally very short at the Oaks, so a call on base may not be practical, but a call should be made on turning Final.

Note if we are planning in advance to drop in at The Oaks, as against landing there through necessity, we should telephone to let them know our intentions. We can call the Ultra-light School on 4657 2771, or Sydney Ultra-lights on 4657 2604, (these numbers should be on the notice board in the pie cart.

4. As a general guide, with the stick centralised and held firmly the free play should not exceed 2.5% of the aileron chord. So if, for instance, the average chord was 120mm, the free play from the upward position of the aileron to downward position should not be more than 3mm.

5. With the vario in Climb mode, the averager shows the climb or descent rate over the last 23 seconds, which is the time taken to do a 360° turn with 30° bank at 40 knots.

6. This is to protect the tug from damage if the rope snags a tree or fence etc on landing.

7. The metal protective sleeve has the slot facing aft. If the weak link breaks the sleeve stays with the tug. Only the broken links will still be attached to the tow rope.

8. This is something discussed in the radio procedures course. Camden is a GAAP airfield when the tower is operating. It becomes a CTAF-R when the tower is closed. A radio is mandatory in both cases. Therefore you shouldn't allow yourself to be launched if there is some doubt about the whether the radio is functioning. So, the safest procedure would be to release immediately. The tuggie will soon realise that you aren't with him.

An outlanding at Camden

Woody

One of our newer members made an outlanding near Camden recently. The circumstances were as follows. After a practice cable-break check, which was carried out successfully from 600 feet, he went off in a K13 on his fourth solo. The sky was overcast and before launching, the tug pilot advised that 3000 ft might not be achievable. The launch went normally until tug waved the glider off when nearing cloud base at about 2500 feet.

After performing normal FUST checks, the pilot tried to locate the field and was unable to do so in the gloomy conditions. In due course, running out of height, he selected a paddock not far from the coal dump and outlanded successfully. The outlanding report was passed by radio and in due course a retrieve crew arrived using the available access road. In the meantime flying continued at Camden.

On the flight immediately after this one I found that due to the overcast conditions the ground appeared relatively grey and featureless, making it harder than usual to identify the airfield from a distance.

In his subsequent chat with CFI, the pilot concerned suggested that perhaps before anyone is allowed to make their first solo they should be asked to identify local landmarks from photographs and be clear about their positions relative to the airfield. Landmarks are, I'm sure, pointed out by instructors many times during training, well before the solo stage has been reached. But perhaps emphasis on their relationship to the airfield could be stressed more. For instance Camden township is long and narrow, and if viewed with the river on its right hand side, the airfield is at the end of the town. In fact if you can identify the river, the airfield sits in a very obvious loop beyond Camden. I imagine that everyone knows Mount Hunter. Well, if the village is viewed with the road on its left hand side, the airfield is about three kilometres away, and somewhat to the left of the road. Similar relationships can be established with other key landmarks.

We should aim to keep in mind our position during the climb, though in some circumstances this can be difficult for a newish pilot. However if, during the climb, whatever the visibility, the pilot becomes uncertain about his location, or if for instance, he thinks that the tug is going too far downwind, he should radio the tuggie and request that they return towards the airfield.

So, if doubt persists, don't release until you are satisfied where you are! But if on release there is uncertainty about our position we should attempt to keep the tug in sight as it returns to the field. In poor visibility it is, of course, quite easy to lose sight of the tug after we have turned right and he has turned left into a rapidly descending curve, particularly if we spend even a few seconds on the FUST check and looking around for the airfield.

The pilot concerned in this incident should be congratulated on keeping his cool in the circumstances, and making a safe landing. I think we can all learn some useful lessons from it.

Satisfied Customers

Our AEF's are almost invariably thoroughly enjoyed by the passengers, but sometimes the flights have a special significance. One of our recent AEF's was an 80th birthday present for Stan Wilkin from Kellyville. Not only did Stan and his wife come to Camden, but also his children, some grandchildren and even a great grand child, so it was quite a family outing.

Stan had last flown in a glider when he was in the Air Training Corps in his native Wales, over sixty years earlier. That was in an open primary glider (I almost said open cockpit, but of course there wasn't any cockpit – just a wooden seat, and a rudder bar for your feet!). He certainly noticed the difference in the K13. Pity he didn't have a flight in the DG, he'd have been really impressed.



The family gather to see Stan off on his birthday flight

GlideFast at Lake Keepit, Jan/Feb 2007

The GlideFast course was a success all round and Southern Cross has earned a great boost in its reputation, firstly by making the aircraft available and secondly by the smooth operation of the course. Lake Keepit Gliding Club commented on it a number of times and knowing the aviation world, the news will spread like wildfire. Thank you SCGC.

The participants were Dominique Estival, Bryan Hayhow, Mike Moore from our club, and Wayne Hadkins from the Lochart / Wagga Wagga club. Dominique and Wayne were able to spend the whole week on the course, but Bryan and Mike were only able to stay for a couple of days. They certainly filled these days to advantage.

The course consisted of morning briefing sessions, followed by flights, finally post flight briefing and evaluation. Apart from improving their cross-country speeds and increasing their knowledge of how to be successful and efficient, the students clocked up impressive distances.

Dominique did a total of 1,211 km, with three of her flights in excess of 200 km. A tremendous effort, given that she only had a Silver C to start with and not much confidence when it came to leaving the home airfield. Towards the end of the course she was hard to restrain and did 91 km on the last day, despite the fact that it was riddled with huge storms and widely spaced unreliable thermals. However, she assessed the weather well and planned her flight in such a way that she was never further than 15min from home base.

Mike was on track on a day with bases only 4500ft above deck and no clouds helping to point out where to go to. His speed of 70kph was remarkable on this day, but was achieved by putting into practice what he heard at classes on the same morning.

Bryan, on his only flying day managed 317km, despite having to deviate from the planned track due to a massive storm. His speed of 90 knots was excellent, but he was still too much in his hang-gliding skin, but now he knows how to shed it, (i.e, he had a tendency to take thermals when it was better to press on and find something better). But watch out boys, soon every SCGC glider will follow him around.



Great weather for training

Wayne with his tremendous model airplane background was probably the one who advanced most, but a full week, and with this background, certainly helped. In the end he flew his Libelle at 90kph average in demanding condition. His total kilometre score stands at 1,270. On the second last day he hopped off tow at 760ft with his Libelle - some how I seem to recall a person on a particular camp

never going higher than 1000ft.

The club didn't lose anything by letting the DG go to the course. It earned close to 1000 dollars throughout the week. It was returned on Sunday first thing in the afternoon, and within half an hour was rigged and put on the flight-line earning money by making TIF flights.

I have only one word for the exercise - EXCEPTIONAL!!! When will you participate? An article by Dominique and Wayne will be published in Australian gliding – probably in May.

Perhaps I should mention that we now have another coach in the club! Marcel Stiehle is a glider pilot with about 1000 hours flying time and a history of cross country soaring over a very wide range of terrain, covering the European Alps, wave, ridge soaring and terrain similar to the wheat belt around Narromine. He was member of the German junior squad and flew the junior pre-worlds.

If you haven't met him, he has a German accent with a hint of French in it and dark curly hair is another trade mark, unlike me he is usually clean shaven.

Invite him to take a launch with you and get a few hints on improving your cross-country skills. I am very happy to present you a coach of such ability.

Martin

P.S. The course members thanked Martin profusely for the time and effort which he put into it, including towing the DG the considerable distance to Lake Keepit. They found it both very instructive and thoroughly enjoyable.



L-R: Martin Feeg, Dominique Estival, Bryan Hayhow, Wayne & Gabrielle Hadkins

Ted Furby

Mid-week flyers who have been with us for a few years may remember former member Ted Furby. I met him again recently when he gave a talk to the Springwood Probus Club about the work of the voluntary organization Technical Aid for the Disabled. TAD makes, repairs or modifies a great variety of items to help those in need. His speciality at present is to make fitments for bicycles to enable handicapped children to ride them. This, apart from general repair work, may include a back or chest supports, outrigger wheels or other one-off modifications. However during the 28 years that he has been a member of TAD he has been involved in many different projects.

Voluntary work such as this is very commendable, and I thought that those who knew Ted would be interested to hear of his involvement.

Brian Stanton.

News of another old member. While at camp at Cootamundra, Phil Endicott met up with former member Brian Stanton who lives at Coota. Brian was a member in the very early days of the club while he was in the RAAF. Back then, in 1949/50 the club had just one machine – a Primary glider constructed by club members. However, Brian's membership was unfortunately of fairly short in duration as the Air Force posted him away from Sydney.

He was naturally interested when he heard that Southern Cross would be at Cootamundra for its camp, and was very impressed with our modern machines.

Now retired his hobby is model building. He has just finished a model of an Avro Anson, a twin-engined aircraft used by the RAF and RAAF for training. Cootamundra was an RAAF airfield during WW2 and the Anson is destined for the local heritage centre, which also has a model of the corvette HMAS Cootamundra. This too was made by Brian.

He is able to keep in touch with aviation as Temora, with its air museum and regular air shows is close by.

A letter of thanks from the President

For those who haven't previously seen it :-

Southern Cross Gliding Club Inc

An organisation devoted to the advancement of soaring in Australia

Dave Boulter, President, 120 Heritage Way, Glen Alpine, NSW 2560 (0417) 705 997

January 30, 2007

The President,
Sydney Gliding Club Inc
PO Box 633
Camden NSW 2570
Dear Ernie,

Ref: Letter of Thanks

On behalf of SCGC, I would like to thank Sydney Gliding for help and assistance lately. I do believe we have moved to a new plateau of cooperation between our two clubs. This can only help Gliding at Camden, Gliding in general and of course our two Clubs.

I would like to highlight three recent events.

1. On Sat 13th Jan we didn't have a Level 2. Bill Winton offered to be our Level 2 for the day. Bill kindly hung around from about 1pm to 5pm just for us to get through all the AEFs
2. The Cross hire of WVK has been a great help to the Club with our recent incident in WVJ.
3. At Cootamundra I had the pleasure of being Level 2 for Michael. We had a lot of fun that week and would be more than happy to have your members attend Camps with us in the future.

Please pass on our thanks to Bill, Michael and to the rest of your members.

Regards

Dave Boulter

Segelflyg-sport Dec 2006

A Swedish visitor came to our club last year as part of a holiday during which he visited several Australian gliding clubs. In the December 2006 edition of the Swedish magazine Segelflyg-sport he wrote an account of his time down under, including the following (translated account) about Southern Cross.

"The same lovely atmosphere here (*as in other Australian clubs which he visited*). The same active 'veterans' - after all it was just an ordinary weekday off-season - Randall Krebs, the tug pilot, was one of the younger ones, only 61 years old!

Camden is an old airfield with several flying businesses and workshops in the hangars. Lovely to have morning coffee in the company of Moths, Pitts, Cessnas, Pipers and Yaks. Or in the club's own building. The club has 2 bedrooms with bunk-beds, comfortable clubroom with a well-filled fridge. The flying field is big and the gliders were not particularly bothered by the powered planes or helicopters.

There are lots of interesting things in the club's hangar. Chosen for the day was a DG-1000 in 20m mode. Woody Woodthorpe, 79, a pensioner (?) and retired water engineer, paid for a couple of hours, and then I paid for another couple. The weather here (winter) seems like summer in Sweden. Plenty of cumulus, and it was very easy to climb to maximum height within the 'inner circle'. The towing was interesting. It involved flying under the slipstream in Aussie fashion. If you ask why, the answer is that the propellor must not foul the towing line. How on earth can you do this when the plane is free." (*I think he must have misunderstood whoever explained the reason for low-tow! Ed*)

Well, it's good to know that Torsten enjoyed his brief stay with us. Perhaps the article will encourage other Swedish glider pilots to visit Camden.

GRACE HOINVILLE – an obituary

By John Postlethwaite

I saw in the Herald this morning the obituary for Grace Iggulden. Described as a "High-flyer With Many Lives", Grace was a larger than life figure in the early days of gliding, though she was mostly known here by the name of her second husband Fred Hoinville. The Hoinvilles were the folk that brought skywriting to the Sydney skies in the 1950s with Fred's Tiger Moth "Brolga" fitted up with a device to inject oil into the hot exhaust manifold which gave brilliant white smoke. Fred flew the contortions in the Tiger at pageants and fairs around the state, while Grace - knowing every move - gave the commentary over the PA.

After Fred's death while trying to take off in an underpowered motor glider from a soggy Goulburn aerodrome, Grace being a journalist by trade, helped get Fred's unfinished book "Halfway to Heaven" published in 1960. This book tells a lot about the early gliding days in Sydney and is now in its second printing after all these years.

Grace was born into the Iggulden family in Victoria - a gliding dynasty of father and sons who had tremendous influence on the Victorian gliding scene. So Grace had done quite a lot of gliding before coming to Sydney. She was the first of the modern female glider pilots and after Fred's death returned to family and the Victorian gliding scene before moving to North Queensland with a Victorian gliding buddy and became of all things, immersed in country life.

Eventually they drifted apart after many, many years and Grace became interested in women's refuges, helping intellectually disabled people. She was arrested for protesting against bush clearances and became known as the "green granny". She wrote many books under her own name or various married names, covering many subjects but particularly covering the disgraceful treatment of Aborigines by the early white settlers.

Grace bore six children throughout various phases of her life, of which three have died. Her last ten years with Dick Martin were happy and serene. She died at 87.

Farewell to a feisty woman who left her mark on so many different parts of life.

Finally – Welcome back Ray.

I'm sure that everyone will join me in saying that it's good to see you back at Camden after your recent knee operation, and we are glad that it all went well.

Until next time – have some great flying!