

KGC NEWSLETTER

Newsletter Issue 3

Aug 2011



Apologies for the late arrival of the summer edition, this year seems to be zipping by and I'm struggling to keep pace as usual, but not to worry, if the Chairman fires me I hear there're vacancies for editors at News International. They need have no fear of me hacking mobiles; it takes all my efforts to send a text!

The last few weeks have seen me doing my SLMG NPPL at Ringmer with instructor Alan Tapsall in ESGC's venerable old Venture motor glider G-BUFR – it's slow, very stable and forgiving - ideal for a not so venerable old glider pilot like me to learn on. Am I the only one who finds operating the throttle counter intuitive? you push it in to open it and pull it out to close it. My instinct is to do it the other way round, which I have to admit has caused a couple of interesting moments, but Alan has nerves of steel and is very even tempered, unlike some of the gliding instructors I have "tested" over the years. As an ab initio I once recall opening the air brakes at the top of a winch launch instead of releasing the cable – you've never heard such language ! I now have to concentrate on getting through the Aviation Law exam before I can fly solo – I'll keep you posted on my progress as I'm sure you'll all be keen to hear if and when I will be let loose on my own in a powered aircraft –at least the Venture has a fixed undercarriage !

Enough about me – for the time being anyway. Autumn is almost upon us which means that the club expedition to Sutton Bank is just few days away (13th to 20th August), quickly followed by task week (27th August – 4th September). There's still time to get your names down for both.

Terry Webster – Editor in Chief

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Chairman's Briefing

August 2011

David Shearer

When I last wrote this column in April, you may remember that I was optimistic about the imminent soaring season. Whilst it has not turned out to be an exceptional year so far, there are already an encouraging number of flights on the "Club Ladder"

(Which you can find on the wall in the hallway between the office and the kitchen)

One thing that can however be relied upon each year is the harvest, and by the time you read this the farmers will have prepared some nice fields for land outs, thereby taking some of the pressure off pilots flying away from the local area.

This leads me nicely on to Task Week which starts on Saturday 27th August and finishes Sunday 4th September.

Task Week is an opportunity for pilots of all abilities to fly cross country whilst taking part in a friendly competition either using their own or club gliders and I can heartily recommend it.

Club two seaters (with an instructor) and the two Juniors can be booked by filling in the form which will appear on the notice board during August.

If you aren't yet cleared to fly cross country but aspire to do so, I suggest you coax your favourite instructor into committing to as many days as possible and then book a two seater.

In addition to the flying there is a good social atmosphere throughout the week with quite a few members staying at the club each night.

Finally it is nice to be able to report that despite the snow affecting activity levels at the beginning of the year, both financial and membership figures for the first six months of 2011 are looking quite positive.

David Shearer

Chairman



Technical Officer's Report

David Beams

Awaiting a more current photo - ED

Well it's time for another newsletter and Terry has asked me if I have anything to contribute, so here goes.

Many things around the club go in cycles; some of these are caused by an influx of new people and others by a gradual relaxation of standards. This was brought to mind recently when a trimmer fault was reported on one of the juniors, this caused me to examine the D.I. book.

The D.I. book serves several purposes, however its usefulness is reduced if it is not used correctly. The first (i.e. leftmost) column has the heading Day / Date, please enter both as one serves as a cross check against the other, people frequently get the date wrong but usually know what day it is.

Secondly please write your comments in block capitals and try to be explicit in any comments you make.

Thirdly please print your name in the right hand column as well as initialling it, often it is helpful to be able to discuss a comment but this is often impossible as the signature along side the comment is indecipherable.

While on the subject of D.Is most of you will know that the Polish gliders on our fleet require intermediate inspections at 50 & 100 hour intervals. In order to keep track of how many hours the gliders have flown, we some time ago installed hours run meters (also sometimes known as Hobbs meters) in the Puchaz and the two Juniors. Until now it was necessary to compare the reading on the meter to that listed for the glider on the serviceability board, in order to simplify things, in future once an intermediate inspection has been completed, the hours meter will be reset to zero.

During the course of its business the committee consider and make decisions on many things. Recently it was decided to develop a series of written policies, the intention of these is to record in a document the various decisions relating to a particular topic that have been taken in committee over time. The first of these to be developed was originally issued in October 2010 and relates to use of the workshop. This document has now been revised and re-issued at Revision 2 dated 27th May 2011, and a copy is lodged in the office.

As club members we are not very good at looking after our joint property, both the tug and the gliders are frequently put away in a dirty condition. In the past a club member provided a number of buckets and sponges in an attempt to encourage us to take more care of the aircraft, however within quite a short time most of these went missing.

Dave Shearer has supplied some leathers and sponges which have been placed in a cupboard just inside the main hangar doors adjacent to the tap. The leathers are the artificial type that come in a plastic case and can be stored damp, please ensure that after use these are folded, returned to their case and put back in the cupboard.

David Beams



C.F.I. Rescues fellow

Aviator or as he put it
rescues fellow aviary ateor.
Which ever way you put it he got
the bird !

A story to truly touch your heart.

The aviator or pigeon was rescued in a truly heroic fashion by our CFI when it made a forced landing on the club's front door mat a couple of weeks ago. It had been released in Saintes, South Western France and was en route back to its coop in Windsor when it was subjected to a 25kt south westerly which forced it to change its flight plan. There has been some suggestion that it was carrying contraband, but this has not been confirmed (Has Project Pegasus been informed ?)

The pigeon having rested and stuffed itself with Trill for two days was collected by its grateful owner and conveyed back to Windsor.

A Bit More Club History

The following article is an extract from the September 26th 1930 edition of *Sailplane and Glider*, the fore runner of our present day *Sailplane and Gliding*. It was given to Bob Lloyd along with a database containing all the back copies of the publication by a friend at a recent vintage rally. This particular extract is from the Club News section and describes a meeting or "battle" that took place between KGC and Channel Gliding Club on 21st September 1930 at Lenham one of KGC's earlier sites. The Mr Lowe Wylde referred to (also mentioned in Nobby Clark's article in the April) was one of the founder members of KGC and was later killed test flying one of the aircraft he manufactured. Fortunately, gliding is a little less eventful these days. I hope you'll find this as fascinating reading as I did. Unfortunately, it doesn't say who wrote the article, it's just signed T.J.

Terry Webster

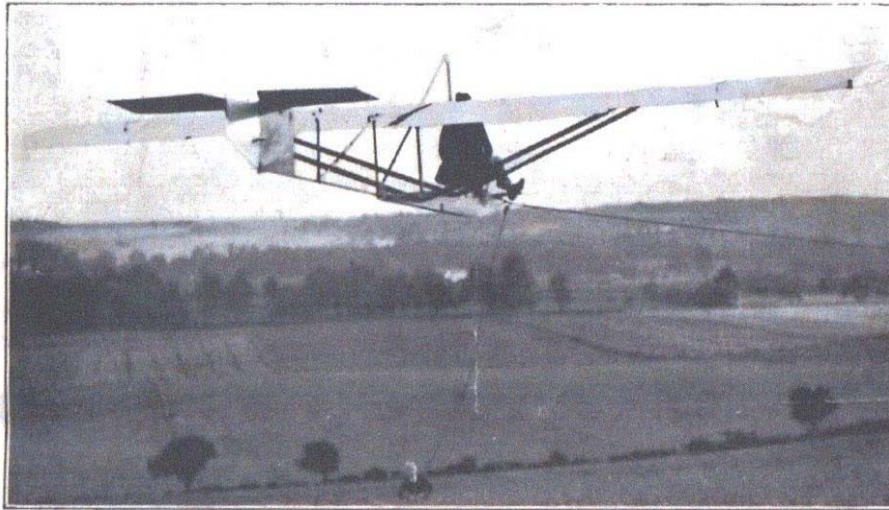
Sept. 26, 1930.

Vol. 1. No. 4.

THE SAILPLANE AND GLIDER

Price
3d.

BRITISH SIMPLICITY.



The new Lowe Wylde training machine which is strut-braced for ease of erection. The cabane is to save the pilot's head if the machine turns over in a crash.

The meeting at Lenham

On the 21st September the Kent and Channel Gliding Clubs agreed to have a battle. The London Club were there in snappy “flieger” coatings of bright blue and rather diminished strength, but they had to remain neutral. As 75% of the competing machines were smashed this was probably as well or the damage might have gone up to the 100% mark.

The Kent Gliding Club has certainly shown the gliding world how, and there seems some doubt as to whether other clubs will be able to keep the pace. The occasion was more than a vulgar struggle for a drink out of the same cup; it was an Air Rally with visiting aircraft and A.A. aeroplane scouts well to the fore.

The Kent Club are lucky in that they have a perfectly good aerodrome or landing ground next to their gliding site. The car-parking arrangements were good and so was the lunch. It was a real lunch in a proper marquee and that in spite of the weather. Good organisation was responsible for the fencing arrangements which were adequate and with the aid of a Lyons’ loud speaker did prevent the crowd from obstructing the launches.

The writer considers that the hurdles were placed too close to the slope and better launches would have resulted had the machines been further back. The hurdles would have been better had the wind come from the proper direction and they were properly placed expecting this.

The Kent Club had bad luck because the wind blew their new hanger down and smashed a pair of new wings. I should take this as a warning and go elsewhere. The site has its advantages, but it is not good enough for a soaring site and is probably dangerous for an inexperienced A or B pilot. There were two crashes on Sunday, and these happened to experienced pilots; one was a German-trained B pilot and the other was Mr Lowe Wylde himself.

If these two people could come to grief the chances of ab initios doing likewise seem good.

Another feature of the meeting was the appearance of the British Aircraft Company’s latest type. This is a primary training machine of novel design and ridiculously low price. The workmanship is extremely good and the machine has many advantages claimed for it. Practice alone will determine whether these advantages really exist. The North Staffordshire has bought one and also an intermediate fuselage which fits the same wings. I had hoped to see this latter type on Sunday, but was disappointed.

After a smoke bomb had been fired and at least one of the local air currents discovered, proceedings started. There were four machines, two to each Kentish club. The Channel people had brought along their RFT ATI and an extremely interesting machine which had been built by Corporal Manuel.

The Kent Club had their original veteran, which alone survived the day, and the latest Lowe Wylde trainer, which has a box spare fuselage and cantilever tail unit. The wings are rigidly braced with parallel struts.

A further point is that the ailerons are raised by springs, but are pulled down by single wires from the joy-stick.

Each machine made its test flight. Mr Read, who we are glad to see quite well again after his argument with the chalk pit, took off the Manuel machine. This has a very low flying speed and did not get launched properly. It was in an eddy and although its pilot kept its head into where the wind was supposed to be coming from, it continued to drift sideways until it touched the hill when the seat came unstuck and the skid was split. This was the first victim.

The competition was for a large cup which has been put up for the challenge by the Kentish Express. This cup was to go to the club that put up the greatest aggregate duration.

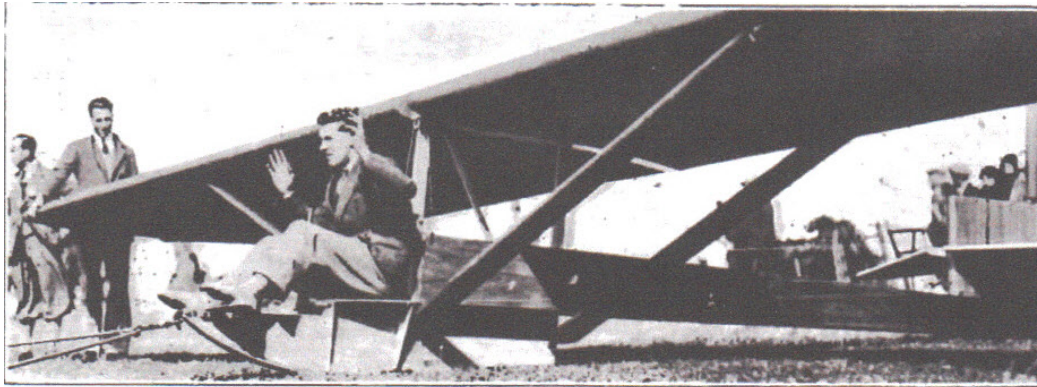
I am all against a duration competition for Zoglings. People will try to hold them up until the machines are stalled. This contention was supported by the events of the day. The gliding was much better when people were flying for a mark than while they were competing. Let us in future concentrate on spot landing competitions for Zoglings. This calls for much more skill on the part of the competitors and does improve the standard of flying.

The best flight of the duration contest was put up by Mr Derham of the Channel Flying Club. Mr Derham is a B pilot who was trained at Rossitten in East Prussia. He flew down the hill at the proper angle and when he found he would have to clear the hedge, turned neatly down-wind and then into wind. This manoeuvre got him across the sunken road and past a large tree. But eventually both of these caused his undoing.

During the competition Mr Lowe Wylde took off on his new training machine which because of its cleanness has a flat gliding angle and high speed. It soon became obvious that he was getting too close to the hedge. He did not, as the German trained pilot did turn down-wind over ground that fell away and would have left more height, but turned towards the hill. The height he lost and the upward rising ground proved his undoing. The wing tip struck the ground.

It was an excellent piece of propaganda for the British Aircraft Company's products. The whole machine rose up on that one wing-tip and turned over with a horrid crunch. The moment when the machine turned over and the victim could be seen kicking upside down was not nice. But the rush of rescuers proved more than adequate. The machine was not too badly damaged and the enormously strong wing structure stood up well and suffered only local damage. The fuselage and tail unit appeared intact.

The cup was won by the Channel Club with four flights of 28 & 9/10 seconds, 7 & 9/10 seconds, 20 & 1/5 seconds, 17 & 2/10 seconds, which total 74 & 1/10 seconds. The Kent Gliding Club's times were 15 & 2/10 seconds, 15 seconds, 10 & 1/10 seconds, 17 & 2/10 seconds, which total 57 & 5/10 seconds.



Mr. Lowe Wylde on his latest training machine which has a spar fuselage and cantilever tail unit. The wings fit his secondary type.

After lunch two visitors came over from Eastchurch on a Grebe and Gamecock respectively. These two pilots put up the most terrific show, which was probably all the better for being informal. This allowed it to approach pretty close to the ground at times. The part of the performance I liked best was the roll out that followed a long slide down on the back after the machine had looped. This was not as people will tell me a half roll out off the top of the loop, but something much better. The gliding clubs must have been very grateful for this interlude. Their visitors certainly were.

Mr Jackman then took up his Puss-Moth and showed off its sleek lines and easy speed to great advantage too.

When the cup had been won and before or after or during the bomb dropping by the visiting aircraft the spot landing competition started. The first flight was made by Mr Buxton and drew much applause. It was a really cunning effort and deserved to win. During the same competition Mr Derham flew down too fast and after landing skidded across the wet grass until he slide across the sunken road. He tore his hand badly on the barbed wire and damaged a wing-tip against the large tree that he had so skilfully avoided before. This was the third casualty.

We were all cheered to see Mr Lowe Wylde again and he was not only sufficiently recovered to fly in this contest, but also to fly the Sopwith Dove, which he has recently repurchased. This early light aeroplane appeared to compete well with Moths, Widgeons, Puss-Moths and Klemms that where floating about.

The organising committee and everyone who worked so hard to make the show a success, including Mr Gordon England at the microphone of the Lyons' loud speaker van, deserve to be commended. There were grounds for criticism, and these have been dealt with. That the show was not quite up to Light Aeroplane meeting standard was to be expected, but all the visitors seem to enjoy themselves and may be expected to look forward to the return meeting when the Kent Club will try to take the cup from the Channel Club.



Expedition to Jaca

By Colin Beer

At the end of May Stefan Bort and I took our LS8 to Jaca in the Spanish Pyrenees for 8 days.

The drive to Jaca with a trailer takes about 14 hours from Calais mainly down French motorways with light traffic, must have something to do with the tolls, the only towns you need to go through are Rouen and Bordeaux then after about another 100miles you use single carriageway roads as you head up the beautiful valley into the Pyrenees and through the new Somport tunnel and down to the ski resort town of Jaca.

The airfield is at Santa Celia a village in the wide valley of the river Aragon about 8 miles west of Jaca. It was built about 15 years ago as part of a failed Spanish bid for the winter Olympics, I think they needed more snow and higher mountains, but they are left with one 850 metre asphalt runway, one 650 metre asphalt runway and some herba, that's grass to us in between. All the runways are east-west so if there is a strong Northerly, good for wave, you will need to be up to scratch with cross wind landings. It seems that the Aragon tourist authority provides money and so the airfield is equipped to a standard we can only dream of, 2 hangers with electric doors, 2 Robin tugs with professional pilots who come out when you want them and a comprehensive operational and met briefing at 10am each morning in Spanish, English and French which pilots must attend. The clubhouse is a separate building which serves food and drink all day and opens out to the swimming pool. In short it is commercial operation not a club, the cost of my flying for the week which includes temporary membership and 4 tows, one to 4000ft was 210 euros.

The flying. Alan Garside who goes there twice most years and talks of days with cloud base at 17000 feet and the days when there is a light Northerly wind going up one side of the mountains and the sun beating down on the Southern side giving thermals rising up that side causing a convergence along the peaks so you can fly along the top in strong lift doing great distances without turning. Of course none of this happened the week we were there.

The first day was blue and though a few pilots launched at about lunchtime they were only hanging on at about 1500 feet part of the way up the hill they towed too, by about three it improved a bit so I took a tow and spent a few hours in very broken lift at best I got to 4500 but it was good to get my bearings and remember what Alan had showed me three years ago about using the spines between the little valleys to find the thermals.

The forecast for next day was for better lift with clouds but thunder storms coming up from the south at about 4. It was Stefan's day but he felt unwell and came back after about 2 hours, so off I went. This was more like the conditions we had come for, off tow I climbed quickly to 6000 ft and then headed down a line of lift into the mountains where the cloud base was higher still and I reached the top of the Pyrenees with about 1500 feet between me and the snow covered peaks So I set off to the East, soon cloud base dropped and a shower made me head back to the valley. Here it remained good for some time and I went about 40km down the valley in each direction before the predicted thunder storms which are often around in the mountains arrived from the south, so best to land and derig.



Aerodromo de Santa Cilia

The next day it rained so we did tourist things and watched another afternoon storm. The following day had a Northerly wind which gave a possibility of wave later but some decent thermal soaring for most of the day. Stefan went first but as ever came back after a couple of hours, great guy to share a glider with! I foolishly pulled off low down and nearly had to land back but got away from low down which drifted me across the valley to 4000 foot hill called the Cuckerloo which has vultures nesting on it and a bit of controlled airspace so we don't go and bother them. I found some weak broken wave and climbed to about 6000.

For about an hour I saw a piece of cumulus type cloud about 30 km away down the valley to the west which didn't drift with the wind so worked my way down towards it at about 6 pm, when I got there I found a very rough climb to about 8500 in company with one of the vultures, why do these beautiful birds climb this high. I climbed on the upwind side of the cloud in the hope that it would take me into a wave system but despite hanging around for half an hour I found nothing. There were group of French pilots with a lot of experience in the Pyrenees there with us and two of them also thought this might be a route into the wave but they had no luck either.

The next day we had a 25 kt northerly and a forecast of wave, but difficult take offs and landings on an east west runway. A lot of gliders lined up with no visible sign of wave, then someone took a tow to 7000ft and came straight back and the wind got stronger. A few others tried without success so we went to the supermarket to get some supper, when we came back at about four Alan Garside was at about 19000 ft so Stefan launched and managed a climb up through the rota and up to about 18000 in the wave. Next morning it was my turn with similar weather, that's strong N wind and little sign of wave, I towed to 3500 and then spent a couple of hours in broken rota that's 10up one side and 4 down the other at least in the good bits until I finally found some wave and climbed to about 10000 over the lake at Yasser then saw a proper cross wind bar running along the mountains which took me to about 15500 before I lost it or it broke up but not before I had enjoyed some wonderful views, and wished I had taken the camera.

The next day was Stefan's turn with some of the best looking Cu we had seen all week but a forecast of thunder at about four. He enjoyed a good flight while we laid in the sun by the pool, it was the best day we had for that, he returned about three and while I was deciding what to do as we could see rain to the west a clap of thunder told me it was trailer and derig. Our last day was a bad forecast so we drove into the mountains for tapas lunch and a walk, before the long drive home.



The Spanish Pyrenees



Camphill Vintage Rally, 18-25 June 2011

By Mike Davis

The Derbyshire and Lancs Gliding Club (DLGC) has been running an annual vintage rally for the past 16 years at its gloriously windy hill site near Buxton in the Peak District National Park and just south of the Ladybower reservoir (where the Dambusters practised their bombing runs). This was a first time for me, other members of the Kent Vintage Glider Group (KVG) have been participating for up to ten years: the 'pack' this year included Alex and Tim Bartsch, Bob Lloyd, Malcolm Kerley, Chris Weston and Dave (and Joan) White. We were joined by Jack Stockford, a former KGC scholar now working for Airbus near Chester and flying in North Wales. Our fleet consisted of the KVG's Oly463, Oly2b and Skylark 3b and Chris Weston's Ka18; Jack brought along his Zugvogel. Some 40 pilots attended from around the UK (from Cudroose to Aberdeen) with 20 vintage gliders from the 1950s and 1960s. The Chairman of DLGC participated in his beautiful red Slingsby Sky (he also co-owns a DG 500).

The whole week was extremely well organised, including the important bits, ground and flying operations. DLGC are only allowed to winch because of National Park restrictions, but employ a professional winch driver and use two winches with a total of four cables, the consequence being little delay in launches. With a strong westerly across the 4 km long main ridge, the concave run is only 400 metres and very rapid. There are some nasty curl over areas behind the ridge. All pilots were required to do a site check and assigned one of four colours for the week. Most of the KVG were given a Green (the highest), I received a Yellow, the next down. It's a good system which is aligned with the weather/ wind conditions and allows Duty Instructors to ensure that pilots are not flying outside their capabilities.

We flew on every day apart from the Thursday (see below) with a total of 47 launches and 46:25 hours. The daily briefing began at 9am sharp and consisted of met forecasts (we always went for the most optimistic one), safety and general notices and prizes awarded for the previous day's achievements, usually a bottle of wine with the 'wooden spoon' equivalent of a hooter. Several 100k triangles were flown during the week and our longest flight was 3hrs 21 minutes (Chris Weston, ridge and thermal soaring). I had one of the shortest in the Oly463 when I was joined just after launch on the ridge at 600 ft by a paraglider and 3 hanggliders (who should have been further to the North), decided that 5 was a crowd and landed.

Thursday was a total washout so we all took part in a competition on the DLGC simulator: a 35 km triangle flying a 'K8' with randomly generated thermals. Tim Bartsch won with a very creditable 23 minutes, another of our group took the scenic route and arrived after 48, yet another decided to go to lunch and left the glider hanging in the air.



Dave White – Simulating !

Post-flying activities usually began in Peter Redshaw's Gin Palace, a large orange tent complete with generator powered ice machine. Peter is a 4500+ hr glider pilot with an immaculate Slingsby Capstan (see photo) and more modern DG 600b, and extremely generous host: no-one has been known to consume more than two of his G&T specials and leave the tent unaided. Our evening meal was followed by competitions (including a pub quiz which we, the Invicta team, naturally won) or talks from DLGC participants in the rally: Rob Faulkner on 'Landing in very small fields pitching up and down', about his time in the Fleet Air Arm and Peter Harris, a retired Air Vice Marshal, on flying Harriers. Apart from winning numerous bottles of wine in the various competitions, KVGK also walked away with the trophy for 'The glider you would most like to own', our Oly2b 'BBH'.

The rally was a great experience for me: I flew six different aircraft in the week from a new and complex hill site and enjoyed the camaraderie, both on the field and off it, of members of the National Vintage group and of DLGC. Camphill is holding its 17th vintage rally in late June 2012 and the National Vintage Rally is at Sutton Bank in late May. We will be returning, why don't you come and join us?

Achiever's Club



Congratulations to Colin Fretwell on achieving his Full Cat Instructor status



Congratulations to John Lutkin on completing his Silver C



Congratulations to Robbie Christie for re soloing after a 30 year break from gliding.



Congratulations to Martin Dove also for re soloing after a break from gliding



And finally congratulations to two stars of the future: Simon Beer & Jake Brattle on achieving their silver heights.

www.skydemonlight.com

If you find checking NOTAMs a bit of a bind you should try Skydemonlight. It's a free web-based programme that's very easy to use and shows current NOTAMs on a map very similar to an aeronautical chart.

Oxygen Bottles

Anybody heading of to Aboyne for the wave season and needing their oxygen bottles certifying or filled - Les Connolly recommends Nigel. He lives locally (more or less) in Teynham and his mobile is 07976 281778

360 degree Space Shuttle images

If you've every wanted to wander around the flight deck of the space shuttle, then here's your chance, just click on the following link – after all it is a glider !

http://360vr.com/2011/06/22-discovery-flight-deck-opf_6236/index.html

And finally the photo competition.

And the winner is.....John Hoye



Following on from Peter Carpenter's encounter with a feathered visitor, this photo of a family of swallows nesting in the Wendy House was taken by John Hoye. As many of you know, John is in now based at Lake Keepit in Australia (www.keepitsoaring.com) and usually pops over here during the summer to get some decent soaring in. Little did he know that on this years visit he would win the prestigious KGC Newsletter photo competition. Unfortunately, he'll have to wait until next year to collect the prize of a bacon sandwich.

John did promise me on this visit that he would write a piece for the newsletter on Lake Keepit – so, John if you're reading this it's about time to start writing.