

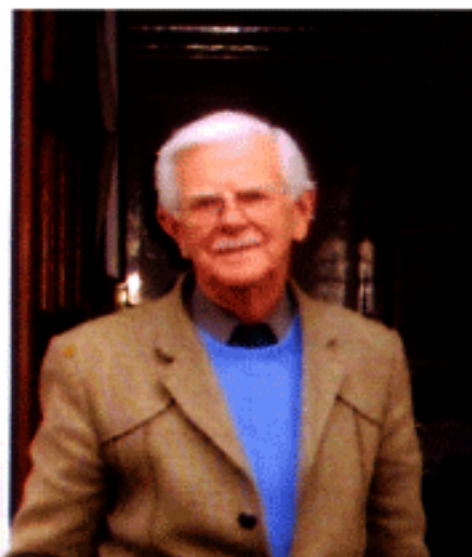


# KENT GLIDING CLUB NEWSLETTER

KGC NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2005

## OBITUARY - Peter Beechey



By Deniss Clark

It is with deep regret that I have been informed of the death of Mr Peter Beechey at the good old age of 88. I understand that he had been ill for some time, and was in hospital for only 2 days.

Peter was one of the first people to respond to an advert in the Kent Messenger asking for interested people to form the Kent Gliding Club. He was one of our first Directors when the Club started in 1956. He was very helpful in setting up the Club at Challock. During the severe winter of 1962-63 he lived in a caravan with his wife Mary at the sheep pen entrance to the club, supervising the construction of the hangar, and airfield levelling. He was also Ground Engineer, and the first Course Instructor during the early days at Challock.

## Task Week 2005

Shirley Barker  
Task Week Director

A big thank-you to everyone who contributed to Task Week; those competing, helping on the field, tugging, glider spotting, etc.; the enthusiasm, commitment and goodwill shown by all ensured that Task Week was successful. How can we draw in the budding cross country pilots that KGC has coming through the training programme and encourage them to 'have a go' next year. Talk to someone who took part this year to find out what it is all about.

Ron Cousins once again did a splendid job of setting tasks that were demanding but achievable, though only just on one day! Most pilots managed to score some points, if not actually to win.

Of the nine days allocated to Task Week we had five days in which tasks were set and flown.

2,126 kilometers were flown over the 9 days.

Malcolm Kerley looked after flying and safety issues and Bob Lloyd presented the weather for us with a fair degree of accuracy and a lot of looking out of the window. This year we missed the company of Mike Sesseman who has developed the black and white photos of turning points for many years. In fact Mike has been unwell and we wish him a speedy recovery and hope that he will be joining us again next year. / . . . contd

### CONTENTS

Obituary  
Early So Low

Task Week  
Club News

Editorial  
KCC Alternative Curriculum Programme

Rough Diamond

Bronze Course

A Model Dad

TASK WEEK contd/ . . .

With the majority of pilots having loggers and the remainder taking digital camera photos, the checking of claims was very much quicker and easier.

A fair amount of club flying took place on the days when tasks were scrubbed which gave the non-competing club members who had been helping a chance to get their feet off the ground.

The winner of League One was Peter Carpenter in the Discus 735 winning three of the five days. Great determination, competitiveness and skill from Peter.

The winner of League Two was the K21 KDP, flown by Malcolm Kerley, Bob Lloyd, Darren Palmer and Matt Adlington, but it wasn't a pushover. Both Jack Stockford and Lee Francis each won a day in League Two with very creditable performances.

Wierjel did us proud in the catering department, leaving breakfast and rolls during the day and providing us with a splendid evening meal every day. A very special thank-you to Wierjel for all her hard work.

Various ideas are being floated as to where Task Week 2006 will take place and what form it will take. Your committee will make that decision.

Bob, Ron and I are standing down as a team; we all feel it is time to hand over to a younger crew who might take a different approach but of course we would all happily provide support if required to our successors.

---

## EDITORIAL

Merry Christmas and Happy Gliding in 2006.

The usual apologies for lengthy intervals between issues, and thanks to all who contributed. Darren Palmer and I continue to share the information collection, but the publication delays are all mine.

**Task Week** appears to be entering a critical time - in case you haven't heard, there is a group in favour of moving it to another venue where soaring is more dependable, who are opposed by another group who see the social side as being at least as important as the soaring, and who feel this will be impossible at a guest venue. As attendance has been falling, and no successor has come forward to take over from Shirley (to whom many thanks), it seems to be a case of use or lose it. Perhaps all will be debated at suitable length at the AGM ?

### Articles to

Darren Palmer - member@npalmer2000.fsnet.co.uk

Tim Carlyle - tim.carlyle@talk21.com

## A ROUGH DIAMOND

By Malcolm Kerley

The week of the 24<sup>th</sup>- 30<sup>th</sup> September saw Brian Tansley and me with the ASW 19 on our annual late summer pilgrimage to Aboyne. Included in the expedition were Bob Lloyd with the Std Libelle and Chris Ireland and John Northen with their ASW 15. Shirley Barker, Barbara Lloyd and Lesley Ireland also joined us. This year we decided to take the much less stressful route of travelling up the A1 and with hindsight this is what we should have done last year. I suppose one learns from experience! Nevertheless, it's still a fair trek north.

In the highlands of Scotland it is said that if you are unhappy with the weather, just wait 15 minutes as it is constantly changing. This proved to be the case with us for much of the week. One minute, a cold gusty 25kt wind and horizontal drizzle and the next, bright and sunny still with a strong wind but warm enough to wear just a T shirt (on the ground). We had four flyable days, three of them produced good wave conditions. On Sunday the wind was unusually almost flat calm and we had a float about the local area, there being no detectable wave. On Monday, Brian had an interesting thermal flight but was unable to find the wave. Bob managed to find a gap and climbed to around 10000 ft. During their flight, low cloud started to form on the local mountains, the cloud gaps started to close up and it started to drizzle.

Anyone who has been to Aboyne before will know that in these conditions all the airborne gliders tend to return together and make a very busy circuit. Also, with only two long narrow tarmac runways available it is essential that each pilot rolls right to the end of the runway and be removed by the very busy ground handlers before you had a chance to get out of the cockpit. Anyone not reaching the end of the runway was expected to provide the CFI with a pint of beer for every foot short of the yellow line. The very real prospect of having anything up to half a ton of glassfibre up your rear also concentrated the mind!! Needless to say the Kent group ensured that the CFI went thirsty for the week.

The club is developing a third grass runway but I only saw one pilot use it and it still looked a little rough. I did not fly because the rain set in for the remainder of the day and we derigged.

Tuesday was wet all day. Wednesday dawned bright and sunny and there was obvious wave activity so rigged. Brian went first and rather bravely released at 1500ft in lift but it was short lived and spent the next hour or so gallantly battling with a mixture of broken wave and thermal lift in the rotor. When it was my turn, the wind had increased to a gusty, 15kt. 90 degree crosswind and I was glad the ASW19 has a tailwheel to help keep the initial part of the ground run straight. The ASW15 has a tail skid and couldn't launch because it kept weathercocking off the very narrow runway.

I was advised by the tuggie to hang on until we got to the mouth of Glen Muick. After a very rough tow, I released at 3500ft under the edge of a wave bar in smooth lift. I climbed up through the gap in the clouds and at over 10000ft looked over an undulating sea of milky white cloud. There was just solid cloud and the only gap I could see was the one I'd just climbed through. Keeping a beady eye on the gap, I explored the cloud tops and 'surfed' along the smooth edges for over 2hrs. The gap then very quickly started to close and so I opened the 'brakes and dived through a tiny hole in the nick of time. Nailbiting stuff this wave flying!! Bob in the Libelle went to 11000 ft but we didn't meet up in the air.

Thursday was windy with intermittent rain so we went for a walk near the River Dee close to Ballater and got soaked. Incidentally, the butcher in Ballater produces very tasty venison sausages!

On the Friday the weather forecast looked awful with very strong NW winds forecast (they got that bit right) and rain. We went to the airfield in sunshine and rigged. Brian launched first and climbed to around 6000ft in wave. Two hours later he landed just as it started to drizzle on the airfield and all the gliders started to return at once. With two parallel tarmac runways it looked more like Heathrow in the holiday season. It kept raining around midday so went in the clubhouse and had lunch.

Eventually, the sun came out and a huge wave bar had set up over Morven, a local mountain. We rushed out of the clubhouse and towed 239 to the launch point and I was 2<sup>nd</sup> in the queue. On went two thick jackets, gloves more socks, chunky boots and woolly hat. The wind had veered to a 20kt westerly straight

down the runway and the tow was uneventful until at 500ft all hell broke loose. It was like being in a washing machine. Mask and maps were bouncing around the cockpit in a blur and frequently, I was hitting both stops on the ailerons just to keep the tug in front of the glider! The tuggie took me to Morven and I released at 4500ft. This sort of height is sometimes necessary at Aboyne if you want to escape the turbulent rotor.

I was climbing at 2kts in smooth wave and then at 4800ft it just died. I then made the mistake of crossing above the roll cloud and the vario needle nearly wrapped itself round the bottom stop heading back towards the club hurtling earthwards like a piano over some pretty mountainous countryside. At about 3000ft the sink rate reduced to 6kts. down and it became very rough again and then whoosh straight into a 4kt. gust. I pulled into an almost vertical bank and started to climb quickly. This rather unconventional bank and yank surge technique seemed to work as I was bouncing around in the rotor and at 5000ft it became silky smooth with the vario singing sweetly at 5-6kts., we were now really climbing 6,7,8,9,10000ft. I put on the mask and turned on the oxygen only for the lift to top out at 11500ft. A good looking lenticular cloud was forming up wind so at 90kts surged forward through sink in the hope of climbing again.

Nothing! Sink, sink, sink. I tried all along the upwind edge of the cloud, still nothing. My glider had the flying qualities of a piano again, fickle stuff this wave!! I went haring off downwind to where I'd been and was back down to 7000ft. before climbing again over the same spot I was earlier. Bob had launched by this time and was slowly climbing below me.

Again, I topped out at 11500ft. and saw cloud forming in front of the wave bar which was the signal to move forward. The lift increased to 3-4kts. on went the mask and the altimeter started to wind up again, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16000, the same height I reached last year. I calculated from the GPS that the wind at 16000 was 55kts!! At 18000ft. the lift dropped to 1-2kts. and although my body was comfortable, my toes were freezing. I radioed down to ask if someone could bring up some warm woollen socks- it was met with a groan. During the flight I didn't see any other gliders and later learned that an hour after I launched they grounded the tugs for a while because it was too turbulent. Eventually, the altimeter swung round to an indicated 19900ft and a diamond dropped onto my lap contd/ . . . .

Rough Diamond contd/ . . .

although I didn't know it at the time because I couldn't recall my low- point height. I explored for quite a distance along the edge of this magnificent lenticular and the altimeter would not round up to 20 grand.

Downloading the logger revealed that my absolute height was 20064ft and my low point was 2900ft and so high enough. Any one of you who has been really high in wave will tell you what a surreal experience it is. The views are stunning and the cloudscapes fascinating and it's all so silky smooth in spite of the strong wind. I wanted to stay up there but my toes and more importantly the oxygen gauge was telling me I should be going down.

With full airbrake and 80kts the long descent took ages and it's then you realise just how high you've been. The circuit and approach was VERY rough due to rotor over the airfield but the wonderful handling of the '19 made it relatively easy to keep the landing and roll out tidy. A 3.5hr flight like that makes the long drive up worthwhile and I'll never forget it.

---

## Bronze "C" Theory Courses

Cyril and Caroline Whitbread

We are planning to run the next Bronze "C" Theory Course over the weekend of **26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2006.**

As with previous weekends, we need to restrict the number of people on each course to six. This is because one of the subjects involves working with air maps (which we provide) thus using lots of table space. If there is the demand, we are quite prepared to organise a further weekend during the winter months but not in the summer - for obvious reasons.

Candidates must be solo and expect to complete the entire Bronze within the year. Bronze "C" application forms are available, either from any club instructor, or via the BGA website. These forms detail all the requirements to qualify for a Bronze "C".

If you qualify, or think you will qualify, for the next course, you need to put your name on the list in the clubhouse along with your e-mail address. You

can contact us on [nimbus@eggconnect.net](mailto:nimbus@eggconnect.net). If you do not have access to the internet, telephone on 01795 842623. Access to a PC is essential and if you don't have this, you will need to use one of the two PCs at the club. Again, just give us a call and we will be only too glad to help.

---

## A Model Dad

By Andy Young

Quite a few people at the Kent Gliding Club know my Dad as the person who made the models behind the bar. He has modelled the whole vintage fleet plus the Puchasz, KCT, KDP FQD and FPM for various club members. I wanted to take an opportunity to tell you a bit more about him, and a life of modelling everything.

After my first ab initio course with Bob Lloyd I put it to Dad that it would be nice to make an Olympia as a present for Bob for all his patience in trying to teach me to fly. Once he had agreed the subterfuge began. First we had to photograph every inch of the Olympia without Bob's knowledge. This was largely achieved with long lenses and lots of help from John Turner, who gave us the BGA numbers and the little details of how the wings joined the fuselage.

Finally the model was finished, but my Dad would not let it go. It went on like this for days:

"He might not like it . . ." or

"He might spot the bit of the paint job that ". or

"May I should start again . . ."

When he finally surrendered the model, Jack, Les and I contributed to the building costs, and we had our first over the moon customer.

When I next suggested that I thought one of my instructors (Tudur Williams) had spent more hours in the air in the Puch than on the ground, Dad was already ahead of me, saying "right - you get me some plans and photos, and I will have a go." Having already made one model, and with people being aware of how we did it, we had to take a different approach and spend some time with Kevin in the workshop looking at the Puchasz manuals, and photographing Tudur and the Puch as the background to photos of other gliders, and then blowing the prints up to get the detail. It was almost as much fun as flying.

Dad never really liked the Puch or any of the glass

□ □ □ □ contd/ . . . . □

### A Model Dad contd/ . . .

planes he modelled as it was very difficult to fill the grain of the wood to create the glass effect, and maybe his heart was really in the vintage planes. Apart from these models, he also built radio controlled gliders which he flies. These included, much to my pleasure, a very large scale model of the K8 - FQD - my first solo single seater.

Modelling things has always been in my Dad's blood. and the things he has made for KGC are at the end of a long list of models that started with the model fort I got for Christmas when I was six. It had a moat round it and the water was painted blue with little wisps of white and a darker blue that made it look as though it was flowing. It also had a drawbridge that could be wound up and down. The battlements were just the right size for the plastic soldiers I was using, and the platform behind them was just at the right height for them to put their rifles through.

Next came the go-kart. It was bright red and big enough for two very small children, and was a great way to spend a long summer. Every time we brought it back broken Dad would take it into the garage and by the next day it was ready for us to break again.

There were papier-mâché jungles for Action Man to play in and a papier-mâché moon surface with paper round the back with stars on it for the model of the lunar module to sit on. Years and years before I started fencing I was very happy with the wooden swords my Dad made, and then I discovered Airfix and covered my ceiling with models of planes that my Dad helped me build and apply transfers to.

When our neighbours moved out they asked my Dad if he would like them to leave a vintage car in our garden for us kids to play on, and it stayed there for years giving us more fun than I have space to explain, but like all things it slowly rusted away until it reached the point where it needed breaking up and taking away for scrap.

Then my Dad explained it had a "very special gearbox" - this meant absolutely nothing to me, but my Dad's idea was that we could and dismantle the gearbox, clean the gear cogs and put the whole back together in a clear Perspex frame. One look in the dismantled engine made it very obvious to me that it was an impossible task, but, we did one cog at a time, until we had a complete freestanding gearbox. I sort of expected it to be used for something, but he said to try and think of it as industrial art. It was - and in its own way it was very beautiful. It stood on our sideboard for years, until it was relegated to the loft and then the rubbish bin.

The first kite that we built together was a 'Delta Conig', and much to the surprise and annoyance of the professional kite flyers, won awards for altitude, endurance and sprints. Then we went to build an 'Alistar Box Kite' and a 'Hargraves Kite', which several people asked us to build copies of for them, but we have bigger fish to fry and have started work on our seventy kite train.

At the vintage glider rally my Dad was taking a very cursory interest in the gliders there, which seemed most unlike him, and as we walked back up the field we saw Bob and Malcolm bringing down a glider, and he said "I think that glider is the Kirkby Kite, it's going to be my next model", and he then proceeded to photograph every inch of it.

Things don't get much better than a Dad who builds models. It doesn't really matter whether you're six or forty-five - and I thought I would take some time to share a few thoughts with you.

---

## EARLY SO-LOW

Anon (Name supplied!)

"So wosser power failure then?" I asked the instructor in my impeccable sarf London accent on the long walk back from another of my distant landings - half way to Lydd this time. He explained: "It's when the winch motor is giving up. You're not really going anywhere on the launch and you sort of arrive at the end of the field with no - er, height!" Sounds wonderful. He went on to explain the need to pull-off early in such circumstances, and was also kind enough to describe, in graphic detail, the options available on failing to recognise the situation early enough. My blood still runs cold at the thought!

Anyway, we concluded our cosy chat, and 're-loaded' at the launch point for yet another attempt in my quest for the elusive 'perfect' circuit. In the event, the circuit may not have been entirely *au point*, but it worked out all right after a fashion, although it later transpired that the (unknown to me) planned simulated power failure had not come off as expected.

Never mind, my next flight was to be a solo jobby; the third in my (not so) long and illustrious career as aviateur extraordinaire. With childlike hubris, I climbed aboard KDP, fantasising about our heroic forbears fighting it out in the skies above Kent, and wondering whether people would laugh too much if I turned up next time in sheep-skin boots and a leather flying helmet. Whatever - such day-dreams instantly evaporated with / contd . . . .

---

Early So Low contd/ . . .

the sickening sight of the cable going live, and that too-late-to-get-out-now feeling. This time there was to be no insurance policy sitting in the back seat.

The ground run was fine. We rotated and started to climb, so I pulled back on the stick (I'd been told to do that). And then it climbed some more, but not much more, then we didn't seem to be going anywhere at all. Frankly, I could have leant out of the window and pulled the cable in faster by hand, except that I didn't think the CFI would be too impressed. Oh bu\*\*er - what to do?

I couldn't ask the audience (too far away), or phone a friend (no phone .... who said "or friend"?), so it was all down to a 50-50. Hmmm.

With the earlier pearls of wisdom regarding the "zero option" still ringing in my ears, I opted to pull-off, which only left the slight problem of bringing the whole thing back to Mother Earth without putting too many scratches on it. Regain flying speed: I know enough to understand that it's the first imperative, which is fine, except that it was eating into my precious height, something that already looked within range of a less than average pole-vaulter.

Execute the pre-planned turn : the mantra had been dinned into me from Day 1, so I turned left toward the trees on an ambitious 270-and-a-bit turn, with eyes GLUED to the ASI - if that goes pear-shaped, we're toast! And I've never had such a close look at the club-house roof either, I'm sure I could see Julie opening the morning post at one point.

After what seemed like half an hour of dropping like a stone it's *still* turning, and it's *almost* pointing towards the chalk quarry, but not quite, and the port wing does seem to hang an awfully long way down, and the precious non-existent height seems to be all but gone, and then there's that wretched ASI still laughing at me. Eventually, and with huge relief, I could at long last have a shot at getting the thing level again, which only left the business of returning to terra firma without shoving the main-wheel up into my already distinctly loosened backside.

And so, after several lifetimes had flashed before my incredulous eyes, we did, finally, round-out and touch down once more upon this green and pleasant land ..... only to balloon straight back up off it again! For some inexplicable reason, the thought actually went through my head that at least I was too far down the field for the CFI to have seen that bit - except that I'd have to buy the winch driver off to keep shtum about it later!

By the Grace of God, KDP and I eventually settled back down again with (dare I say it?) rather a good landing, but now we're now doing about Mach 3

across the grass, and heading straight for the sheep pen with an unavoidable visit into the rough, if not Maidstone, in prospect. Have you ever tried cadence braking on a single wheel?

It's not really going to work is it, and the wheel brake offers about as much 'feel ' as a dressmaker wearing boxing gloves. I settled for locking the wheel on the basis that it might just offer about 1% more braking than a rolling one. But to be honest, I was so relieved by this time that I didn't even care. If I was going to be drummed out of the club in disgrace, never again allowed to venture down the A20, I could at least still walk off on my own two legs.

Valium sandwich - anyone?

---

## CLUB NEWS

From Darren Palmer

Congratulations to various new solo pilots:

Durran Hunt, Josh Hurley, Gen Francis, Alan Murdock, Richard Miller, Steve Godelman, and especially Alex Bartsch (yes, - son of Tim) for going solo badge on the first flyable day after his sixteenth birthday the week before - equalling Mirren Turnbull's achievement.

Also for:

Bronze Badge to Darren Palmer, Silver Badge to Peter Belcher, Silver height to Stuart Maxwell (with special thanks to Colin Fretwell), and Diamond Height to Malcolm Kerley.

If there others we have missed please let us know, and also Brian Laverick-Smith so he can update the club ladder.

---

## KCC Alternative Curriculum Programme

In the summer Andy Beatty and others ran a short course for young people with special educational needs, organised by KCC, greatly appreciated by the kids and the staff :

" .everyone expressed how the instructors worked calmly and with kindness towards them . . ."

" the best bit was the loop da loop that Andy done. It was fun and I had a good time. I rate it 10 out of 10"

' brilliant isn't the word - I can't explain how cool it was"

" Thank you for your time and instructions . . . Gliding was ggreat . . . we all learnt something. Some of us now actually like each other.