

Booker Gliding Club Newsletter



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This month we have pictures of the fly-past for Dudley Steynor's 100th birthday and a reminder of Booker's past from Harold Fletcher. The clocks have gone back and it's time to think about winter activities. There are aerobatic courses starting now and running through to March, there are bronze lectures for next year's new XC pilots and a really encouraging report from Graham Morfey about the club's finances. We also have a great article about going to Aboyne for the first time.

William Parker

From the CFI

Well what an end to the soaring year! Aboyne was one of the best expeditions I've known, with plenty of flying, drinking and fine dining (thanks to all the various chefs). Aboyne never ceases to amaze me each time I go and it really shouldn't be missed. My thanks go to Dave Byass who put a huge amount of effort into making the trip work, but most importantly Deeside Gliding Club who essentially adopted us for three weeks and make us incredibly welcome. For those that were left down South, you were treated to some very good cross country days for the time of year.

The Shobdon expedition dates have now been set (20th-27th March) so if you are interested please let the office know so we can gauge interest and work out what kit needs to go. Expeditions are an important part of BGC as it allows a group of like minded people to go to different places to explore new and different soaring opportunities. It also gets you out of the routine of flying from the same site which happens all too often. If you feel there is the opportunity for the club to visit another site please let me know in the usual way; I am open to suggestions.



The days are getting shorter and getting colder but don't despair! There's still plenty to do at the club; Graham Saw's aerobatics courses where you can learn to understand the flight envelope and fly to it, the dates for the bronze lectures, and if we get a good North Westerly we will endeavour to make use of our ridge and we mustn't forget instructor training.

You may have noticed that the Discus (314) has now returned from its extensive and expensive rebuild. It has been hard waxed and is in superb condition. I shouldn't need to say this but it would be nice for it, like all our gliders, to remain in this state. It doesn't take

5 minutes to put some polish on it and put it in the trailer in a state you'd expect to find it. I doubt you'd put your own glider away filthy so why put a club glider away like it?

We are also still missing valid medicals from a number of members could you please get them to the office ASAP.

Now for all you instructors out there it's renewal time. We are still missing instructor renewal forms from a large number of you so could you get them to the office somehow sooner rather than later. Also below is a list of instructors that require an instructor check, please book it in the diary with the office.

Basic Instructor Checks

Richard Harris	Henry Ross	Phil Cumming
Jim Pengelly	Roger Harris	

3 Year Checks

Symeon Economou	Roland Wales	Julian Saakwa-Mante
Chris Rowland	Doug Hilton	

5 Year Checks

Martin Ffoulkes	Chris Rollings
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All those that require a basic instructor annual check can do so with the following:

- Mike Collett
- Doug Hilton
- Graham Saw
- Julian Saakwa Mante

Those of you requiring 3 year checks please do so with:

- Mike Collett
- Doug Hilton

Due to a change in the system when you've completed your checks you must ensure the instructor has signed your logbook as evidence.

Mike Collett

Cadets open day and end of season meeting.

There will be a review and planning meeting for all cadets 10:30 on Sunday 15th November in the clubhouse briefing room. This will be followed by a buffet lunch at 12:00 in the clubhouse for cadets and their friends and relatives. Weather permitting we will also be carrying out trial lessons for the friends and families of the cadets on the same day.



Bob Smith

Booker salutes Dudley Steynor

Dudley Steynor who instructed at the Gliding Club for 30 years, celebrated his 100th birthday today in grand style at the Grouse and Ale, Lane End. With a Tiger Moth fly-past and aerobatic displays by Graham Saw in the Lunak and Al Kay in the Spitfire.

Full details of Dudley and his flying at Booker, including his service in the RAF, can be found at his website <http://www.steynor.net/index.htm>



Dudley's 100th birthday fly-past

Members achievements in October

- Sarah Fearnley 1st solo
- Rocky Cheung 1st solo

Welcome to...

Will Ellis who joins us as a full junior member.

Treasurer's Report

The financial year of the club runs to 30th September and I am happy to report that this year the accounts show a break even compared with a loss of £39,000 last year. Our cash balance stands at £82,000 an increase of £49,000 over last year.

Some of the improvement can be attributed to luck; for instance our fuel costs were well down. However, most of the gains were from the hard work of many individuals. The instructors worked tirelessly to get those extra launches that make such a difference. The

considerable increase in the utilisation of the club's single seaters undoubtedly was helped by having gliders rigged and at the launch point. Trial Lesson launches were 19% up, thanks to a combination of sales effort and member instructors helping. Costs have been tightly controlled and it is the sum of each of these inputs that enabled the club to turn the corner. Another encouraging statistic is the volume of private launches. In 2005/06 there were 1,413 private launches, but by 2007/08 this had fallen to 912, however 2008/09 recorded 983. There is one vital figure for the club that I am hopeful has passed its nadir. Membership has been declining for many years, but I believe that this forthcoming year will be different. We have had a number of new members, principally joining from courses and the signs are that next April we will see a net gain in membership.



The club is a complex operation and it depends on all its sources of income to exist. Members should be aware that our income comes one third from Trial Lessons and Courses, the same percentage from flying income and the same percentage from Subscriptions and Facility fees. If any of these are neglected, we will have problems. This week the committee have agreed the budget for 2009/2010 which is going to be a more difficult year than the one just finished. VAT rises to 17½% and this will hit us. Our insurance will be more expensive because of the claim this year and we will be incurring extra costs on maintenance; one tug has already had four new cylinders. The committee has endeavoured to keep price increases as low as possible, do not forget that you can save money by renewing your membership before 31st December at the April 2009 rates. One cost over which we have no control is fuel. You will recall that last year we had to introduce a fuel surcharge during the middle of the year. Thankfully fuel prices fell in the winter and we were able to eliminate the surcharge. In January this year the price was £1.00 plus VAT, but by September it had risen to £1.30. The committee have therefore regretfully decided to apply a fuel surcharge of £1.50 per launch with immediate effect. We will keep this under review and if fuel prices fall, then so will the surcharge. Please keep flying during the winter, it is good for you and the club needs the income.

Graham Morfey-Treasurer

Workshop Volunteers

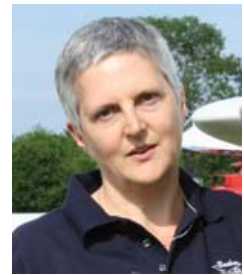
Thanks to all who have offered help in the workshop. The Winter programme is now underway. Feel free to turn up - there should always be something to do, but there will be occasions when there isn't an inspector on site that day. My email address is dave.snike@btinternet.com - feel free to contact me for details of what's happening but do understand that replies will not be immediate as I may well be abroad. I also will only have a sketchy idea of what the other inspectors have planned.

Dave Byass

Marketing update

The Sales & Marketing Team is still working hard on ways of promoting gliding to those who have yet to discover all that unpowered flight has to offer. We have found that the most successful way of raising the profile of gliding is to park a glider somewhere improbable, our trip to the Henley Show in September was the latest of these events and generated a lot of sales and interest. We have another site in mind which is still at the planning stage, more information in due course.

There are only three of us on the S&M team, plus Steve Williams who is 'our' committee member, and there is a limit to what we can do - after all our main reason for belonging to a gliding club is to go flying. So we would welcome ideas for low-cost promotional events, and we would especially welcome offers to run them. If you have the germ of an idea and would like to share it with the S&M team, please get in touch and we will support you in your efforts.



And is it too early to say that glider flights make excellent presents?

Jane Moore

Sharpen your flying on an Aerobatic Course

Once again Graham Saw is running his popular aerobatic courses which lead up to the hotly contested Easter Egg Cup aerobatic contest. Even if you don't want to compete, joining one of Graham's one-day courses will definitely improve your flying. Get your name on the list in the clubhouse, places are limited!



- 7th November
- 5th December
- 2nd January
- 6th February
- 6th March

Bronze lectures 2010

Solo'd in 2009? Time to focus on getting that coveted Bronze badge. Find out all you need to pass the bronze exam at the 2010 bronze lectures.

- 9th January Theory of flight - *Bob Smith*
- 16th January Navigation and Notams - *Steve Williams*
- 23rd January Meteorology - *Alun Jenkins*
- 30th January Air Law, Airmanship, Radio and the Exam - *Jane Moore*

New Boy at Aboyne -2009

'Craig, you ARE coming to Aboyne this year AREN'T you?' asked Jane Moore in a way I could hardly refuse. 'Err, yes, of course I am wouldn't miss it for anything.' I replied. I had been told by several people that Aboyne was an unmissable event. I booked a week's leave with my plod employers and hit the field to get a few more precious minutes flying time under my belt as I still haven't completed my Bronze. Time passed quickly with the odd 'You still coming then?' from Jane. By then of course I had decided I was going and was looking forward to it very much indeed. Right up to the point when someone told me my instructor was going to be ex-Concorde pilot Dave Byass. Aaah, no pressure on me to perform well then! Oh, and the runways at Aboyne are four and a half inches wide, relative to Booker anyway. I started to think of ways of pulling out. 'Sorry Jane, I'm having my hair done that week etc.'

'What the hell!' I thought. 'What's the worst thing that could happen?' Besides, I was returning to the spiritual homeland of the Cairns family, well, about 100 miles N/E of it anyway. Accomodation was sorted by Chris Collett, and a decision by me to arrive a day early resulted in a spare bed at Birkelunn for the first Friday night followed by a cottage with Chris and Geoff Tabner for the rest.

I arrived at Deeside Gliding Club tea-time on Friday. What a fantastic location to fly from! I admit I haven't flown/been to many airfields around the world, but Aboyne is in a splendid location: hills, pine forests and buzzards abound. Bob Smith was tapping away on his laptop in the well-equipped club house (bar and kitchen thrown in) and welcomed me aboard. There were a number of pilots from other visiting clubs present and there was a pleasant buzz about the place.

First night at Birkelunn was great. Most of the Booker team were staying there. It's a single storey log-cabin seemingly in the middle of nowhere with several bedrooms, a massive living room with open fire and a dining room where fish and chips were wolfed down with glee.

I don't propose to go in for a day to day diary of events for the following week, but..... On my first day of flying Dave gave me a briefing on flying the Duo Discus (a first for me). We saddled up and launched behind one of the Deeside Pawnees. The runway, yes, for me, it was very narrow and I realised that my rudder usage previously was below par. I think I only ran off onto the grass either side 3 or 4 times. Dave assured me that I would get the hang of it. About 30 seconds later my mind was temporarily off the ground run as we climbed into a beautiful blue sky and took in the breath-taking scenery of Deeside with Mount Morven just to the N/W and not too far away were the Cairngorms out to the West which were covered in snow. I soon remembered that I was supposed to be learning how to fly in 'wave' and switched back into learning mode. As with thermalling, blue days aren't good for 'wave' flying either. Dave was trying hard to explain what to look for and where. I needn't have worried though because within about a minute of releasing we connected with 'wave.' I couldn't believe how smooth it was. The vario was bleeping away merrily and the needle was spinning round the altimeter very nicely. It was like stepping into a lift and hitting the 'go up' button. Dave was busy pointing out landmarks to me whilst I flew the Discus in what felt like perfect flying conditions. We were soon at 10,000 feet and about 20 miles west of Aboyne. For someone used to flying around within a safe distance of Booker this was monumental. On our return I called our 'downwind' to Aboyne Base and turned 'finals.' 'Dave must have made a mistake' I thought. He wants me to land on that pencil I can see lying in the grass. The South runway was just a thin grey line from where I sat. But hey, I touched down with my usual skill and finesse and almost immediately ran off into the grass and then steered back onto the tarmac. Curse my feet!!! Still, 2hrs and 13 mins was my longest flight in a glider and what a flight!

The rest of the week varied from day to day, but I flew every day. Some days the wave was better than others. On the not so good day we did a thermal flight followed by some thermal practice. We had one 'wave' flight up to 14,000' which was for me truly amazing. By the end of the week after Dave's expert tutelage I had a fair idea what I was looking for as far as 'wave' was concerned and even managed to connect with it unassisted! I also managed to land and stay on the runway.

What did I bring away with me from my week? Well, Deeside is a very nice club in a very nice location. They are very fortunate indeed! During the wave season they even have catering staff running a kitchen supplying great breakfasts and lunches and a bar for apres-flying tales of daring-do and sampling the local fermented vegetable juice. 'Honest oshifer, I only had one!'

Dave is an excellent instructor with what appeared to be an endless amount of knowledge (and patience). My one regret is keeping my mouth shut for most of the time. I feel like I missed a golden opportunity to ask him about his flying experiences. He didn't appear to stop all the time I was there, running around organising pilots, getting weather and condition updates, fixing broken gliders etc. Thanks Dave!

Lastly, the flying. It is fantastic, I can't think of another way to describe it. I know the more experienced pilots and older hands have been there and done it, but for a 'wave virgin' like me, it blew me away. It exceeded my expectations and then some. It has sharpened me up and it's given me a huge kick up the backside to get my Bronze sorted out. I had a great week. Am I thinking about going next year? Definitely!

Should you go? Ditto!

Craig Cairns

Booker alumnus contacts us from Spain

Do you remember Harry Fletcher? He sent us these cheerful recollections from his present home in Spain.

I was a member of Thames Valley (*a forerunner of Booker GC –ed.*) at the time of the change from winching to aero tow, in fact I probably had the last winch with George Scarborough. And then on to the Ka7 for my `solo`. Next I bought a Foka 4 from a syndicate of 5, which I think included Elliot. George coached me onwards (I had the time and money then) and a drop off over the `Orgy` Ball got me my Silver C to Lasham. I got to Sen. Obs Status, Sen.Instr. Status and was the i.c. when, one day, Brenig (my family doctor, and a very good friend) handed me a declaration, it wasn't until Vera Waites and I were 'sorting things out' after the gliders were put to bed, that we realised just what he had done that day in his Diamant (I think that was the glider). The first ever 500k flight, and he just went off home, wot a FELLA? Happy Days!

All the best Harold (rechristened Harry `cos Spaniards can't say Harold!)

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Club Communications

We use Yahoo email groups, which we encourage all members to subscribe to, in order to provide a quick way to communicate with the membership. Details are below.

Booker GC Forum – Open to all members to participate. The Forum provides the opportunity to share ideas about the Club. Send an email to: bookergc-forum-subscribe@yahogroups.com and *include your membership number when applying.*

Booker GC Expeditions – Open to all members to participate. Send an email to: bookergc-Expeditions-subscribe@yahogroups.com and *include your membership number when applying.*

Booker GC X-C – Targeted towards those pilots who fly cross-country or who aspire to develop their cross-country skills. Send an email to: bookergc_xc-ubscribe@yahogroups.com and *include your membership number when applying.*

Booker GC Instructors – This is for Booker instructors only to easily email each other. Mainly used for swapping duty days. Send an email to: BookerGC_Instructors-subscribe@yahogroups.com and *include your membership number when applying.*

The **Booker GC website** at www.bookergliding.co.uk has a Members Page. This contains the latest Club news snippets and links to previous newsletters, meeting minutes and several useful and informative Club documents. The Members page is accessible to everybody (not just members) but certain documents, such as committee minutes need a user i/d and password. To obtain these, go to the members page and click on the 'email Administrator' link. Don't forget to *include your membership number.*

For the latest news about what's happening check out <http://bookergc.blogspot.com/>.

*** All view expressed within the newsletter are those of the contributor and do not necessarily represent the view of the Club or committee ***

Contributions to the newsletter are welcome. If you'd like to submit an article for a future edition please send it to William Parker by email at (william.parker5@btinternet.com).

Published by Booker Gliding Club
WYCOMBE AIR PARK, MARLOW, BUCKS SL7 3DP
Office Tel: 01494 442501/529263
Booker Gliding Club Ltd, t/a Booker Gliding Centre
is a company registered in England with company number 1492733
Registered office address: Wycombe Air Park, Booker, Marlow, Bucks, SL7 3DP
VAT number: 350 4182 83

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