

# **I thought it was funny**

**selected humour  
from 3 decades of  
*free flight***

**Tony Burton**  
editor

**Gil Parcell**  
illustrator

# free flight

## the fun collection

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Here is a collection of much of the funny stuff that has been in *free flight* over the years – the earliest entry was from 1976 – but the material has been organized by author or theme. Enjoy. The book reads better if it is printed double sided rather than viewed a page at a time on your monitor because many facing pages are layed out to be seen together. Clubs, print out a copy or two for your clubhouse.

We have been privileged over many years to have had Gil Parcell among our throng. He was a professional illustrator and cartoonist beginning back in the 60s, and the day he took up gliding as a pas-time was start of a long happy association with editors in Canada and the USA, and his work has filtered into gliding publications around the world. His style is distinctive; what isn't Gil's is by Mike Morgulis (for the Bald Eagle stories), and a few one-offs.



### Spring Fever

Oh, what a glorious day!  
to be tending my garden this May  
little bird's harmonizing,  
bumblebees bumble-izing,  
for what could a mere mortal pray?

A sudden gust ...  
What's this ... a thermal?

What am I doing  
in this stinking weed patch  
when I could be soaring?

Jack Olson

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# Desiderata



GO PLACIDLY AMID THE NOISE of the towplanes & remember what peace there is in the silence at 5000 feet • As far as possible without surrender, be on good terms with the towpilot • Speak your truth quietly & clearly; and listen to others, even the dull & ignorant – they too have their good flights • Avoid loud & aggressive persons, they are vexations when you are preparing to fly • If you compare yourself to others, you may become vain or bitter, for there always will be novices or Diamond pilots about • Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans; keep trying for that next badge leg • Exercise caution in competition, for contest pilots are full of guile • But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many pilots striving for height get help from those already in lift • Be yourself • Especially do not feign affectation • Neither be cynical about lift, for in the face of sink and poor landing areas it is as perennial as the grass • Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth – let the younger club members push the gliders to the flight line • Nurture strength of spirit to shield you when lift fails • But do not distress yourself over poor forecasts, many fears are born of fatigue & loneliness in the cockpit • Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with the controls • You are a child of the universe, no less than the power pilots & jet jockies – you have a right to some airspace • And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should • Therefore be at peace with the CFI, whatever you conceive him to be; and whatever your labours & aspirations this season, in the noise and confusion on the flight line, keep peace with your fellow pilots • With all its sham, drudgery & broken dreams, it is still a beautiful sport • Be careful • Soar to be happy •

*Found in the map pocket of an old 2-22, dated 1954.*



# Zen pilots & tribal elders

the Bald Eagle

**W**ELL, THERE I WAS, attending yet another Ontario Provincial Contest. In the past, I have competed, towed, parked cars, run ropes, done retrieves, and so on. This year the hard work was done by others, so I could just relax and enjoy the sun, marvel at the professionalism of the old timers, and the enthusiasm of the new folk. Most especially, I got to renew old acquaintances. They're a bunch of great people who I only get to see at such fests, and I look forward to meeting them again.

Some of the folk who fly contests are like those guys who show up at stag parties just because they like to play poker. They don't care about the location or who the host is, they crave the action. They come from far away, they make sacrifices and deal with vexatious issues just to be involved, to compete, and to perhaps have a few flights with a purpose, a task, directed by others, instead of taking the regular weekend easy route of just heading off where they think there might be lift.

I like to watch and listen to the contest pilots, hear the tales of yesterday's fun and follies, of today's challenges, and to learn from them. This year, I have been flying vicariously through others. A famous movie critic suggests that movies will always have an attraction, separate from their artistic merit or box office appeal, because they offer a young man an opportunity to sit in the balcony and put his arm around the girl beside him. Well, folks, this is why I show up at contests. I may not fly this year, I'll never be 'Dirty Harry', but I still get a huge thrill from putting my arm around the old guys and the new guys. They are my heroes, my role models.

Ulli Werneburg from Gatineau claimed the Award for the Longest Distance. Not during the contest, of course, the driving to get there. Ernie Prack from SOSA ran neck and neck with Kevin Moore of Erin for the Marian Nowak Award for Perseverance. (A couple of years ago, Marian was plagued by parts falling off his glider everywhere he went.) Ernie had a dead battery, got up early, drove hundreds of kilometres to get yet another dead battery, and was saved by a loaner from Ed Hollestelle. Moral of the story: save trouble by buying quality batteries from Solaire in the first place. Knowing that he would not place in the standings, and desirous of a trophy, Ernie faked yet another electrical problem and went to the back of the grid.

Kevin? – he somehow managed to get three main wheel flat tires in two days (reminiscent of Richard Longhurst's five landouts in four contest days). Kevin, too, was saved by the efforts of his clubmates and the loan of an inner tube from York's Paul Moggach. What a great, helpful, close knit community. I also depended upon the kindness of others. It was a full year since I

had flown last, and Kevin was kind enough to take me up in BEK, Peter Rawes' venerable Twin Lark, in which Peter gave me my licence exam many years ago.

Speaking of Ernie again, the classic Volvo he has owned since new, for 18 years, doesn't have a trailer hitch. When he radioed on the last contest day that he would not, for a change, be landing out, his hitch equipped crew went home! Would I go 100 km out of my way to tow his glider back to SOSA? I assumed that this was simply a ploy to wrest the already awarded "Hardship" trophy from Kevin, so, to avoid the hassle of me having to change the scoring, I trailered it home for him.

Perhaps the best example of helping others was York's David MacKenzie loaning his PW-5 to Jim Carpenter, so that Jim could join us. Jim did not insure his glider this year. He keeps current flying intros at SOSA. Now, Jim has been around a long while. He and Wilf Krueger compete for the "Second Oldest in the Contest" trophy next to Walter Weir. Jim flew the very first glider into SOSA's current location, has a wealth of stories about flying in the fifties, and has done well in contests in Canada and around the world. Can you imagine getting your first intro ride from him? Would he take you away for 500 kilometres? Would he discuss his fourteen references in *free flight*, ranging from "Jim Carpenter does beer commercial in Libelle", and "new contest won by Carpenter", to answering probing questions about fake photos that he had submitted to free flight?

I'm not certain of David's flying history, other than all of his clothing says "Omarama" and he claims to have once been on the same frequency as Chuck Yeager, but at York he is a cross between a curmudgeon and a tribal elder. Tall, distinguished, with a long, white beard, Dave is the person you go to to get advice and solve problems, and he smokes a pipe. He smokes a pipe for two reasons: first to irritate his wife Eilean, and to use it to punctuate his paternal pontifications. He waves the pipe around to illustrate stories and, since it frequently goes out, you desperately and eagerly wait while he gets a relight before continuing the story. He's got you hooked and mesmerized.

Anyway, Jim and I go way back; I always enjoy his stories. He and I were waiting in line for the barbecued burgers being prepared by the aforementioned David, and the pipe and BBQ smoke intermingled. Jim was explaining to me how to be successful in cross-country flight. He spoke of actually being able to see the thermals develop, and of feeling the lift in your soul, and of really being a part of the glider, flying by feel and by instinct. The instruments were secondary, the primary requirement was to actually BE the glider. Here was the culmination of fifty years of soaring experience. I hung on every word, trying desperately to follow, veering in and out of understanding, just as you might try to core an important thermal. Jim figures that to succeed, you need to be at peace with yourself and in harmony with your surroundings.

As we came next in line, Jim turned to the magisterial David, looked at the burgers, looked up at David, and said, "Make Me One With Everything". ■

# Casey at the Nats

*the Bald Eagle*

*with sincere apologies to  
Ernest Thayer, who wrote  
"Casey at the Bat" circa 1888*

*The outlook wasn't brilliant for the SOSA team that day,  
T'was the last task of the contest, just one more chance to play.  
Yes, it was the National contest, "The Nats" as it is known,  
Where daring sailplane pilots soar far away from home.  
But dawn saw humid, clag filled air – we cried like soggy cats,  
"The game is lost, there is no chance, for SOSA at these Nats."*

*But then the cold front rumbled through, to wonderment of all,  
The sky had cleared, the wind was right, the cu was rising tall.  
And when the scud had lifted, men saw what now occurred,  
There was Jimmy rigging, and Flynn said, "Have you heard?  
That, table full of tephigrams and weather charts galore,  
Our proud and mighty Casey plans six hundred 'K' and more."*

*When Casey had announced this goal, there was a muffled roar,  
The crowd went wild, as they realized, it had ne'er been done before.  
Defiance gleamed in Casey's eye, a sneer curled Casey's lip,  
As one by one his flying foes said, "Man, that's quite a trip."  
Four hundred eyes were on him as his contest launch got started,  
Four hundred hands applauded as the radio said he'd departed.*

*The crews all knew, to make it back, and win his fame eternal,  
That he would simply have to find the country's biggest thermals.  
For Reichmann says, don't waste your time in thermals that are light,  
You really must avoid them, if you want to do it right.  
Stop only for the Big Ones, to get on final glide,  
But too much speed, too little lift, will quickly end your ride.*

*Yes, flying fast, avoiding sink, is how you win the game ...  
Wait! Cooney was reported down, then Barrows was the same.  
The SOSA team, the crowd now saw, was down to one alone,  
Could valiant Casey save the day, and would he make it home?  
With a smile of expectation, great Casey's visage shone,  
His nose went down, his speed went up, like Striedieck he pressed on.*

*Cloudstreets came, and turnpoints passed, ignoring his MacCready,  
The lust for speed, and fame at last, had made him much too greedy.  
Casey had been running fast, his working band now thinning,  
But flying like George Moffat, his only thought was "Winning".  
The question to be answered now that 'rose in Casey's thoughts,  
Is whether he should stop and use that measly two plus knots.*

*"No, by Truth, that ain't my style", our scornful Casey said,  
While through the gently rising air, his sinking glider sped.  
He spied a circling gaggle now, but on and on he flew,  
The crowd of faithful held their breath, the late day sky was blue.  
The sneer is gone from Casey's lips, his teeth are clenched in hate.  
How did he get below glide slope, enroute to the finish gate?*

*Wait – was that a beep he heard from the sullen vario.  
A little surge, a final chance, "Which way, which way to go."  
Quick, which way to centre it, should bank be right or left?  
Casey, with a mighty oath, gave the stick a mighty heft.  
If choice was true and pull up deft, he'd soon have height to burn.  
And so the air was shattered by the force of Casey's turn ...*

*Oh! somewhere in this favoured land, the sun is shining bright,  
The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are light.  
And somewhere teams are laughing, and somewhere crews do shout,  
But there is no joy at SOSA – mighty Casey landed out.*

# All the bells and whistles

the Bald Eagle

**D**URING THE WINTER SEASON, some people pass the time by attending cross-country clinics in anticipation of summer. Me? I decided to brush up on my trailer towing. Always a useful skill around SOSA on a busy day. I learned a few new techniques, but mostly I gained an appreciation for the quality of the options available on finer tow vehicles. I first became aware of the value of a comfortable tow vehicle some years ago when my crew retrieved me on a very hot day in my own car, complaining bitterly about the broken air conditioner. They were in such a foul mood by the time they arrived at my landout site that they actually tried to make me feel sorry for how their day had gone. They had lost the sense of humour that is such a pivotal quality in these situations, and were unable to properly handle the stresses of derigging. Anyway, I was given the opportunity to study the issue while moving a couple of ships long distances for people who had less leisure time than me. And in the process, I was banned from two major tourist areas.

The first outing was to take this guy's Mazda pickup from Toronto to Worcester, Mass. to bring back his recently purchased ASW 17, which was once owned by Karl Striedieck, of Bald Eagle Ridge fame. How could I, of all people, resist? I have always hankered to visit the Boston area, and especially to meet the people of Worcester. My father's family emigrated from Worcester to Canada in 1776 to protest the American Revolution. Dad claimed this made us United Empire Loyalists. A draft dodger friend of mine once told him that it made us Draft Dodgers. My father failed to appreciate the comparison, but I did learn from him an appreciation for our past. Apparently we come from a long line of cowards who fear authoritarian men in uniforms with weapons. Authoritarian women in uniforms, my Dad said, are a different story. But I digress.

While in Worcester, I also wanted to find the origin of their zesty sauce, which is, of course, a key ingredient in many hangover remedies. I learned an appreciation of that from my father, as well. So there I was, heading along the Interstate, enroute to investigate my past – both the ancestors and the hangovers. Now, the entire trip was made in below VFR conditions. There might be some great scenery along this highway, but I'll never know. Visibility was marginal, and I was worried about seeing ahead, and also about being struck from behind, especially during lane changes. This fear was made worse by the lack of trailer lights and by ineffective side mirrors. Why didn't the lights work, you ask? Well, for starters, they never do. In this case, my guy claimed he had been visiting his partner Ray, and Ray's dog had chewed on the truck's wiring harness. Doesn't this sound a little like, "The dog ate my homework." Personally, I have trouble with this story, because a guy who gets retrieved as much as Ray needs to, would always ensure the equipment is in top shape. He would also most likely need to have a more helpful dog like, say,

Lassie, who he could send to get Gramps for help whenever he lands out. Anyway, a few jumper wires and lots of duct tape later, it became apparent that the trailer lights themselves were unserviceable. With the weather deteriorating, I decided to forego further repairs and make a dash for home.

As for the mirrors, they were covered with sleet. Trying to improve the situation, I rolled down the window, by hand, so I could scrape the mirror, with the same, cold, wet, bare hand. The reason I note this manual stuff is that my next trip was in a new Jaguar with power everything including windows and electrically heated mirrors, which were sleet proof. But here and now, all I could do was to reach out and smear the mirrors, making things worse. And more sleet was coming in the window and covering my glasses. As I used the windshield washers, I had an inspiration. Perhaps if I were to spit out the window, onto the mirror, it just might melt some of the ice and wash off some of the dirt. Especially since I had the foresight to have a mouthful of hot coffee. Sometimes I am so clever, I amaze even myself.

So, I calculated the aiming point as carefully as a final approach to a spot landing, raised my head to get the right angle of attack, and let go. But I didn't allow for the drift. Now, some of you may have seen how a very strong headwind can make things go backwards. Well, the Mazda created headwind overcame my lung power, and this large, brown cumulus, saturated beyond the dew point, came floating back through the window onto my glasses and did not, in fact, melt any of the sleet thereon. As dark approached, I took refuge in Niagara Falls, spending the night with my friend Wolf Gower. Wolf sort of bonded with me by showing me a historic picture of himself at the scene of the very first landout of an LS-8 in Canada. However, apparently I snored so loudly through the night that his parents have permanently banned me from the Falls. I blame sinus trouble from having to drive with a wet face and the window open.

The next trip was to use a Jaguar convertible to tow a Ventus from Toronto to Seminole Gliderport, near Orlando in Florida. Again I was trying to outrun bad weather and a Jaguar will outrun most things. Yet again, the lights wouldn't work – you would think that a trailer with European style lights, hooked to a European car, would be a natural fit, but you'd be wrong. Fortunately, even though I couldn't signal my turns, the heated mirrors afforded a pristine view of the irate drivers behind me.

Now, a few years ago, I wrote about trailering through downtown Montreal in Hour de Rushe of a long Fin de Semaine, making frequent lane changes, and the effect my Ontario plates had upon Québécois feelings of federalism. Well, I'm here to tell you that on a three day trip, if you get up at the appropriate time, and drive at the appropriate speed, and time the rest stops just right,



you can hit the morning and evening rush hours of most major American cities on the Eastern seaboard. As luck would have it, this was the weekend that George Dubya was being inaugurated as president. As you may know, many Canadians are concerned about his attitude toward us, and worry about a looming negative change in US foreign policy. Jean Chretien had just lobbied long and hard to be the first head of state to set up a visit, to try and stave off such things as retribution against former United Empire Loyalists. All visiting Canadians were out to make a good impression. Except me. The unsignalled stops and the Ontario plates were an international incident waiting to happen. Once again, I amazed myself and most of the other drivers around. We were crawling along in heavy traffic, when I remembered that you can electrically lower the top on the Jag if travelling at less than 15 km/h. So I did.

Now I was able to make hand signals that were visible to those guys behind me. I could do it on both sides by switching hands. And I would add a jaunty wave to show gratitude for their sharing the road with the world's Longest Undefended Trailer. It was cold, but I was in a Jag! So there I was, proudly sporting the old Toronto Maple Leaf's tuque, and enjoying the heated seats more than the Jaguar designer could have ever imagined. I experimented after nightfall with making signals while holding my flashlight, but, after whacking myself upside the head during a complicated lane change that involved switching the flashlight between hands, I gave up and stopped for the evening.

The next day, I did the regular DI on the lights, and found that part of the problem was some burnt out bulbs. I also found that European bulbs are difficult to find in the southern USA. That night found me in Atlanta, visiting my friend Tom, a retired Special Forces colonel who generally wears a shirt reading, "I am an American Paratrooper. I visit exotic places, meet interesting people, and kill them." Tom lives in the country and wasn't home when I arrived, and I set off the alarm while attempting unlawful entry. This meant I had to answer a lot of questions from the Georgia State Patrol. Men in uniforms, with weapons. I decided to apologize for the 1993 World Series to distract them from either a vehicle light check or embarrassing questions regarding 1776. (How many of you remember Kelly Gruber mocking the Tomahawk Chop?)

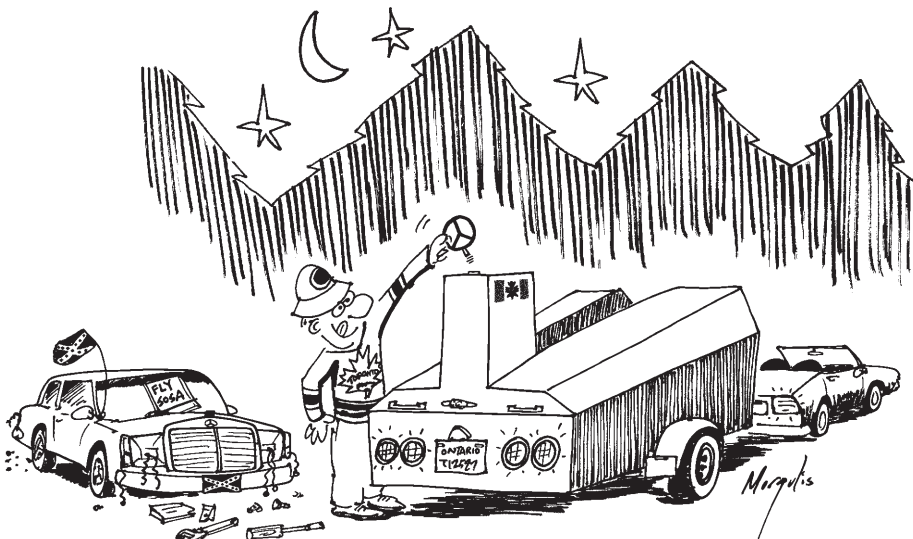
Lest you think that I exaggerate my fear of being shot by Tom or the cops, may I say that while in Atlanta I dined with Tom's minister, who noted that the Men's Gun Club meets in the basement of their church on Thursday evenings. Tom's unit used to practise with paper targets that resembled hippies, communists, and other Enemies of the State. I asked what the church targets resembled and he said, Lutherans. Anyway, when Tom arrived, I noticed that he had a Mercedes that he brought home from a tour in Germany and, Gott im Himmel, it had the same type of light bulb. I say "had", because three of them are now installed in the Ventus trailer. I departed very early one morning, at a time of day Tom's army buddies call Oh Dark 30. Under cover, and with my face blackened, I stealthily snuck up on the unsecured vehicle and carried out a search and seizure mission. Pretty brave I thought, all things considered. In payment, I left him a coupon good for one free intro ride at SOSA.

Similar to the previous trip, rain was my frequent companion. An interesting option on the Jaguar is a sensor that automatically turns on the wipers when moisture is present. This meant I could relax, listen to Willie Nelson, and be assured of good vision. As I entered Florida, the rain stopped. I really liked playing with all the electronic toys, and I was curious to see just how sensitive the wipers were. I briefly debated lowering the power window and trying to spit onto the windshield, but then remembered Ian Oldaker's Rule of Primacy.

Another feature on this car is an outside temperature gauge. I was monitoring this closely, and when it finally read above freezing, I slowed to 15 km/h, pushed the "TOP DOWN" button, and activated the heated seats. I was somewhat mindful of my father's admonition not to leave the door open in winter. He wouldn't have had to worry about that if we hadn't moved to Canada.

That evening, having impressed the gang at Seminole by arriving with the top down and the heater going full blast, they invited me to join them for ribs and fried greens at the Beaches Country Store and Truck Stop. Sophisticated woman that she is, Barbara Weir, snow birding with husband Walter from COSA, ordered wine

with dinner and it came in one of the four wine glasses that the place saves for discriminating guests. I suspect that the rest had been broken during Happy Hour, which starts at 5:30 and generally goes until the first fist fight. Walter noted that last night the wine came in a frosted beer mug. Real classy joint. Probably most people just drink out of the bottle. I think I saw Worcester sauce on the breakfast menu. (On a related topic, SOSA is hosting the Nationals this year. For one of the dinners, Steve Burany wants to get some homemade Hungarian wine – I cannot





# Reach for the Sky

## and your wallet

the Bald Eagle

**H**ERE'S A PLAN to address the issue of efficient student training, without placing undue hardship on other club operations. And, it offers badly needed job opportunities in the exciting world of Aviation. Ladies and gentlemen, let me introduce the Bald Eagle Academy of Flight Training (BEAFT, a division of Bald Eagle Enterprises, Inc). All you out of work, newly minted commercial pilots, who don't want to fly floats in bug-infested swamps, here's your ticket to being your own boss! No more hanging around the glider club trying to build up hours by towing for free! How does BEAFT work? Read on.

Frequently, students find their training gets low priority behind other club operations, and they quit at the end of the season because of frustration over slow progress. Occasionally, our club does actually expedite the learning process. We have a tradition where a new solo pilot buys a case of beer for the club. My friend Lynne was sent off on her own with the encouraging words, "You're not really ready for this yet, but we need the beer." But she, if you know her, is always an exception.

There has been much recent discussion about the declining membership in clubs across Canada, and what we might do to make it easier for people to join and to learn how to fly. Like any enterprise, a steady supply of new revenue is required for continued existence, let alone expansion or fleet replacement. So, what to do? There is a perception that if you make it easier for someone to come and fly, that they will – it's sort of a variation upon the "Better Mouse Trap" theory.

This seems to be borne out by stories about trips to full fledged commercial operations, in Canada and in other countries, where the access to exotic gliders and efficient and courteous instruction are readily available. For a price. People will come and pay well if they are given the attention their money deserves.

Every year I am taunted by postcards from well heeled pilot friends who flock to the Holy Grails of New Zealand, Nevada, British Columbia, and, of course, the Bald Eagle Ridge. These guys are ecstatically happy to plunk down lots of hard-earned dollars for a unique and rewarding experience. The shrewd operators of

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resist asking if anyone knows how to make a Hungarian wine.)

Now, I had just spent several days reading the extensive Jaguar user's manual, and trying out all the gadgets. In addition, I'd become something of an electrical expert, what with all the lighting issues on both trailers. I figure it wouldn't be that difficult to rewire some of the sensors on the car to activate certain functions when you get a combination of no rain, temperature above freezing, and IGS (indicated ground speed) less than 15 km/h. I would program it to make the wipers stop, the top automatically lower, the heat come on as required, and the CD player seek out an Eagles disk – they have far better "Driving Fast" songs than Willie does. Believe me, you do drive a lot faster with the top down.

Later that night, I made a trip out to the car to get something from the trunk, er, boot, and decided to use the remote keyless entry, another excellent feature which helps you prevent scratching the car door with the key in the dark. Useful for those late retrievers. Clearly though, the owner hadn't given me enough dual, and I didn't realize I was arming the alarm system. Shades of Atlanta again. I truly learned the full meaning of the phrase, 'All The Bells And Whistles'. It's a good thing the trailer was disconnected or the

strain of constant flashing lights would have burned out the sensitive wiring. "Platypus", writing in that English magazine, refers to the action at Seminole as "Geezer Glide". These guys retire early, in both senses of the phrase. They were so incensed at the noise and resulting sleep disturbance that I am now also banned from the environs of Orlando, as well as Niagara.

Finally, I had just seen the movie, "American Graffiti", and needed to visit an A&W for old time's sake on my way out of town. The waitress skates over and, naturally, is impressed with my car. Evidently they don't get a lot of people in convertibles wearing tuques in Orlando in the winter. She begins asking about all the buttons and features, and I caution her not to spill any root beer on the windshield unless she is standing clear of the wipers. As luck would have it, I had taken in a little golf, and there were a couple of tees on the console beside me. She asked what they were for, and I replied, "You rest your balls on those while you're driving". She said, "Golly, those Jaguar people sure do think of everything!"

Well, I think I have finally done my "Author Selected Task", as conceived and promised to you last spring in free flight. Near as I can figure, this piece is appropriate to the magazine, yet I never once used the G word or the S word. You gotta have a goal, and that was mine. ■

these establishments recognize from whence cometh their future revenues. At those airfields, the ab initio student is neither neglected nor relegated to the back of the grid. Most of these places advertise professional flight schools that treat the students with the respect that paying customers deserve. There are lots of benefits that the students get there that are absent in the "free" training available at most clubs. For example, scheduling is done in advance, so there is none of that pesky standing around waiting your turn. There is a very real expectation of quick and efficient progress from Intro Flight to Licensed Pilot in a short period of time.

One of the Canadian clubs has proposed an innovative solution, as noted on the SAC Roundtable. They plan an operation that borders on a commercial set up, with expedited access to equipment and launches without all the fuss, bother and long term expense of having to join the club and SAC. The comments on the Roundtable about the quasi-commercial aspects of this suggest a potential conflict between regular club activities and a fee-for-service plan. Clubs are not prepared to deal with such things as special insurance and liability, and they are not chartered for commercial operations.

So, what is the solution? How can you serve the needs of the students without compromising club principles? I'm glad you asked. The answer lies in outsourcing. Partnering. Subcontracting. All the big companies do it these days. It makes for the most efficient use of scarce resources, keeps fixed costs and overhead down, and gives you someone else to blame when things don't turn out as expected. Where would you find a reliable partner for outsourcing? Again, I'm glad you asked. Simply enter into an agreement with the Bald Eagle Academy of Flight Training, where we will supply our own gliders, certified instructors, and lease your towplanes as required. In return, you will get lots of new, qualified members, without the hassles of running a training program.

The current business plan is to start small by buying a surplus 2-33 and contracting to handle all the training at our club. BEAFT will charge a fixed fee for student training, with guaranteed results, and will supply the club with a steady source of newly licensed pilots, who will be hooked on flying and thus eager to pay various membership and beverage fees, sustaining club revenue well into the Millennium. The Five Year Plan calls for franchising the operation to other clubs in need of Flightline Management Consulting. You too can invest now and get in on the ground floor of our Multi-Level Marketing. Share prices will be higher after we get our own late night infomercials on TV.

To pay instructors, we will aggressively seek outside sponsorships, including selling ad space on the gliders, and possibly towing banners behind the 2-33, as well. The extra drag will keep expensive air time to a minimum, and should help with those short field landings. Then we won't have to backtrack to the launch point. We must always be concerned with operating efficiently, and turn around time is not productive. Instructors will probably work cheaply in order to build up time to advance their own personal flying. I know that at our club, you require about five years experience in the 2-33 be-

fore you are allowed to fly your friends around in the Twin Grob. A fair number can probably be enticed to work for free to comply with their court orders for so many hours of community service.

As noted above, the key to a successful commercial operation is to provide great customer service so that the customers' needs are satisfied and they are more than happy to pay for the experience. Also critical are the marketing, packaging and presentation of the product. Andy Gough tells the story of an operation in the UK where they obviously had not done a "Best Practices" study. The CFI was so poor that he wore a discarded tea cozy for a hat, and the sight of him turned off many potential customers. BEAFT will have smartly dressed "Customer Service Associates" to give personal attention at a very high level, ensuring quick student progress, greater customer satisfaction, and faster turnover, which goes straight to the bottom line.

One of the drawbacks to club training is that a student usually has a different instructor every day. This leads to lots of delays in learning as the student and instructor are required to review earlier lessons to see what has been covered, and they need to get comfortable with each other. In addition, a student is often hampered by different instructors having different methods of teaching something like circuit entry, which can lead to redoing something already covered. This is a waste of the client's money. And since his money is our money, well, you get the idea. We can eliminate those roadblocks with our Quick Study Plan. A typical day might go as follows:

**Student** Hi. I'm here for Glider Flight Training.

**BEAFT** Welcome to The Bald Eagle Academy of Flight Training. How will you be paying for the lessons?

**S** Well, can you tell me a little about the Academy?

**BE** Indeed. We take VISA, MasterCard, Interac, and personal cheques with two pieces of ID.

**S** No, I meant what can I expect in the way of lessons?

**BE** Good question. Will you be choosing the Bronze, Silver, or Gold training package, and how will you be paying for that?

**S** What's the difference?

**BE** The Bronze gets you five rides in the towplane, Silver gives you a Glider Pilot Licence, and Gold includes a silly but effective hat.

**S** I'll take the Silver.

**BE** Good choice. How will you be paying for that? And do you wish the basic option or an upgrade to the one on one training that includes a full time instructor in the back seat?

**S** What is the basic option?

**BE** What we call “Distance Education”. You fly by yourself, in a less expensive single seater, and you’re in radio contact with instructors at a “help desk” who prioritize the calls and offer assistance as required.

**S** I’ll take the upgrade.

**BE** Okay, fine. As part of our market research, may I ask where you heard about the Academy?

**S** I saw your ad in “Swinging Singles” magazine. Why were those girls in the pictures wearing wet T-shirts? And what did the ad mean by “All instruction is done with ‘the Twins’” – are they the twins?

**BE** That’s a little ceremony we perform to reward someone who has gone solo. Sort of provides an extra incentive. We used to wet down the customers, but we picked this idea up in one of our Focus Groups, and it gets much higher ratings in the Client Satisfaction Surveys.

Later, after becoming airborne:

**S** Say, this is exciting, but it’s bumpier than I expected. Is there a barf bag handy?

**BE** Yeah, sure. Just insert a quarter in the dispenser on your left. The one that’s marked “Eagle Bags – Quick and Easy When You’re Feeling Queasy”. Now, if you’re ready, let us proceed with Lesson One. This is called “The Effects of Controls”.

Note the water tower straight ahead, beside Ian Oldaker’s house. Note how as I pull back on the stick,

the nose raises sharply, the speed and outside noise decrease, and finally we are stalled, and the nose drops below the horizon. Now, for a further effect of controls, I will stomp hard on the right rudder, inducing a full spin. Note how the ground is getting closer, objects are increasing in size, and the water tower is whirling all around.

**S** Aaaahhh!!!

**BE** Okay, now you have control.

**S** Aaaaiieeee!!! I don’t know what to do! HELP!

**BE** Oh, right – you only paid for Lesson One. Didn’t I mention that Lesson Two is the one that teaches spin recovery?

**S** Quick! Quick! Tell me what to do!

**BE** Sure no problem. How will you be paying for that? I’ve got to decide soon if I’m going to get out.

**S** What do you mean?? Aaaaiieeee !! And how come you’re wearing a parachute and I’m not?

**BE** You didn’t request the upgrade. If you want to proceed to Lesson Two, just swipe your card in the slot on the right of the instrument panel. (Dial-up sounds emanate from the instrument panel.) Sorry for the delay. The cell phone service is poor in this location, and the line to the bank is often very busy on a Saturday. Uh-oh, it looks like you need another quarter, too. Now, punch in your PIN number. Okay, good, looks like the transaction was accepted.

**S** Aaaaiieeee!!!

**BE** Okay, so, now, open your eyes again and watch carefully as I apply full opposite rudder, centralize the ailerons, then pause slightly, move the stick forward until the spinning stops, centralize the rudder, pull out of the resulting dive, and gently flare over the runway, hold off, and put it down on the main wheel. Congratulations. Come on into the Hospitality Centre, where you can clean off, and buy me a beer to celebrate getting your Glider Pilot Licence.

**S** But I don’t know how to fly.

**BE** No problem. The lineups at most clubs are so long that you won’t fly at all in your first season, and you will have plenty of time to learn by watching and talking to other students. And most clubs won’t let a new member go solo without 20 or 30 checkrides, so you’ll be fine. Now, how will you be paying for that beer? ■



# The Bald Eagle meets the Falcon

the Bald Eagle

*the gastronomy of gliding*

**T**HIS IS A STORY ABOUT EATING. If you really want to read about flying, there will be an interesting article by one of my friends concerning the intricacies of weight and balance in a forthcoming issue.

I am at the age where certain pleasures are no longer as available, as attainable, or as satisfying as they once were. Or at least as I remember them to have been. Sometimes, the hyperbole that periodically appears in the pages of this magazine actually creeps into my own memories, and I have some difficulty recalling what is fact and what is fancy. And, of course, with the onrush of senility, I often have trouble recalling anything. Having a bad memory and being a story teller to boot, well, that's certainly a dangerous combination. It seems that, instead of me improving with age, it's my stories that improve with age. Yes, the older I get, the better I was. You know – nudge, nudge, wink, wink, I once stayed up for FOUR hours. Who would believe me? (I mean in a glider, of course.) These days, however, my search for pleasure has left its mark with some lasting evidence.

Now that I am older, eating has replaced everything else as my favourite physical and social activity. I can do it with a friend, I sometimes do it in a group, and I even do it alone. In fact, I have just had a mirror installed over my dining room table. Trouble is, if I get any fatter, I fear I'll be mentioned by name in that article on weight and balance. I have begun to notice my friends are also gaining weight, and some are having their arteries reamed out on a regular basis. I am thinking seriously of starting my own Bald Eagle Soaring Club, where us overweight, over the hill guys can sit around the bar all day, telling stories instead of flying, and have as our slogan, "All Gut, No Glory".

On a quest to research people who have started their own clubs, I invited myself to a barbecue at Great Lakes Gliding. Their story is that they always wanted their own club. Since this group of guys are working out of their fourth airport in about seven years, I had formed the natural conclusion that they must be antisocial. I found instead the opposite. The only reason I could guess for their having to move so frequently was the chance of the neighbours complaining about the loud music at 3 am. Talk about keeping it up for hours, these folks know how to throw a party. They attracted members and sailplanes from a few other clubs, along with plenty of first timers who kept everyone busy doing intro flights and working up an appetite until mealtime. And what a meal it was.

I have often thought that food, and to some extent drink, are as important to glider pilots as, oh, say, weight and balance. I may ask if we can have a section on this at our next ground school. With respect to food, SOSA's noted culinary expert Andrew Parker has lectured about the benefits from a snack of complex carbohydrates, and he has written recently in *free flight* about the perils of flying at 10,000 feet after eating Hungarian sausage.

With respect to drink, we encourage pilots to take plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration, and food on the ground is as critical to a good day at the airfield as a mid air snack. I fondly remember that early in my gliding career, I had a girlfriend who really knew how to pack a lunch. No, that's not a euphemism, nor an example of the wishful thinking noted above. You see, what her technique was, she wrapped the tomato slices separately from the sandwiches, to keep the bread from getting soggy. It was interactive to the extent that, prior to consumption, the food had some assembly required, but I never had a fresher lunch. These days I do miss her, and am reduced to walking around the field eating peanut butter from the jar.

In the evenings, when other folks are bringing their own food to slap on the barbecue, I usually heat a microwaveable entrée. They have the advantage that on hot days, I can suck them still frozen, like a Popsicle. One night, one of the other members offered me some of their extra vegetables, and another family suggested I help finish off their salad. To me, this was the dining equal of someone marking a thermal. I became a worse leech on the ground than I am in the air. I began to show up at dinner with utensils and an empty plate. I would wander past the firepit, peering at the separate steaks, chops, etc, complaining loudly that my food would never be cooked given the poor arrangement of coals. Periodically, I would borrow a long fork and poke ostentatiously at some item whose rightful owner had gone off in search of refreshment. Eventually, various families would each offer sundry items to tide me over until my stuff was done. I ate like a king for months.

Even after the ruse was exposed, I managed to keep up a healthy competition among my benefactors by challenging them. I would shamelessly say, "Oh, no potatoes thanks, Olga might be offended if I don't have a big helping of her wonderful Potatoes Paprikash", or "just a small portion of ice cream would be great, I need to save room for Marg Ferguson's terrific apple pie."

When it comes to dining at other clubs, I have eaten very well, but at some locations they made you cook the stuff yourself, which was not without peril. Last year at Pendleton, we grilled steaks in a rainstorm, and some years ago I wrote about a trick fork at Champlain that caused several burgers to land out during the flipping operation.

Here at Great Lakes, the barbecue was second to none. There was lots to eat and drink, and the highlights included fresh corn and a magnificent hip of beef, roasted all day on a spit by Gerry Bunder. Gerry and his son Shaun, who is perhaps the only third generation glider pilot in Canada, provided a tremendous amount of help to SOSA during the recent Nationals. We thank



the club for providing us with them and their immaculate Paw nee. Back at Great Lakes, Gerry did a masterful job of carving, resplendent in a tall chef's hat. I hope they have a photo of that to put on the web site next to the shot of Mike Morgulis doing his Gilligan impression. See <[www.greatlakesgliding.com](http://www.greatlakesgliding.com)>.

Like the Jaguar people, these guys think of everything. They even had a junior member running around on call with a battery powered pepper and salt mill, complete with built in flashlight. In order to make the kid feel use ful, many of us kept eating until way after dark. I think we quit only when the battery went dead.

Just as Gerry loaded up our plates, we were treated to a lecture from a representative of the local Falconry Centre. This man had previously entertained us with flying demonstrations of gas powered, radio controlled ornithopters. (Yeah, not only did I have to look it up, too, but it confuses my spell checker.) The guy had on his arm a hooded falcon, with a giant wingspan, a sharp beak, and a very hungry look in its beady eyes. (Okay, so I was imagining what the eyes looked like under the hood). We were given a talk on how, through the ages, birds of prey have survived by swooping in on likely looking food and swallowing it alive.

Now, the aroma of gently roasting beef had been wafting over the field since about seven that morning, making all of us very hungry. I could only imagine the effect it had upon the bird. Try to picture how I felt about protecting my huge slab of rare meat when the handler took off the hood and instructed the falcon to go hunt. As it made directly for me, I mumbled something about professional courtesy, and pointed towards one of the barn cats. Check out <[www.falconrycentre.com](http://www.falconrycentre.com)> where they actually have a live image Bald Eagle Cam.

After dinner, I got to meet Mike and Cheryl Ronan, up on whose farm the club is located. Mike is an airline captain, and a fascinating guy in every respect, and they are both genuinely hospitable. I barely had to mention driving home when they offered me accommodation for the night, which meant I could continue snacking on the beef until quite late. Mike's interests include beach volleyball, aircraft, and all kinds of craftsmanship. He has fully equipped wood and metal shops, which he built, and he has supplied the club with an outhouse complete with seat belt, stick, rudder pedals, and thoughtfully, a drop-down oxygen mask.

One of Mike's greatest abilities is that he can scrounge materials and fabricate anything from discarded parts. I think this is admirable, but may come back to haunt him or whoever buys his farm. We had a guy at our club like this, who, for example, built both our wind-sock frames from old car parts. They are both different sizes, and neither is standard, so we need custom made socks that are difficult to get when you need one. Mike made his fifty foot hangar door from some square tubing and soffit panels. The operating mechanism, pulleys, chains, etc. were scrounged from an old combine. The solenoids, relays and some switches were sourced from a washing machine. Picture trying to find replacement parts for this when Mike is out of town at a beach volleyball tournament.

Their 16 year old son Tim is a pilot, and has a band that did a creditable job of entertaining us all evening. It was amazing how, in order to tell stories, we kept asking the young lads to keep the volume down. Mirror, mirror, on the wall, I've become my father after all. Tim and the boys favoured us with a whole lot of rock from the sixties, which was greatly appreciated by our age group. I have taken the liberty to adjust the lyrics to a Joni Mitchell song of that era, which I think is appropriate to the theme, and I dedicate it to the whole gang at Great Lakes. I call it Windstock:

*I came upon a child of God, he was walkin', along  
the road.  
I asked him, where are you going? And this he told me.  
I'm goin' on down to Ronan's farm, I'm going to join  
up with the Great Lakes band,  
I'm going to soar above the land, and try and set  
my soul free.  
There is lift now, in the thermals  
And we've got to get ourselves up to the cloudbase.*

*Then can I fly beside you? I have come here to  
lose the herd  
And to feel just like a bird, gracefully turning.  
Well maybe it's now the time to launch, or maybe  
we should hangar stack.  
Don't know if we can make it back, but life is  
for learning.  
There is cumulus, that is forming  
And we've got to get ourselves up to the cloudbase.*

*By the time we got the task done, the lift was still  
quite strong.  
On the radio there was song, and celebration.  
And I dreamed I saw the towplanes, riding shotgun  
in the skies  
Turning into butterflies, above our nation.  
In the sunset, we are golden  
And we've got to get ourselves back to the pattern.*

*Postscript* I wrote Mike Ronan to see if he wanted me to tone down my observations re scrounged parts. In fact he embellished them, specifying that it was an Allis-Chalmers combine he used ... and you guys thought I made this stuff up. Also after this story was written, I was invited to COSA, near Omeme, Ontario, to assist with the Provincial Contest. I was in charge of parking cars. I feel that I must include COSA among the great places to eat while away from home.

These guys are obviously concerned with the gastronomy of gliding, because their website, <[www.centrlontsoarassoc.com](http://www.centrlontsoarassoc.com)> bears the instruction "Best viewed with a beer" – I had an ex wife who fell into the same category. More to the point, Cheri Milner, Kathy Luxemburger, Melba Leger, and Kathy Kocsis prepared and served some excellent meals. And, they were exceptionally cheerful given that they got stuck with all the dishes.

I was most impressed when they showed up on the flight line during a launch delay with sandwiches for sale. Timing is everything. While I am fond of ham and cheese, I think they should consider a unique offering, only available at COSA, that they could call either a Club sandwich, or a COSA NOSHTRA. Thanks, ladies. ■

# A visit with Mike and Cheryl

the Bald Eagle

**H**AVING MADE IT A PROJECT to visit other clubs in Ontario and check out their, uh, hospitality around dinner time, I once more found myself at Great Lakes Gliding, near Tottenham. As noted in a previous story, the club is located on the homestead of Mike and Cheryl Ronan, and is conveniently situated equidistant between a biker bar in Beeton and a cowboy bar in Loretto, where the motto is “Home of the Point-less Fist Fight”.

So, as we were standing inside the hangar, waiting and wishing for it to at least look like a soarable day, this being the only available shade (there being no giant cu to block the stark rays of the sun), Mike and I engaged in small talk. It turns out that we're both doing well, keeping busy, looking forward to some cooler weather, hoping the ball players don't strike, etc. We were literally watching the grass grow. Cheryl has decided to put some seed down in front of the hangar, and it needs periodic watering. We came upon a spare pair of sandals, which Mike suggested might look pretty natty with one of my, as he so quaintly calls them, “outfits”. I have previously dined there on “Hawaiian Night” wearing, well, a skirt. Look, it was authentic; check out those National Geographics. In between the Fijian girls working on their upper body tans, you see the fishermen in dugout canoes wearing sarongs. Now, after I tried the sandals on, and kept tripping over myself, I formed the opinion that they are not manly attire:

Me: Say, Mike, your cracks about my sarong notwithstanding, it's not my wrists that are limp, it's my ankles. I can walk better in high heels than I can in these things.

Mike: Quit yer bitchin'; our Lord and Saviour wore sandals.

Me: Richard Longhurst?

Mike: No, you idiot, JC, and He was perfectly happy with them. Could walk on anything. Even water. And, after He was done walkin' on it, He'd change it into wine.

Me: Yeah, be that as it may, I still think that if He'd had sensible footwear, He would have stood a much better chance of getting away from the Romans...

Cheryl's banned me for blasphemy now, and Mike got me a subscription to “GQ” magazine. Cheryl wanted us out of the way, so I towed Mike up for a 300K attempt to the southwest. He called back on the radio and asked, “How many N's in Hanover? I thought he said, “How many inns in Hanover”, so I said “Three”.

I figured he was going to land out and wanted to plan ahead. Turns out, he did land there. Evidently he was trying to program his GPS and blames me now for wrong coordinates due to a spelling error.

You can now get a sophisticated navigation system for your GM car called OnStar, and one of its features will phone ahead and book a hotel room for you. I think if Mike got one of these, and slaved to his GPS (along with the spell check option), he wouldn't have to wait around in dusty fields waiting for those late night retrieves.



I have had some modest success, and a lot of fun, in a couple of past issues by taking a poem or song and substituting some gliding lyrics. I periodically hear a song and think it would be well suited to being modified, but I get stuck after only a couple of lines. I feel frustrated by being unable to finish the task, the writer's equivalent of a landout. What I usually do in cases like this is to sit down and drink Scotch until my thoughts become clear and organized.

Matter of fact, this would probably be a very good time to reveal that Tony Burton, editor of this esteemed magazine, rewrote a good portion of my poem, *Casey at the Nats*, which appeared in 4/2000. When I look back at my original notes, I am still impressed with how he helped take the kernel of a clever idea, and added a whole lot of polish while simultaneously removing a lot of chaff.

Anyway, what I am looking for here is some help finishing off some song titles. What I propose is a contest to complete a verse or two of one of these songs. Winners in each SAC Zone, as decided by Mr. Burton and myself, will receive a free launch. Some songs are old enough that you may need to ask Charles Yeates or Walter Weir for help. Submit your opus to Tony at *free flight*.

1) *Hens and chicks and ducks better scurry,  
When I have to land in a hurry,  
When I have to land in a hurry,  
'Cause the lift just stopped ...*

2) *Bye bye lift,  
Bye bye altitude.  
What's my longitude?  
I think I'm a gonna cry.*

*There goes my thermals,  
The sky looks blue ...*

Oh yeah, this contest is not open to the employees of *free flight* and their immediate families. ■



# No particular place to go

the Bald Eagle

**T**HIS ISSUE OF USING a *nom de plume* seems to have caused some controversy on the SAC Roundtable. I thank those who supported the concept, especially Anne N. Emuss, Douglas Fir, and my pal, “Fearless Fred”, who gave a URL for my picture on the CAS website. I am not trying to hide, but rather to inform and entertain, and to try and follow in those web shaped footsteps of the longtime contributor to *Sailplane & Gliding*, “Platypus”.

Here is how the nom evolved. While writing my second article for *free flight*, I realized that I looked forward to making a somewhat regular contribution to the magazine, and I began two separate changes in style. At the time, I didn’t realize that the two changes were related, but they were, and I have Platypus to thank. The first change involved content. The story was about the provincial contest at Champlain, and it dealt more with the ambiance than the actual flying. A lot more. The second change was a *nom de plume*, “Hotel Tango”, after my contest letters. As I began to hear about Platypus, I decided to investigate his popularity, and I was jealous that he had a better nom. I was inspired by a picture I saw in Terry McElligott’s house of Rod Crocker being attacked by Karl Striedieck’s pet eagle. I figure looking at the photo is about as close as I am ever going to get to flying on the Bald Eagle Ridge, but I did see a striking similarity between me and the bird.

I now had an appropriate *nom*, but I had never read Platypus so I set about researching some of his articles. I was delighted to find that, in addition to sharing an avian name, he is very entertaining, and rarely mentions flying – I instantly felt a bond.

The first Platypus piece I saw dealt with such diverse topics as the French translation for breaking wind, a situation apparently made worse by the Continental predilection for adding garlic to beans, and the excessive scenery in a local production of *Les Miserables*. His digression on the dangers of getting your chest hairs or nipples caught in the springs of a chest expander exerciser caused the magazine’s new editor to comment, “What the heck has this to do with gliding?” Fully one page of his next article involved joining the French Foreign Legion.

I realized then that I had found a goal worth striving for – more difficult for me than any possible badge flight or even trying to get more FAI records than Dale Kramer (we are currently tied at one). I’m aiming to write an article for *free flight* that contains absolutely no reference to glider flying. As I train for this, I ask myself some questions. Can I do it, and is

Tony Burton more of a stickler for the rules than Walter Weir? If they can have a Pilot Selected Task, why not an Author Selected Story? Will the editor require any mandatory talkpoints?

With respect to the non-flying digressions, I feel that, except for Dale, we usually spend more time on the ground talking about flying than we do in the air, and these articles reflect that. Also, our collective club experience is made up of and enriched by the various other activities, socializing, sights, sounds and, as Platypus notes, smells that surround us. To use New Age terminology, I take a holistic approach to club life. I am gratified to hear that my experiences and interests are read and appreciated because others can relate to them.

There are people who enjoy flying and want to read about club life, yet are sometimes intimidated by the polysyllabic technical articles about the intricacies of weather or glider performance. My closest friend at our club once began to read an article in *free flight* about performance that used his glider type as an example, so he was keenly interested. He is an AME, but he had difficulty with the charts and graphs, so he went looking for some lighter reading. Sure, knowing about dry adiabatic lapse rate and L/D is important, but so is all the other fun stuff. He’s moving out of the country, and has sold the glider, but wants to continue his subscription to *free flight* to keep up with our adventures at SOSA.

In my last article, I noted that some of us are on a first name basis with quite a few farmers and their cows, and the editor added an appropriate Gil Parcell cartoon which explained that *aux vaches* is French for “landing out”. Both Eric Gillespie and I have alluded to our own landouts, to each other’s, and to those of fellow members in *free flight*. Some of these stories have the potential for being entertaining, instructive, or both. I am interested in receiving any landout stories that you care to forward as a basis for a future story.

I have already collected notes about several pilots who, having successfully completed their 50 km, got an aerotow in the general direction of home and landed out on the return trip. This is right up there with the contest pilot who returned to the airport, finished, won the day, did a beat up, and landed out. Or the Nationals pilot, now a SAC executive I believe, who once had more landouts than there were contest days. Confess, or snitch on someone else. You can reach me at <thebald eagle99@hotmail.com>. Feel free to use a *nom de landout*.

One of the subjects that comes up now and again is the issue of, well, pee bags and various other methods and systems of allowing elimination without eliminating your chances of a longer flight. At least one of my contest landouts was to deal with this situation, and it became more problematic as my hurried leap from the cockpit coincided with the arrival of the vigilant farmer and wife. There was no place to go:

“Hi there, did you have an accident?”

“No, but I’m about to”.

I have been discretely asking others for input on their output, and have gotten a range of suggestions. Most are unsuited for installation in club aircraft, and in addition, I find difficulty in working around parachute straps and seat belts. I was therefore looking for a solution that would handle the solution, well, internally.

I got advice from the notorious “Pregnant Woman”, whom you may recall had beaten me in my first contest. Her pregnancy has produced a little future pilot who also has difficulty in controlling when and where he goes. She suggested that since he and I share a similar problem, that we could also share similar underwear, and she gave me some samples of what he uses. This is just great. I now picture myself landing *aux vaches*, colliding with a cow and being rushed to hospital. Mothers everywhere would be pleased to find me wearing clean underwear, but presumably quite surprised to find that it is decorated with The Three Bears. I might apply to change my contest letters to 3B.

Speaking of the three bears, one very senior pilot, whose name I won’t mention, once complained that I had towed him too fast, so the next time I went slower. He wasn’t very happy as this was apparently too slow. I blamed faulty instruments – he said any self respecting towpilot should be able to get it “just right by attitude alone”. This spring, I had the usual glider checkflight, and he happened to be towing me in the towplane with questionable instruments. He radioed back asking me to report my airspeed. I reported that it was about the same as his. Evidently he is still not pleased with my attitude.

We’ve had the usual spring at SOSA with a few flyable days interspersed with rain or more snow, but regular flying began end April. It was nice to see a great turnout for our annual spring cleanup, and I hope the volunteer momentum continues. One of the things that slows our start-up is a water run-off problem. Just like me, the field has no particular place to drain itself. Our cure involved having a contractor excavate the verges, and one of our members, who is a professional landscaper, couldn’t resist having the operator remove a copse of scrub trees and grade the area for planting seed. Our guy feels that the world would be a better place if it were flat and covered with grass. I can’t figure if this is because of his profession or because he lands out so often (see “You Can’t Get There From Here” in *free flight* 2/2000). Within seconds of this act, several members

pointed out that the hill and the bushes had, for 50 years, served as cover for those wishing to relieve themselves without trekking back to the clubhouse. Once again, no particular place to go.

Actually, I think I have hit upon the perfect topic for my goal of an article, suitable for *free flight*, that contains no reference to flying gliders. I’ll collaborate with my landscaper pal who, by coincidence, also wants to write ... we’ll do a piece entirely devoted to ornamental gardens for emergency landing purposes. ■

## Workshop Glossary

**Hammer** Originally used as a weapon of war, the hammer nowadays is used as a kind of divining rod to locate expensive glider parts not far from the object we are trying to hit.

**Acetylene torch** Originally purchased as an industrial strength metal working tool that combines gases in the presence of a spark to create welding heat. Now used exclusively for smoking barograph foils.

**Hacksaw** One of a family of cutting tools built on the Ouija Board principle. It transforms human energy into a crooked, unpredictable motion. The more you attempt to influence its course, the more dismal your future becomes.

**Utility knife** Used to open cardboard cartons delivered to your front door and to slice through the contents. They work particularly well on boxes containing wing covers, parachutes, and canopies.

**Electric drill** Normally used for spinning pop rivets in their holes. It also works well for drilling holes in the floor pan just above the vacuum line that goes to the TE probe.

**Aviation snips** See Hacksaw.

**Air compressor** A machine that takes energy produced in a hydroelectric plant 500 kilometres away and transforms it into compressed air that travels by a hose 5 metres to an impact wrench that grips rusty bolts last tightened 20 years ago, and rounds them off.

**Wire wheel** Cleans rust off old bolts and then throws them at the speed of light somewhere under the workbench. Also removes fingerprints and hard earned calluses in about the time it takes you to say, “Ouc...”.

**Vise grips** Used to round off castellated nuts on control fittings. If nothing else is available, they can be used to transfer intense welding heat to the palm of your hand.

# RULES for HOMEBUILDERS

compiled by **Tony Burton**

There is a natural order to the act of construction, in part delineated below.

You always find a tool in the last place you look.

If you take something apart and put it back together enough times, you will eventually have two of them.

Experience varies directly with material ruined.

If all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail.

When the need arises, any tool or object closest to you becomes a hammer.

The one who says it can't be done should never interrupt the one who is doing it.

The first 90% of a project takes 10% of the time, and the last 10% takes the other 90%.

The easier it is to do, the harder it is to change.

If you fiddle with a thing long enough, it will break.

The nut won't go on until you utter the magic word.

When you're about to use the magic word, children will be present.

The first place to look for a dropped washer is the last place you expect to find it.

Any horizontal surface is soon piled up.

You can make it foolproof, but you can't make it damn foolproof.

Assumption is the mother of all screw-ups.

If you drop something, it will never reach the ground.

When you don't know what you are doing, do it neatly.

There are two kinds of tape: the one that won't stay on, and the one that won't come off.

There are some things that are impossible to do, but it is impossible to know what they are.

Save all the parts.

No two identical parts are alike.

Boob's Law

Rap's Inanimate Reproduction Law

Homer's Five Thumb Postulate

Baruch's Observation

Bromberg's Law of Tool Use

The Roman Rule

The "90 90" Rule

Eng's Principle

Schmidt's Law

Bungey's 1st Law

Bungey's 2nd Law

Law of the Search

Ringwald's Law of Workbench Geometry

Naeser's Law

Wethern's Law of Suspended Judgement

Femo's Law of Homebuilding

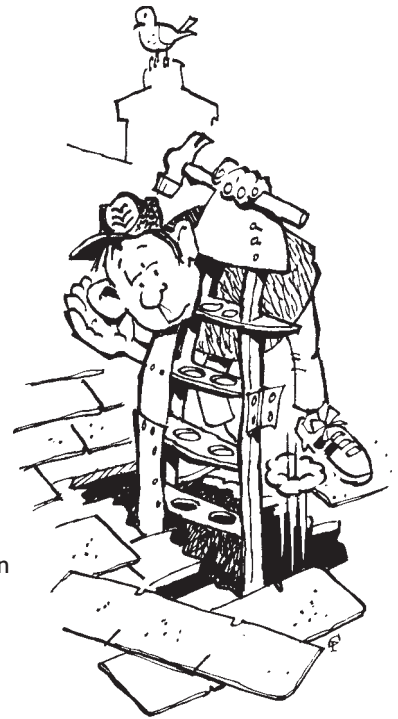
Prissy's Rule'

Teleco's 2nd Law

Jaffe's Precept

First Rule of Intelligent Tinkering

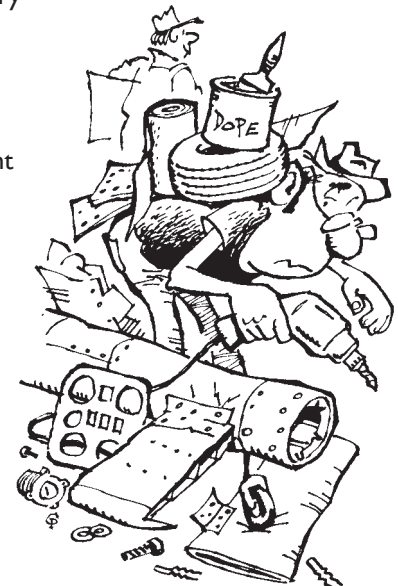
Beach's Law



Femo's Law



Boob's Law



Ringwald's Law

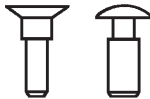
# HARRY'S HANDY HARDWARE

## "Blunder Beaters for Bungling Builders" 1 – Rivets

MOST HOMEBUILT AIRCRAFT are the only aircraft ever built by their proud masters. One consequence of this is that they are usually quite unique, consisting of the accumulation of many examples of learning experience that would not be repeated on a second sample. Often these learning experiences result in the duplication of hours of labour, refabricating some weird and wonderful (and expensive) contraption which was ruined by a slip of the drill in the final stages of fabrication (in accordance with the principles of Murphy's Law). With the experience of a number of years of such efforts, I have developed a great new advance in aircraft hardware, specifically for the ham-fisted amateur. Never again need the fumbling first timer be forced into remanufacturing a part. Instead all he needs to do is reach for a piece of "Harry's Handy Hardware" and fit the pieces together, blunder and all. Here then is a great advance for the Aviation Community.

### Harry's "FIT ALL" Tiered Rivet

Have you ever reached in haste for your 1/8" drill bit and commenced to chew halfway to China through the left wing spar web only to realize that you were somewhat careless? Normally you leave the 1/8" bit in the 9/64" hole (it slips in easier) but this time the hole actually held a 9/64" bit, so you now have an oversized hole. What to do? You could solve the problem by finishing off the hole oversize and using an oversize rivet, but that would require extra work. Up to now it would be the only way to solve the problem, but with the development of the FITALL tiered rivet (available in universal and flush styles) you can now fill the stepped hole and avoid all this extra bother.



FITALL rivets are available with the larger diameter either on the top or the bottom to suit your preference.

### Harry's "DOUBLE TROUBLE" Biflush Rivet

You did some countersinking in the middle of an argument with the wife and now just discovered you have countersunk the wrong piece? Harry has the answer with his DOUBLETROUBLE biflush rivet. Just go ahead and countersink the skin as you should have originally, then pop one of these trouble solvers in the hole and buck away.



### Harry's "INVISIBLE MENDA" Hidden Rivet

Did you get overenthusiastic with your drilling and wind up with a bunch of holes where you don't really need rivets? No problem with Harry's INVISIBLE MENDA. You don't have to show your keenness with a great mass of pimples protruding out of the skin, just countersink the underside of the top skin, place in INVISIBLE MENDA in the depression and buck it from underneath the second skin.



### Harry's "OH MY GOD" Dual Head Rivet

So you let a bad day at the office carry over while you countersunk your skin, only to find it was not supposed to have countersunk rivets? Once more Harry to the rescue with his special OH MY GOD dual head rivets. Now there is a rivet with a universal head built right on the countersunk head, so nobody need ever know what you did. These rivets are available to suit skins countersunk on both top or bottom side.



### Harry's "DOUBLE FLUSH" Rivet

Did you wind up with both sides of the skin countersunk because you answered a call of nature after countersinking it the first time, thereby leaving the sheet on the bench instead of setting it aside? Now you have a problem. Thanks to Harry, who pulled this trick once too often, we have a way out. Use a TWO SIDER DOUBLE FLUSH rivet with its unique double countersunk head and you'll save your skin.



### Harry's "BENDER MENDER" Angled Rivet

Were you having to steady yourself against the wall when you drilled the latest hole and your degree (or so) of list conveyed itself into the hole? Don't go racing off to the hardware store for a hole straightener, it's not necessary. Harry has come up with a whole range of BENDER MENDER angled rivets (both universal and flush) to handle this problem. Just select the angle to fit your need.



### Harry's "CRATERFILLER" Expanding Rivet

Stuck with a cone shaped hole caused by a wobbly drill? Or did you just lose control of the situation when your lit cigarette slid from your lips and down your shirt at the critical moment? No problem. The hole may look like a miniature edition of Mount St. Helens, but Harry's CRATERFILLER will fix it, available in two styles to handle both top and bottom side craters (Note: the bottomsides CRATERFILLER is a little awkward to fit).



# HARRY'S HANDY HARDWARE

## "Blunder Beaters for Bungling Builders" 2 – Bolts

Harry's considerable stock of specialized hardware for homebuilders has been a great boon to many fumble fingered first timers. His current catalogue concludes with a listing of the most popular nuts and bolts for the ham fisted amateur. Harry is quite aware that much of his hardware will evolve over time with advances in the state of the art in connector technology (bi stable epoxies and boron fibre zippers come readily to mind).

There is considerable research in progress, however, to develop a tool which has the potential of making much of Harry's stock obsolescent! Lab models have demonstrated the feasibility of this tool, although development prototypes being researched have been beset by problems of incorporating the necessary induction heaters, interchangeable ceramic pilot rods and precision alignments verniers, etc. into an efficient, small (and marketable) package. This device is the most earnestly wished for tool since the drill was invented – the HOLE MOVER.

With the bugs worked out, it is hoped that the hole mover will be available in the near future. Harry will continue to supply the newest in "fixer uppers" though, secure in the knowledge that there hasn't been a tool invented that hasn't been misused.

**Tony Burton,**  
*free flight technical editor*

### Harry's "Border-biter" Tightfit Nut

So your hole came through right against the edge of the flange and a conventional nut won't go on the bolt? Once again, Harry has the answer with his "Border-biter" nut designed to fit close to any object. When ordering please specify the amount of clearance available. This nut is available in a wide variety of clearance sizes from large negative to large positive amounts.



### Harry's "Oops" Countersunk Nut

So you did it again? Stood on your head and countersunk the wrong side. This time however, it's not for a rivet, you have countersunk the nut side instead of the bolt head side. Harry's done it before and solved the problem with his "Oops" countersunk nut.



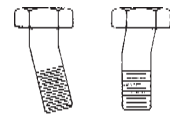
### Harry's "Side-by-Side" Binocular Nut

First hole not good enough so you put another one next to it, but didn't leave enough clearance for two nuts. No problem. Just push the two bolts through, grab a "Side-by-side" binocular nut and twirl it on.



### Harry's "Deflector" Off line Bolts

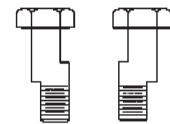
Harry recommends this as the best way to handle a hole that is angled in one piece and straight in the other. It's less work than redrilling. The head is available on either the straight or the angled arm.



### Harry's "Over there" Offset Bolt

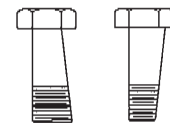
So you were smart enough to learn from your mistake on the left spar butt fitting but still blew it with the right one? The required number of holes on the fitting you have don't line up with those on the spar.

No need to throw the whole darn spar away when a few "Over there" offset bolts will do the trick. Harry has them available for offsets from 1/64" to 1". Specify whether left or right hand offset is required.



### Harry's "Wayout" Sloping Bolt

Did the drill skid sideways as you tried to drill the hole without centre punching? No need to curse the parentage of the drill. Just grab one of Harry's "Way out" sloping bolts, available for both topside and bottomside slopes, and screw on the special nut and the problem is solved. (Note: The nut for the bottomside sloped bolt is hard starting).



### Harry's "Stretch-R" Telescopic Bolt

Appalled at the cost of AN bolts and upset by the large variety you need? Why carry a tremendous stock when you will still not have the one you want? Just procure a small selection of Stretch-R bolts and you will have all you will ever need. Simply select the size closest to what you want and screw it out to the required length.

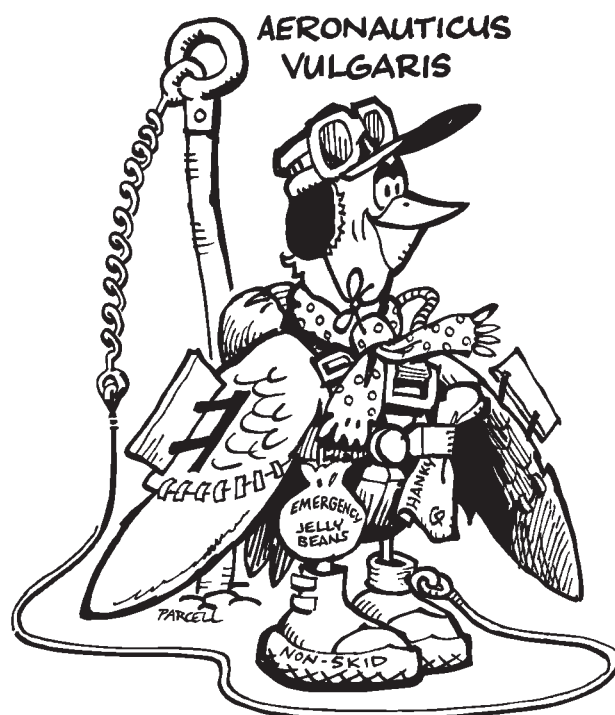




# *an Aviary of Gliding Types*

by **Eric Newsome**, and illustrated by **Gil Parcell**

All glider pilots belong to the species 'Aeronauticus'. Having said that, it then becomes necessary to mention that this species has a plethora of fascinating subspecies. Indeed, one of the joys of club life is to observe, identify and categorize them – a refined form of bird watching in which the observed can reciprocate! This and following pages describe them.



## ***Aeronauticus vulgaris***

is the common or garden variety of pilot found in all clubs in abundance. He is the common house sparrow of the gliding world. All that can be said of *vulgaris* with certainty is that he will win no trophies, set no records and leave no mark in the books yet to be written on the history of soaring flight. *Vulgaris* is a conservative pilot. No glider he will ever fly will be subjected to the stresses and strains it was designed to bear. He will never fly at more than half the maximum permitted speed, in fact, from leisurely thermaling to being in a tearing hurry his airspeed will seldom vary by more than 20 knots. Usually he is content to find a thermal and placidly circle wherever it offers any vestige of support. He is, and will probably remain, an airport haunter seldom leaving the field by more than half his possible gliding range for any given height.

Join A. *Vulgaris* in a thermal and he will make another couple of turns until he judges you too close for comfort and then sedately head out. He is not interested in the challenge of outsoaring anyone, is not tempted by the lure of distant landing fields, he prefers not to chance the cold, lonely heights of the wave.

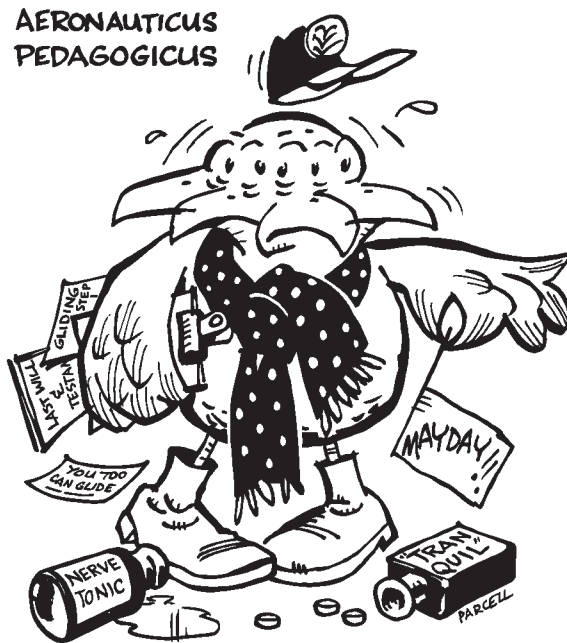
None of this means that *vulgaris* is to be despised. For him the pull of gliding is in doing the seemingly impossible feat of staying in the air without an engine, and in the sheer enjoyment, mystery and peace of soaring flight. Who is to say that his satisfaction is exceeded by any of the flock?

Here's to A. *Vulgaris*, the backbone of gliding and the happiest of men.



### ***Aeronauticus pedagogicus***

is an exclusive breed, the members of which have evolved from the generality of the flock. They fly best when trying to see around a large head with large ears and a larger hat. They have some claim to psychic powers, exhibited by their ability to forestall the suicidal flying moves of fledglings before they occur. There is within the group an obvious aging process. In early days there is no known way of keeping *Pedagogicus* out of the back seat of trainers, but with increasing experience and affluence (usually ending in the fractional ownership of some glass slipper), it develops protective camouflage and becomes difficult to find. It is particularly adept at blending into the scenery when a fledgling is heard to ask for an instructor.



*Pedagogicus* exhibits a marked tendency to flock together with other members of the subspecies to discuss how best to get *A. embryonicus* through their fledgling stage. It is a matter of pride that no two *Pedagogicii* shall ever agree on the single correct way to do anything. The result is that flock meetings are interminable and seldom make significant decisions. Indeed, certain unkind ornithologists have borrowed Shakespeare's phrase, "An idiot's tale of sound and fury, signifying nothing", to describe flock meetings.

Still, *pedagogicus* is our chosen instrument for perpetuating the myths and legends of soaring lore. If the fledglings survive his ministrations, they may yet soar with the eagles. Here's to *A. pedagogicus*. May he also survive.

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### ***Aeronauticus embryonicus***

Like all fledglings, ***A. embryonicus*** appears in the spring in great quantity and variety. With varying degrees of trepidation, they have the common characteristic of wanting to try out their newly discovered wings.

Fledglings are not easily distinguished, as they range from very trim females, delightful to strap into a glider, to gross males almost impossible to fit. They are chiefly identified by their habit of being the only ones to work on the flight line. Senior flock members have long since discovered that the use of fledgling energy in running wings, retrieving ropes and pushing gliders is infinitely preferable to using their own fading energies.

Charged with the task of getting *embryonicus* safely airborne is *A. pedagogicus*. As is the way of the young, the manner in which *embryonicus* regards *pedagogicus* changes with developing skill and confidence: first he appears as a hero pilot who can miraculously fly, then as a disembodied voice calmly explaining how to do things that never seem to work out, later as a 'put-down' artist who, when the fledgling is convinced that all elements are conspiring to make flight impossible, places a casual hand on the stick to restore peace. Later still he becomes a nagging, ever more critical voice over the shoulder, and finally poor *pedagogicus* is relegated to the lowly status of excess baggage to be dumped as soon as possible.

In the air, *A. embryonicus* can be further subdivided according to reaction to training. Examples of these divisions are *A. embryonicus oopsicum*, *musculatum*, *stifnecticus*, and *randomum*.

### ***Aeronauticus embryonicus oopsicum***

Both sexes are the maiden aunts of the flock. No one knows why they want to fly. Installed in the front cockpit, they resemble Queen Victoria in her most 'we are not amused' mood with eyes fixed imperiously forward – a fixation that will not change throughout the flight. When eventually, *oopsicum* can be persuaded to handle the control column, it will be with the same distaste accorded to poisonous snakes, and any movement is so gentle as to be almost imperceptible.

This bird can, with patience, be taught to fly straight at a sedate pace and will also master turns if the bank does not exceed five degrees. To any sudden event requiring immediate corrective action, the only reaction to be expected is a shrill 'Oops!' – no more. *Oopsicum* gradually fades from the scene with profuse apologies about not really having enough time to devote to gliding.



### ***Aeronauticus embryonicus musculatum***

is as far from *oopsicum* as can be imagined. He is confident, fearless and extremely strong. Several years of driving bulldozers and farm tractors have instilled in him the belief that any machine can be tamed providing you get a firm grip on the controls and demonstrate who is boss.

His grip on the stick is so fearsome as to render the instructor helpless to correct errors unless he

is prepared to push the control column with both feet. This is particularly troublesome on landing when it is often necessary to modify *musculatum*'s habit of driving the glider onto the ground as though it were a bus.

In spite of this, he often becomes a very good pilot when his touch has been gentled a little, and he is a good flock member, being particularly useful for heavy lifting around the nest.

### ***Aeronauticus embryonicus randomum***

is entirely unpredictable and so is the cause of many nightmares and grey hairs among the *pedagogicii*. He is apparently fitted with a switch that activates the moment he leaves the ground and which has the charming effect of turning off his brain. It is a curious fact that when one of the *pedagogicii* is driven demented by *randomum*'s inability to maintain a steady airspeed and so turn him over to another instructor, the airspeed control will become rock steady, but *randomum* will then exhibit a marked inability to turn without skidding wildly.

On being told that it is time to land, *randomum* has been known to fly complacently away from the air field until roused by the screams of the instructor who is starting to fear for his life. At this point he has then been known to execute a perfect circuit in the opposite direction to all other traffic and when somehow safely on the ground has responded to the instructor's anguished cry of "Why?" with an unbelieving stare.

As *randomum* flies like a wounded hen on one flight and like an angel on the next, instructors are seen to hide as he approaches in the hope that they will not have to make the fateful decision as to whether or not he is ready for solo flying. Eventually he corners a *pedagogicus* who has not been around for a few weeks and doesn't know what he is facing, and produces a check flight of unexceptional quality.

Only when it is too late and he is just airborne solo do the members of the *pedagogicii* clan emerge from hiding and inform their unfortunate colleague of the

enormity of his deed. From that time on the guilty instructor watches the glider as though mesmerized, all the time steadily chewing on the brim of his hat. Inevitably the gods who look after fools and little children prevail, and *randomum* makes a copybook flight and lands like a feather. But wait until the next flight!

Who will remain a penguin, and who will soar with the eagles? No one knows, but here's to our *Aeronauticus embryonicii* – the future of the sport!

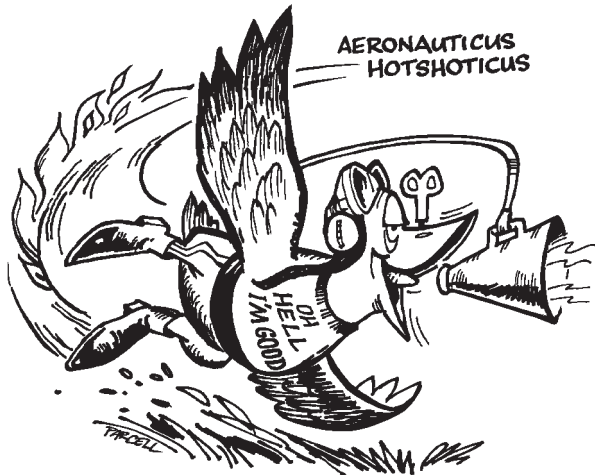


### ***Aeronauticus embryonicus stifnesticus***



The Oozle bird is reputed to fly backwards to keep the dust out of its eyes. *Aeronauticus embryonicus stifnesticus* flies forwards but sees only where his instruments tell him he is going. With this fledgling of the subspecies it is a problem of confidence, and in this he resembles the learner driver who is afraid to move his eyes from dead ahead in case someone should steal the road out from under his wheels.

For all the glider instructor knows sitting in the back seat, the fledgling's eyes may be moving from side to side, or even revolving rapidly in opposite directions, but his neck muscles never even twitch. The instructor's admonition, oft-repeated, to look around is answered by a flick of the head, out and back in, so swift as to be unbelievable.



### ***Aeronauticus hotshoticus***

This bird, unfortunately, is not rare and shows no sign of ever becoming extinct. The subspecies is best identified by a large gaping hole just above his chin that is in constant motion and from which issues a never ending stream of sound. The most readily identified sound is that of the simple word "I" and it is been observed that if "I" could be removed from his endless birdsong he would be struck mercifully dumb.

The eyes of *hotshoticus* exhibit certain peculiarities in that they do not see flying instruments as do other eyes: rates of climb are doubled, speeds appear greater and altitude higher. Curiously, the time perception of *hotshoticus* shows a certain waywardness in that time in conjunction with speed tasks appears to be less while in conjunction with duration of flight claims it seems to be greater. Many of these strange phenomena might have gone undiscovered had it not been for the fact that *hotshoticus* is often equipped with a powerful and much used radio by which he is able to report his instrument readings to lesser pilots nearby who see

things on a different scale. The only temporarily effective means of silencing his radio monologue is to ask him to look up to see if your wheel is retracted just after he has radioed his great height and general soaring ability.

*Hotshoticus* flies with a flair that in lesser subspecies is fairly characterized as bad airmanship. Naturally he considers rules are made for others who need them more. His idea of a standard landing circuit is a high speed pass across the field, flicking the top of the long grass, followed by a zooming climb and a steep turning approach to the runway. It has happened that *hotshoticus* had been so dazzled by his own virtuoso performance that he has forgotten to put his wheel down and so has landed amid a fine shower of fibreglass particles. On the occasions when his wheel is firmly locked down, his landing run is predictably unorthodox as he cuts in front of the line of gliders waiting to takeoff and skilfully using his wheel brake (which this time happens to be working), comes to rest with the sailplane's nose only a few inches from the door of his glider trailer. Very impressive.

Scientists are somewhat puzzled by the position of *hotshoticus* on the scale of glider pilot evolution. Is he the apex of development to which all will eventually climb, or is he a case of arrested development? It is reliably reported that most glider pilots exhibit some small streak of *hotshoticus*, whether it be as a latent development or a vestigial remnant, and this streak can be intensified by adding alcohol to the bloodstream by an oral injection through the neck of a bottle.

Here's to *A. hotshoticus*. May his deeds be as great as his words.

There is hope for fledglings but none at all for the subspecies known as ***Aeronauticus overconfidens***. This bird is usually found in gaggles on days when thermals are rare (and crowded) spiralling merrily upward with head and eyes caged in blissful ignorance of other gliders. If you feel in need of stimulation, get into such a gaggle and meet one of the subspecies head on at the same altitude and circling in the opposite direction to every other glider in the thermal. Don't be afraid of startling him, he knows he's alone in the big blue sky and will never see you.

A cardinal rule of the air is to see and be seen. As there is no way of being sure that you have been seen, it is wise to assume that every other pilot is a fool and a blind fool at that. With *confidens* this is an accurate assumption. The air gives freedom in dimensions unknown to the ground bound, but it also gives the possibility of trouble from all angles.

Here's to *A. overconfidens*. May he follow the dodo bird into extinction. Until then, keep your neck swivelling.

### **AERONAUTICUS OVERCONFIDENSUS**



## AERONAUTICUS COMPETICUS



### ***Aeronauticus competicus***

is a simple, uncomplicated bird with but a single aim – winning. His single minded devotion to his goal has been known to make him somewhat unpopular with the lesser breeds. Among his armament he has an encyclopaedic knowledge of every club rule ever written and a remarkable facility for using them to his advantage without ever transgressing the letter of the law by more than an hair's breadth. His knowledge is most frequently used in getting a tow just when he wants one, which is invariably as the first cu start to pop in the sky. He sees no harm in pushing out of the line naive romantics who wish to fly only for pleasure. It is obvious to him that it is far more important for him to get practice for important contests than it is for them to clutter up the sky to no purpose.

To *competicus*, no cloud scene has ever appeared as a majestic ever changing mountain vista, but only as a source of lift to be coldly assessed. Slanting sunrays breaking through the overcast and bathing a patch of the earth in a golden glow elicit from him no appreciation of beauty but indicate where he should go for his next boost skyward.

The subspecies has a migratory habit which is exceptional in that it occurs in summer and the destination varies from year to year. The flock gathers regionally and nationally to compete and *competicus* is always first to arrive in his wreck of a car – all he can afford after he has purchased the finest glider available. He has a healthy measure of contempt for many of his fellow competitors who are there for what they mysteriously call the fun of competition and would lapse into terminal shock if by chance they should ever finish first some day.

*A. competicus* should be kinder towards these competitors, for if they were not there to be last, how could he manage to be first?

## AERONAUTICUS POLISHITICUS



### ***Aeronauticus polishiticus***

has the finest and most modern glider that it is possible to buy, and this being one of the major investment of his life he considers it worthy of tender, loving care. It is immaculate and seldom flown. The stark white fibreglass gleams from constant polishing, no speck of dust or blade of grass is to be found in the spotless cockpit, which has been tastefully cushioned and carpeted by his mate. He is the mortal enemy of small boys with dirty, sticky fingers.

On the panel an expensive and complicated range of dials and instruments gleam mysteriously. However with so many instruments there is so much to go wrong. It is for this reason that many club members know *polishiticus* only by his posterior, the only view of him they have ever had as he investigates the rat's nest of wires and tubes which, theoretically keeps his instruments telling the truth. His glider trailer is likewise immaculate. Wing and fuselage cradles are lined with the finest of carpet, naturally matching that of the cockpit. All equipment is neatly painted and labelled.

On sunny cumulus dappled days he can be found hiding from the scene as he assiduously cleans rust spots from the trailer axle.

*Polishiticus* has been known to fly on days when there is not too much dust blowing and when there is no chance of rain. He is, of course, properly dressed for flying and always wears gloves. His flying is proper and sedate and he never strays more than a few miles from "mother" airfield.

Here's to *A. polishiticus*. May he one day inadvertently go cross-country and have to land in a swamp!



## AERONAUTICUS DESIGNICUS



*Aeronauticus designicus* is an extremely rare subspecies – many experienced observers claim that the last place to spot this bird is on a glider airfield. *Designicus* is a combination of sculptor, mathematician and the Marquis de Sade. Its creations, in their most refined mode, reach the pinnacle of form following function. It pays meticulous attention to flowing shape and perfect finish, to minimum frontal area and to tucking away neatly all those things which must occasionally dangle in the breeze – but that's all outside.

The average pilot spends remarkably little time on the outside of a glider in flight but a considerable amount of time on the inside – assuming that he can get in. *Designicus* must, as a condition of entry to the designers club, be no more than five feet tall and weigh no more than ninety pounds soaking wet. If it were otherwise, he would be tempted to design a

glider with an interior space large enough to contain a normal, healthy, well fed male. The agonies suffered by sailplane pilots in the name of pleasure are remarkable to an observer unbitten by the gliding bug, but the sight of a glider pilot being shoe horned into the cockpit and then cowering down while the canopy is crammed down on his hat must be as idiotic a sight as can be imagined. By comparison, a submarine is like living in the wide open spaces.

Any pilot of a modern sailplane can be stirred to revile *designicus* by any of the following questions: Have you ever tried reaching behind you and found yourself with one arm locked somewhere behind your neck at a critical moment? Have you ever dropped a map in the region of your left foot and had to land to pick it up? Have you ever tried to retract the wheel and found that you cannot get your elbow far enough back to complete the pull on the lever? Ever managed to tie yourself in tight by an arrangement of safety straps fitted in such a way as to require pulling in an impossible direction? Ever thought of bailing out?

Why can't *designicus* evolve to the point at which he starts with an unaerodynamic shape, the human body, and design on from there? Perhaps as an aid to stimulating development, all designers should be required to certify that they themselves have been fattened to normal proportions before releasing their masterpieces, and in such condition have flown for five hours in rough air. Here's to *A. designicus*, may he be forced to learn and apply the lesson of:

*There was a young fellow named Hirth,  
Who was rather broad in the girth.  
His glider was slim,  
He couldn't get in,  
And now he flies on it, not in it.*





# ANGER IN THE HANGAR

**Tony Burton**, 1984/1 *Adapted from a tale by Max Ruff in the "Southern Cross Journal"*

**LS-3** I love this moment on a Sunday evening when everything's quiet again.

**2-33** Yeh, it's great when they've shut her down. Doesn't take them long to dump us back in the hangar and blast off to the pub.

**K-13** Ja, das ist true. Too much hurry they are in. I still haff my electric vario on.

**2-33** Hard luck, friend – mine's U/S anyway. Jeez, what a weekend, my back's nearly broke! Right here it gets me, near the wing roots. Gawd, I feel lousy.

**K-13** You are right, I too am aching. Twenty launches today I had, and more yesterday. I am drooping, and my brother in the corner sleeps already.

**Ka6** We worked hard alright.

**2-33** We? Whaddaya mean, we? You spent all your !\*%&# time thermalling with hot shot pilots. The 13s and me were up and down all day like bloody yo yos, with ham handed students doing their best to bend us.

**Ka6** Watch your mouth in front of a lady! My wing loading is higher than yours, and the strain ...

**LS-3** Hey, let's not quarrel. Why can't we have some peace this evening?

**2-33** That's it, shorty, stand up for your fancy friend. You single-seaters stick together like flies on a dead cat. Conceited, that's your trouble.

**LS-3** Could it possibly be that you are a little jealous?

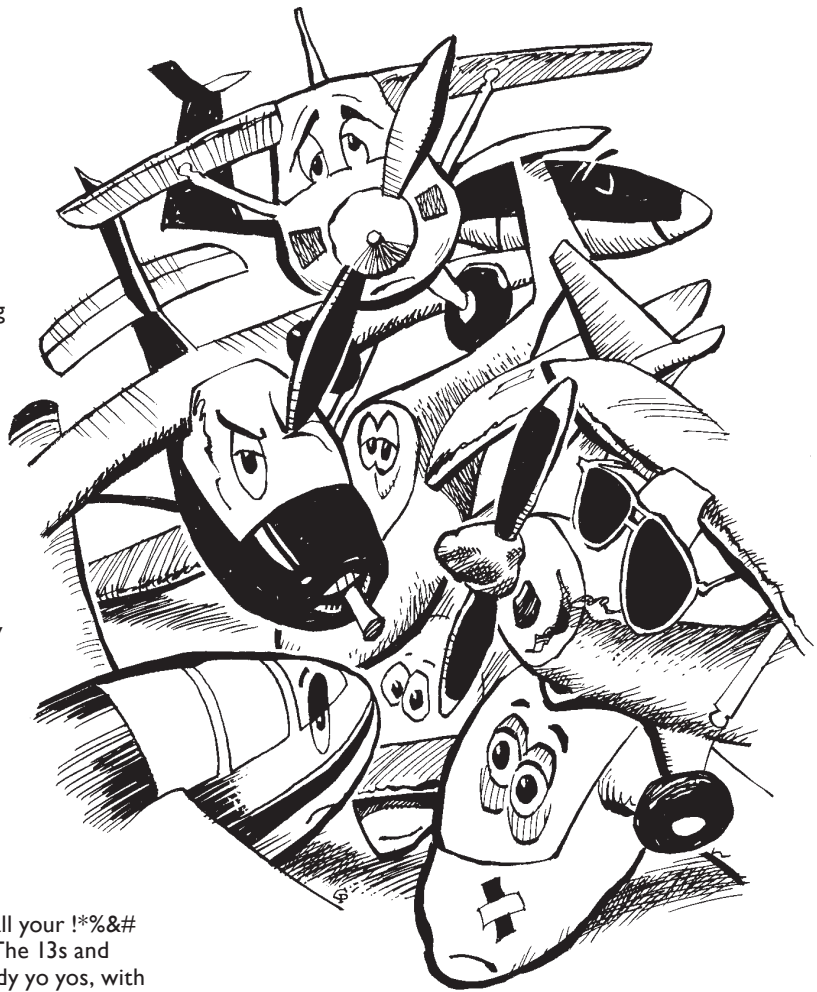
**2-33** Listen, son, you're the wrong shape to be jealous of. And you've hardly had a hard landing in your short life. I got dropped in from ten feet again today – if it happened to you, you'd break in half.

**K-13** And I had the vorst tow of mein career. Swinging madly, ve were, and making great loops in the rope that nearly pulled off mein nose. 2-33 ist right, you solo machines haff an easy life.

**2-33** Right on! Especially that stuck up cow over there. You listenin', Cirrus?

**Cirrus** I am, but do not choose to enter this discussion.

**2-33** Oh, aren't you the hoity toity one. I would expect that from you, you only cost 30,000 bucks, and don't do nuthin' for it ...



**Cirrus** That's a lie! At the last camp, I worked hard. And you are not the only one to suffer – I was ground looped repeatedly.

**2-33** Aw, you poor thing. Wait until you get put through a fence then we'll see how good bloody fibreglass is. I see you've got your covers on – sure you're not too cold, dear?

**Piper Cub** Listen, you guys, how about clamming up and letting me and my buddy get some sleep?

**2-33** Look, turkey, don't you stick your two bits in, you make enough noise during the day. I suppose you got a hard time story, too.

**Piper Cub** Towing you around the sky is no picnic, feller. It's like dragging Vancouver Island.

**2-33** Thanks friend. Give me a winch, any time.

**Citabria** We'd like to – right in your C of G.

**2-33** It'd take more than two greasy gas guzzlers to ...

**Blanik** Please, please, let us be friends!

**2-33** Friends? This place is like the United bloody Nations. A man's surrounded by foreigners. What this club needs is more homebuilts. ■

# Help wanted: tow pilot

*When the Alberta Soaring Council acquired its Scout towplane,  
the word must have got out that ASC was checking out tow pilots,  
because they received the following letter ...*

Dear ASC Chief Tow Pilot,

I would like to apply for a job as a tow pilot, I have a lot of experience – almost 75 hours – and have had only two accidents. I probably wouldn't have had that first one if my instructor hadn't let me solo with the wind blowing. I don't think he realized how difficult it is to land a tricycle gear airplane when it's windy. It really gets tough in a high performance airplane like the Cessna 150. Maybe you already knew that.

If you hire me I could use my own uniform. I have a brand new pair of sunglasses (Ray Ban) and my own jacket with a buckle on the back. I wear them with my new Wellington boots, so I really look like a tow pilot. The jacket has epilepsy where I could put copilot or even captain stripes (later, of course). It also has a fur collar which makes me look strong. My girl friend picked it out. She liked the black one but I liked the brown one better. I got the black one because she said it makes me look more mature – kinda like what's his name in "The High and Mighty". It has some great pockets for carrying gloves and things like that. If I had a pair of leather gloves I could sort of let them hang out of the pocket which always impresses people. The jacket isn't really leather but pretty much looks like leather. I don't think anyone would know it isn't leather except maybe some other tow pilots as experienced as me.

I don't have any wings but if you could give me a salary advance I have a friend who says he will sell me his. They are just the right size so that everyone will be able to see them when I walk through the club house (I'm not sure where he got them, maybe from an Army surplus store).

I can go to work almost anytime except next Sunday. My girl friend and I are going to a rock concert.

Thank you,

Chuck

PS. If you don't like the buckle on the back of the jacket I could probably take it off. I don't think that will bother the belt. After you see it you may want to order some for your other tow pilots who don't have any.

This application was duly passed on to Tom Schollie of Red Deer, the ASC Chief Tow Pilot at the time. Now one of Tom's few bad habits is to think in verse, so he responded this way:

*Dear Prospective Tow Pilot:*

*I want to thank you for your letter.  
I couldn't imagine anyone better.  
Seventy five hours of intense flying  
Only two prangs, and no fear of dying.*

*You're very keen on how you look,  
Willing to fly right by the book,  
Willing to use your own clothes too,  
That's really awfully good of you.*

*I've considered your offer and I advise  
You don't quite qualify in my eyes.  
Tricycle time is fine but lacking,  
Most gliding clubs would send you packing.*

*You must be great with a tailwheel crate,  
And wheel land or stall on as winds dictate.  
Crosswinds must be a welcome delight,  
And lift must be sought with every flight.*

*And stamina is vital too,  
Days are long and rests are few.  
And you cannot smoke while you fly for us.  
Why, you say, what's the fuss?  
There are many risks we have to run,  
But loss by smoking isn't one.*

*So, clean up your act, pile up your hours,  
Solo a glider to earn your wildflowers.  
Know your taildraggers inside and out,  
Recognize danger and get the hell out!  
It's safety first and safety last,  
So live down your short and sorry past.*

*When detractors declare you a real sensation,  
Feel free to renew your tow application.*

Yours truly, Tom ASC CTP

## A black and white cartoon illustration by Dave Coverly. In the center, a man in a flight suit with a bandaged head and a tag that says "REPAIRED BY PAK-MAN" stands next to a man in a pilot's uniform who is inflating a tire. The plane has a "CHECK LIST" and "PASSENGER" sign. Various items like "NEEDED ON FLIGHT", "PING PONG BALLS", and "HANG BY YOUR TOWS" are scattered around. The cartoon is signed "DAVE COVERLY" in the bottom left corner.

Communication from the front (of the rope) re messages on tow tickets:



from Cu Nim's "Barograph Traces"

# SLOTH

“Platypus” from *Sailplane & Gliding*

TIME WAS, if you said to your CFI, “Chiefy, on my next gliding holiday I want to put as many hours in my logbook as possible and fly as many miles as possible and to see the widest variety of countryside and generally get the most out of my glider, my talents, and the British weather, all of which are pretty limited. What do you advise?”, then the instant answer would have come winging back, “Enter a competition, of course! Best of all, get into a Nationals.” And of course a Comp was indeed the ideal way to achieve all those noble aims: expert met briefings and aerotows laid on; a crew madly eager to drive thousands of miles from dawn to dusk, and from dusk to dawn again and finally; with distance tasks that started in the very first thermal of the morning and ended in a long, floating descent from the last thermal of the evening. Many pilots, in gliders of lower performance than those in which people now go solo, averaged seven hours a flight, seeing not just the countryside, but the coastline, often from many miles out to sea, from Cornwall to Scotland in the same week. It wasn’t just worth 50 hours in the logbook, it was beautiful and hard to forget.

Dreadful tales are told of the extermination of the American bison in the 19th century; people would shoot the poor beasts just to cut out the tongue as a delicacy and leave the carcass to rot. That’s what the unholy alliance of competition pilots and organizers increasingly do to magnificent, broad shouldered soaring days that could effortlessly carry hundreds of gliders round this land for seven, eight hours or more. They carve out two or three hours in the middle of the afternoon and discard the really interesting bits at either end. Like a dead buffalo a great soaring day never, ever comes back. It is lost for all eternity. Forget lunch, *launch!* A few times I have got my act together just about in time for an early launch, and I have been continually astonished how soon in the day the good soaring weather can start. On so many days thermals are bubbling at 1000 and I realise I could already have been 40 km or more down the first leg of some vast task. Don’t say that this is all to do with 1989 being a freak year; it was a freak year, but the principle applies every year – some days are perfectly usable a good three hours before the typical competition pilot crosses the start line.

Years ago I arrived overhead a famous club more than 250 km out from home in an ASW 20 on a Sunday lunchtime – about 1:30 pm – and people were saying on the radio that they’d just discovered it was a rather nice day and maybe they ought to aviate a bit. On the ground, high performance gliders could be seen preparing for their first, leisurely launch of the day. They would have discovered that it had been fantastic since 9:30 am if only they’d got off their backsides. (To be fair, I’m sure the same leisurely carrying-on was taking place back home.) It wouldn’t matter as much if they were not the same people that whine about the horrendous cost per hour of gliding, the rarity of good days, the difficulty of getting utilization etc. If you want a worthwhile resolution for the New Year, it is this: get up early; get the equipage and all the assorted junk out on the launch point and get your behind, and all that is strapped to it, into the empyrean at the earliest opportunity. If you are a slow pilot like me, the only way you will ever cover the ground is to use all the soaring hours that God sends. A few more touches of the blindingly obvious:

- It helps to pair fly with friends; tiptoe along at max L/D, and stay in touch by radio and eye.
- Remember that when cloudbase is low the thermals are closer together, so it isn’t so difficult as it looks. The lift at breakfast time is not strong but is almost continuous. That is how Hans Werner Grosse used to do 1000 km flights in his ASW-17 years ago.
- Try to set a task such that there is a friendly airfield on track on the first 20 or 30 km, then you can be reassured that if you do burn your boats too early you can get a relight and not waste the whole day in some meadow glaring up at the clouds and cursing Platypus. Take a good book along, though, just in case.
- If you really have launched prematurely, and the tug pulls you through dead air all the way to 2000 feet, carry on to 3200 feet over the site, announce “Start” in a clear, confident voice and glide out on track, praying. You are giving the thermals 20 minutes to wake up. (You are also impressing the hell out of your friends, who are listening to the radio still in their pyjamas and eating toast and marmalade. The lower the performance glider you do this in, the more impressed they will be, especially if they have shares in it.) If you get nothing by the time you get down to 2000 feet, you either press on or turn back as the mood takes you. I take no responsibility from here on.

In the greatest flight ever done in this country, 808 km from Lasham to Durham and back in 1976, Chris Garton was 30 km along track and down below 1000 feet, with no usable airfield in range before he got his first thermal. That’s the way to write a big flight not just into the logbook, but into the record book. There is no substitute for a “Positive Mental Attitude” (of course, span helps no end). You will note that the sailplanes referred to in the foregoing piece are all available at reasonable prices these days, being to greater or lesser degree obsolete, but capable of terrific performance. So it is not a question of this being advice for Nimbus 3 owners which all others can ignore. It is a question of attitude. Lastly, if flying for seven hours and more does not appeal, then land at lunch time and throw your partners into the air.

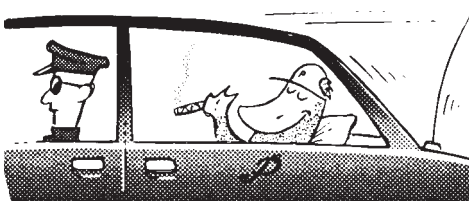
# AVARICE

“Platypus” from *Sailplane & Gliding*

NATURALLY, MY SOLE INTEREST IN MONEY is so I can afford to glide, and anything that threatens to stem the flow of launches or trips to Australia must be taken seriously. A few weeks ago my boss called me in and began talking to me about the amazing opportunities there were to be found in the world of consultancy. He’s a very subtle fellow, for I was out in the corridor before I realized I’d been fired. Nevertheless he was right about the consultancy racket. With this change of life I had to pay for a financial consultant and a legal consultant (that’s the same as an accountant and a lawyer, only costing twice as much). The first one had a plush office in St James’ Street, right near the Palace, and he oozed charm and reassurance and said, “Now, Mr P, tell me all about it in your own time”, and on his desk is the damn great clock, with the big hand marking the fivers and the little hand quietly sweeping up the hundred pound notes.

The lawyer was even smarter – she operated from a little Victorian house in Fulham, no overheads – and charged £120 an hour. Two pounds a minute! We dealt entirely by phone or post. I don’t know whether she fancied me but she kept inviting me round for tea, and I thought “Even Lyons Quick-brew takes four minutes, that’s an aerotow – and this could be an oriental tea ceremony – plus Value Added Tax – I’d have to sell the glider!” I felt that anything I said or did in her drawing room might be taken down and used in an invoice. All the same I suppose I could have done worse than have a lady friend who could earn two pounds a minute without getting up off her sofa.

So I have become a consultant myself – and there are two simple mottos which are “the higher the fewer”, and “less is more”. Have nothing to do with anyone below the rank of chairman or managing director; let them do all the talking; and send them a massive bill so they know they have been well advised. I’m hoping to get to the position where I sit cross-legged on a cushion for one hour at breakfast time, seeing a stream of tycoons for ten minutes each, then my chauffeur can get me up to the club before the thermals start.



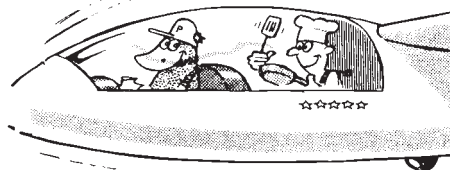


# GLUTTONY

“Platypus” from *Sailplane & Gliding*

FOR YEARS I NEVER USED TO EAT OR DRINK while flying. On one nine hour flight in 1975 I lost eight pounds without benefit of pee bags. Then I learned that getting dehydrated was bad for you, so I started taking pure Dunstable Downs water in a plastic bottle, but no food. Then I was corrupted. It was the two-seater that started the rot. When you are on your own, the urge to eat or drink is minimal. But company changes everything. One of my passengers insists on taking vacuum flasks (“What d’you want? Hot coffee or hot tea?”) and a variety of freshly cut sandwiches. At first I tried to ignore this, believing that a serious pilot had higher things to worry about.

But the aroma of bacon butties<sup>1</sup> – before we go any further I ought to explain the plethora<sup>2</sup> of footnotes in this piece. Our researchers tell me that we have vast numbers of readers from foreign parts who understand only the purest English. Slang, jargon, argot, figures of speech and obscure references to Shakespeare, cricket or television situation comedies cause confusion and doubt. Having lots of footnotes in also puts the printers on their mettle<sup>3</sup> – in a confined space is hard to resist! Has someone been wiring up a waffle iron<sup>4</sup> to those massive batteries behind the back seat? No wonder the artificial horizon<sup>5</sup> has been toppling lately; if we spin in, at least the condemned men will have had a hearty breakfast. Others specialize in KitKat<sup>6</sup>, Twix bars and other sticky confections. In warm weather chocolate melts horribly and dribbles all over the maps, not to mention the luxurious upholstery. One considerate copilot of mine used to wait until we were at 5000 feet, then unwrap the KitKat very carefully in the cool draught from the ventilator; only when it was reasonably solidified was it fit to be passed to the pilot in charge. The copilot’s reward for all this trouble was to get to fly the beast for a while. After a minute or so a loud belch<sup>7</sup> from the front seat would signal that the senior pilot was ready to take over once more.



Hunger isn’t the only reason for the compulsion to stuff one’s face. A 17 stone<sup>8</sup> Billy Bunter<sup>9</sup> ish character that I flew down to Cornwall in a K7 ate bulls’ eyes<sup>10</sup> constantly, in between observing gloomily that we always seemed to be getting lower. Nonsense, I said, the ground is just getting higher, as we slid over Dartmoor<sup>11</sup> and watched the ground drop away again. I think it was worry that made him eat, and my flying simply accelerated an innate tendency towards pessimism.

Years ago (1963, when the Beatles first came to power and satire became the new craze) I invented for the entertainment pages of S&G a ruthless glider pilot called James Bend, whose adventures were so popular that I was asked to give the readers more in 1964. Sorry, I said, but this whole 007 James Bond nonsense will be played out by them, and satires on yesterday’s cult always fall quite flat. How wrong I was! But I remember that our hero Bend celebrated a height record with Bollinger champagne and a Havana while airborne: then I asked the readers to turn to a far distant page, in the infuriating way that American magazines have. The page number in question didn’t exist, of course. “What happened?”, a thousand eager subscribers clamoured to know. (Well, one of them clamoured to know, if we are precise.) The rest just assumed the printer had lost part of the copy as usual. I had no idea what happened to Mr. Bend. But it now occurs to me that at 40,000 feet or so a champagne cork, bottled at 400, would come out with magnum force and destroy the instrument panel, and lighting up a cigar in the presence of pure oxygen would be even more dangerous.

So the story might well have ended with our somewhat scorched adventurer swinging down on his parachute, pondering whether it wasn’t better to stick to lust after all ...

1 Butty – Northern English dialect for a square sandwich of coarse proportions, with any kind of filling. The Queen does not eat butties.

2 Opposite to a dearth.

3 Not sure what one’s mettle is, frankly, but if you are put on it you are being tested.

4 Can be used to make hot butties.

5 A gadget frequently in use in British gliders owing to the frequent absence of a real horizon. Banned in most other countries.

6 A delicious chocolate covered wafer, not to be confused with “Kit-e-Kat”, a petfood for felines.

7 A semi-involuntary sound originating from the stomach, indicating appreciation of having dined well: mandatory etiquette amongst royalty in some countries. The Queen, however, does not belch.

8 A quite unmetric 14 pounds (or a baker’s dozen plus one).

9 A fat, famous, fictional school boy from a public school (ie. a private school) called Greyfriars, who was known as the Owl of the Remove. (what’s a remove? well, it’s a – oh, forget it.)

10 Not the actual eyes of bulls (this would now be banned because of Raging Bull disease) but a stripy, round pellet of hardboiled sugar; revolting to any person of refined tastes. No, the Queen does not eat bulls’ eyes either, not in public anyway.

11 Britain’s most famous jail, not to be confused with the Tower of London, which is where they send people who make fun of the Queen.



# LUST

“Platypus” from *Sailplane & Gliding*

FOR MALE PILOTS IT IS WELL ESTABLISHED THAT SEX is a substitute for gliding, not the other way round as supposed by Freudian psychologists. The reason is fairly straightforward. Male pilots assume that their womenfolk (I'm talking about those men that have womenfolk; large numbers of gliding men don't want anything to do with women) are available for their pleasure at any time, whereas the marvellous combination of an available glider and good soaring conditions is so rare that it must be seized, and everything else can wait. But I wonder if the men don't assume too much.

There must be huge opportunities for a ruthless seducer at gliding clubs. Think of all those bored, neglected women, their men miles away, in mind if not in body. Now I myself have never stooped to take advantage, not even when it was unsoarable. I have to say it is mainly cowardice rather than conscience. Think, for a moment, of the consequences if you actually stirred a fellow member to a fit of jealous passion. (Hard to imagine at my club; about the only thing that would stir a fellow member to any kind of jealous passion would be if you sneaked your glider into his place on the aerotow queue.) But it is just possible; then, imagine, halfway through the take off run you discover you have 200 lbs of water ballast in one wing and none in the other, or the elevator is disconnected, or you go into cloud and the terminals on the turn and slip have mysteriously been reversed. You are playing with fire. That is why at gliding sites, in comparison with what I'm told goes on at golf clubs or fox hunting circles, I hear so little scandal.

There is one small exception – well, it is a pretty big exception really – and I am told it's rampant. Long before those terrible storms it was a rule at [club X] that the house trailers had to be tethered firmly at both ends with steel hawsers. They didn't worry about the gliders or their trailers, so they blew all over the place in the last hurricane, but the house trailers have to be secure. I think the committee were more concerned about noise pollution rather than about them getting loose and bouncing their way down the perimeter track in broad daylight.

So I've often thought, since for the reasons I have mentioned it's not a good idea to do it on one's own doorstep, that it might be fun, on a day when my partner has the glider, to nip down to another club and make a few low passes, so to speak. But I know that with my luck and my character, at the end of the day it would be an emotional disaster of guilt, remorse and self-recrimination. Because, when the tomcat crawls home at the end of that day of debauchery he will switch on the answering machine and hear his partner's voice: "Hello Plat, this is Fred at 9 am. I have been re-rostered and have to fly a 737 to Frankfurt this afternoon, so the glider's all yours, rigged and ready to go. Looks like a 600 km record day. Happy soaring!"

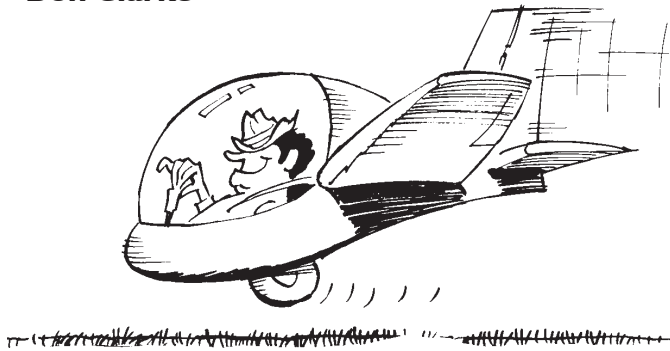
Aaarrrrggghhh! What have I done? What a stupid, mindless waste! (Bangs head against door.) Miserable, lascivious wretch! This is your punishment; the Day of Days, thrown away in a trailer with the blinds drawn! Where's the gin bottle? etc. etc.

The moral is: men who are tempted to infidelity, stay faithful to your loved one, do not stray, for that can only lead to woe. That's right, stick with your glider. Take a cold shower every morning and go up to the club without fail; you never know, the Lord may smile on you and drop the wing root on your partner's foot. Your reward will be in Heaven – ie. anywhere over 5000 feet clear of restricted airspace. Here endeth the lesson.

PS My apologies to women glider pilots for leaving them out of this farrago. Researches into this small but increasingly important group are only just beginning. Offers of information and assistance gratefully accepted. First hand accounts preferred.

# The Hot Shot

Don Clarke



DEAR FRED:

Well, here I am at a place that isn't known to a lot of people, but I am sending this letter to you in a plain envelope so you can write to me without a lot of people perhaps seeing this letter and seeing where I am and perhaps sending a vigilante gang after me, as the Chief said he would if I ever stuck my nose in the hangar again. Now it was all a "miscarriage of justice" as they say in the courts as I will now tell you. Furthermore, I'm not allowed to fly; that's a pity because gliding needs good pilots such as me as examples.

Now as to the events of last week, I think you must agree that it is not fair to have all the good pilots going by the same rules that beginners and those who aren't so sharp on their flying have to obey. What is the use of being a good pilot unless you can do a thing or two out of the ordinary? So you see my point of view and see why the above mentioned miscarriage is wrong and perhaps I should sue for defamation of character on account of the names the Chief said applied to me.

I guess maybe the day got off to a bad start. Just because I moved to a high position on my first tow when the tug was about 50 feet off the ground. As you know, things can get a little turbulent near the ground, and maybe I did get a bit high, because the nose of the tug seemed to be pointing down a bit once or twice. At any rate, the lift hadn't started yet, so I was on the ground in a few minutes, but who should come hot footing it over to me but the tow pilot. He said some things which I cannot repeat to you out of respect to your tender upbringing, but he was so hot under the collar that he was generating a good sized thermal right on the spot.

It seemed like it would be better if I mingled until tempers cooled and, as there was a crowd taking intro and instructional flights, I could maybe tell them a few facts about flying. Pretty soon I spot this babe who seemed to be taking quite an interest in things as she is watching intently as the gliders come and go. So I kind of sidle over and note she is quite a knockout who I would like to be better acquainted with. We exchange a few words and I tell her my name as I figure it is well to start out knowing whom you are talking to, and I tell her all the different places I've been to (I know I haven't been to all of these places, but I know about the gliding that they do there, so it is practically the same thing as actually flying from these places like Black Forest and Pennsylvania and Cowley. "Well," I said, "I am going to fly now, and if you watch me, I will be in the red glider, and I will show you how an expert can fly." "Thank you," she says, "I will be grateful for the lesson."

So I take a tow and the thermals are booming now, and soon, I am at 3000 feet, I figure I will show the lady a loop. (I know I haven't done a loop before, but I know all about them.) Lots of entry speed, so down goes the nose of the I-36 till the ASI is about 160. I guess I'm kind of scared, but it is now too late to chicken out. The ground seems to be coming up awfully fast, so I yank back hard on the stick, and hang on. Things got a bit hazy at this point, so maybe I was pulling a few extra Gs. Next thing I know, the horizon is in the wrong place, but I figure maybe this is the top of the loop, so I still hang on. Maybe this was a lucky thing, because pretty soon we seem to be all level again, but going at a good clip.

The next part of my plan was to do a fast beat up. I was up wind of the field and I could see the crowd watching. So nose down, aim for this side of the crowd, right down the middle of the runway. Worked like charm and I'm moving right along, about ten feet over the ground, and out of the corner of my eye, I get a glimpse of this babe watching things. However, I see a 2-33 ahead coming in for a landing. It's a student pilot – he should learn to fly in close company – so I do a close pass to sharpen him up a bit. Then I do a fast pull up, then a nifty 180 to come in. I figure to come in a bit long, to roll right up to where this gal is, as it always impresses the natives to see how close you can come to them in a rollout. However, as I'm rolling along on the ground and start to turn to the crowd, one wing digs into the ground, and bang! I'm in a groundloop. Of course, somebody had parked a 2-33 too close to the runway, so I kind of dented one wing as the nose of the I-36 hit it.

Now there seemed to be quite a bit of comment about that, but what the heck? – everyone knows that there are these puller things that garages use to fix dents in cars, so why not use one on the 2-33? A couple of yanks, and you would hardly know there had been an impact, as they say. However, I was not getting very far with this idea when there was a awful screech from the CFI who was in attendance. "Look at the dihedral on those wings!" Well, there was a bit of extra slant, now that you looked at the I-36 from the front. Some smart Alec looked inside the cockpit and saw that the drag spar had a sort of a bend in it and everybody started hollering again.

There was a lot of loose talk about pulling too many Gs on the loop and bending the main spar, but I guess they don't make planes like they used to, eh? Besides, a bit more dihedral would stabilize the craft, wouldn't it? So why the fuss? Well, somebody says the Chief wants to see me, so I amble over to the office, but I have a premonition that this will not be a friendly chat, even if it is only about a few minor repairs. But it does not seem to be a friendly chat, in fact, it is more of a monologue, except that it isn't even that because the Chief is practically incoherent and I can only understand a few of the words, what with all the spluttering. But I am given to understand that I am not popular, as I said at the first of this letter.

Then I notice that the babe I was talking to earlier is in the office too, and she says, "We have met and you have given me your name, but I did not get a chance to tell you mine, or why I am here. I am an inspector from the Department and I had come to look over the operation of this club. As of right now I am lifting your licence. You will get an official notice later." So even though I thought it was unethical to use women as inspectors, I figured that there was little to be gained if I stuck around any longer, so I took my leave and thus I am now at the place which is my present address, kind of undercover.

Your gliding pal, **Mort**

# Trylan Erra

Safety is such an unhumorous subject these days — now it's formalized as a "Management System". Decades ago various flying organizations, the military included, often had as a part of their safety awareness programs, a "doofus" that did everything wrong. The RAF had a "Pilot Officer Percy Peach", if memory serves.

Even our soaring association had such a character back in the 1960s, compliments of a poetic as well as artistic Gil Parcell. He invented Trylan Erra, a very unimpressive young man and a bright, shining example of what not to do ...

*Drifting from the aerodrome  
At quite a rapid pace,  
We find our thermal working friend,  
The dauntless soaring ace.*

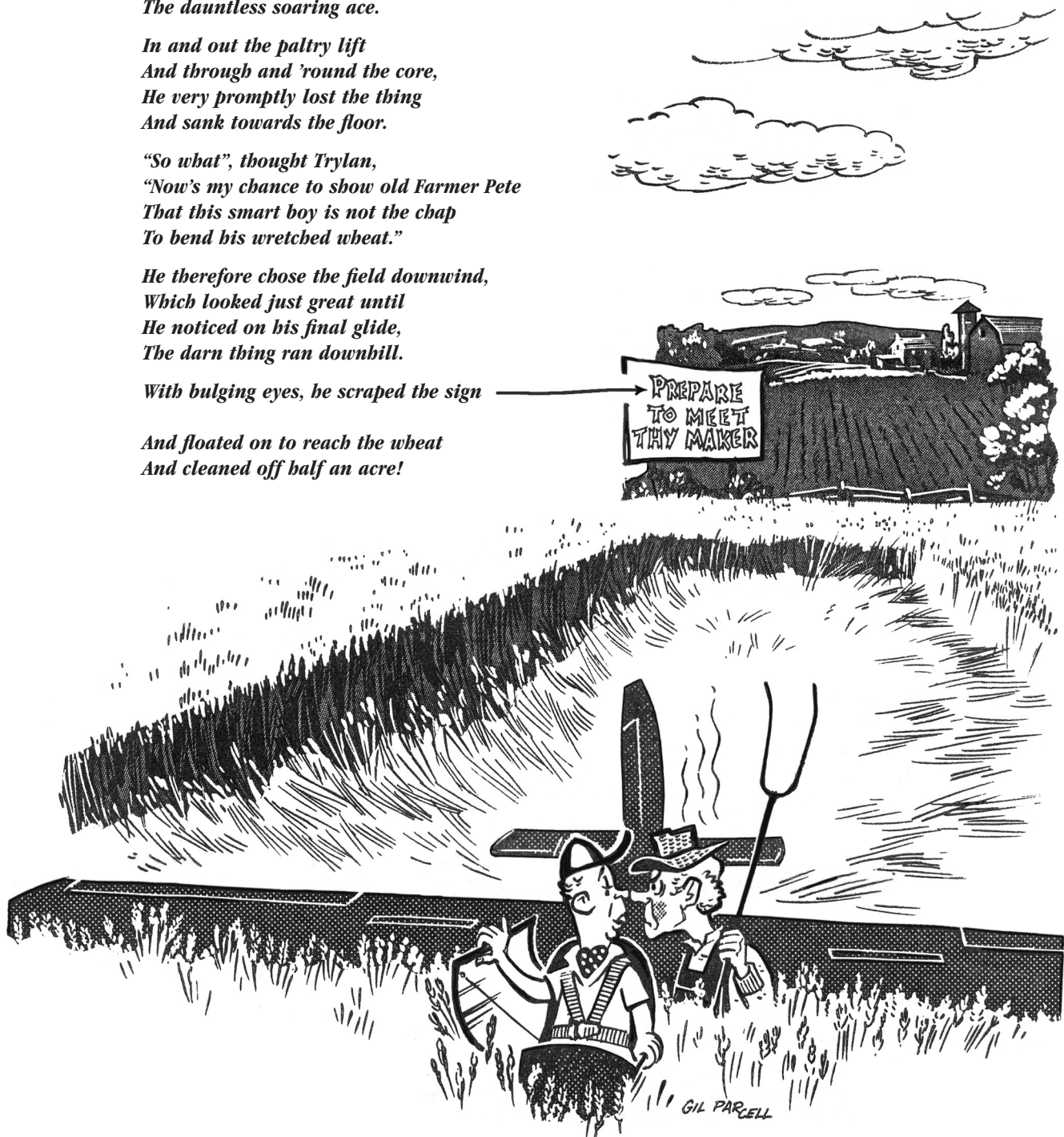
*In and out the paltry lift  
And through and 'round the core,  
He very promptly lost the thing  
And sank towards the floor.*

*"So what", thought Trylan,  
"Now's my chance to show old Farmer Pete  
That this smart boy is not the chap  
To bend his wretched wheat."*

*He therefore chose the field downhill,  
Which looked just great until  
He noticed on his final glide,  
The darn thing ran downhill.*

*With bulging eyes, he scraped the sign*

*And floated on to reach the wheat  
And cleaned off half an acre!*





# Bumble and the Gremlins

Eric Newsome

*Eric begins a brand new series on the foibles of glider pilots. Read and wince (and maybe laugh at that fool over there in the mirror). Superbly illustrated again by Gil Parcell.*

## Part 1 The Case for Gremlins

ONE OF THE FEW GOOD THINGS to come out of the war – the last big one that is – was the science of ‘Gremlinology’. Gremlins are a species of ‘wee folk’ and if the Irish believe in wee folk, how can the rest of us possibly disbelieve? Perhaps part of a poem written about gremlins gives a good idea of what we are dealing with:

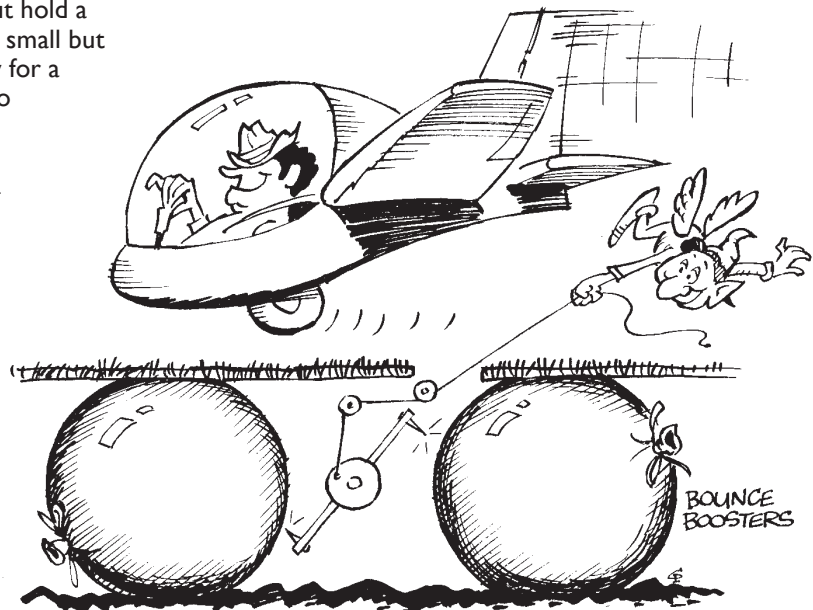
*When you're seven miles up in the heavens,  
And that's a hell of a lonely spot,  
And it's fifty degrees below zero,  
Which isn't exactly hot.  
It's there that you'll see the gremlins,  
Green, gamboge and gold,  
Male and female and neuter,  
Gremlins both young and old.  
White ones'll wiggle your wingtips,  
Male ones will muddle your maps,  
Green ones'll guzzle your glycol,  
Females will flutter your flaps.  
Pink ones will perch on your perspex,  
And dance pirouettes on your prop.  
There's a spherical middle aged gremlin  
Who spins on your stick like a top ...*

Ha! what a lot of nonsense, I hear you say, obviously dreamed up by power pilots. But hold a minute. Who is it that steals all those small but vital glider parts put down in full view for a moment? Who takes your tools? Who breaks ropes on tow?

Does it not seem likely that there is a reason for always being lower than the altimeter suggests? Why do airbrakes open on takeoff after being so carefully locked during the cockpit check? How do you explain the vagaries of the wind gradient? Who steals thermals out from under your wings? Ever wondered why so many cross-country flights are ruined by barographs not operating – you can't really suggest that barographs are capable of switching themselves off!

Three of the most senior of the gremlin groups are the *Runway Winders*, the *Bounce Boosters* and the *Wingtip Grabbers*. These characters are never seen, which is why some people have difficulty in believing in them, but the results of their handiwork are quite obvious to the unusually large audiences before which they prefer to perform. Don't tell me you have never held off the glider inches above the grass and then suddenly dropped six feet to hit the ground with a resounding thud – who do you think lowered the runway? This is where the *Bounce Boosters* take over – how else could successive bounces increase in magnitude while a large appreciative audience counts your ‘landings’ and marvels. As for the *Wingtip Grabbers*, how do you think groundloops occur?

Sure there are gremlins. What else could it be? Surely not poor flying! But then again, things are seldom as simple as they seem and I have some difficulty believing that it is all caused by gremlins alone. I think Bumble has something to do with it.





## Bumble

PERHAPS, LIKE OTHER FLYING ORGANIZATIONS who seem to find it necessary to invent a pilot of incredible stupidity, we need a figure who's an amalgamation of all the stupidities of glider pilots. In smiling at his follies it is possible that the wise might profit. Glider pilots often have an attitude of smug superiority towards those who need a blasting engine to fly. And yet, it seems that they too are capable of being somewhat less than perfect.

To them I give Bumble, 'ace' glider pilot and prime gremlin bait. Bumble is a good pilot. He says so. So good, in fact, that he has a touching belief in his own powers which far transcend the natural forces of aerodynamics. That's where the gremlins come in.

One of Bumble's tricks is to fly sideways. This, he explains, is a sensible procedure for ordinarily the nose of the glider blocks the view somewhat and swinging it out of the way must necessarily improve flying safety. This easy trick requires only a hefty bootful of rudder and a modicum of opposite aileron to hold things nice and straight. It also has an aesthetic side effect for the ball of the turn and bank indicator drapes itself artistially in one corner of the instrument which is a big improvement on having it squatting lumpily dead centre.

Somehow Bumble always seems to come down faster than anyone else, but this he attributes to having bad luck in finding thermals. What he does not realize is that each time he flies sideways a colony of gremlins, known to the clan as the *Dragging Devils* get to work against the broad keel surfaces of his glider and try to hold him back. In this process they manipulate a curious formula known as the L/D (*Lowering Devils*) ratio which makes his up go down. As they do this they sing their theme song, 'Straighten Up and Fly Right'. However, Bumble cannot hear them for the howling of the slipstream. As they are doing their dragging behind him he never sees them, for no matter how sideways he flies his tail always stubbornly stays behind him and he can never get a good look at them.



# Bumble and the Gremlins

Eric Newsome

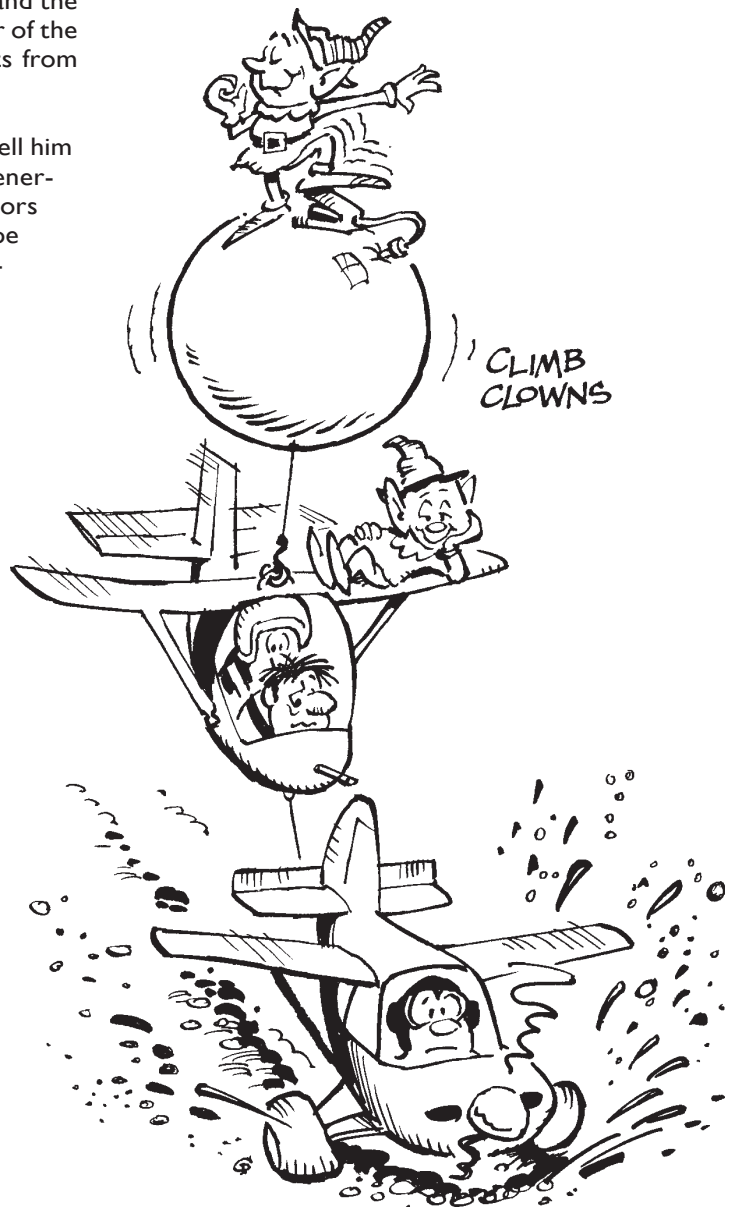
## Part 2 The Case of the Hairy Take off

BEING A QUICK LEARNER, Bumble had discovered early in his training that before you can fly you must first get off the ground. This he found to be a strange and uncomfortable procedure in which the reluctant glider must first be forcibly made to stand upright and then led by the nose over a bumpy field as it perches on its ridiculous single wheel. During this time nothing seems to work very well and the towplane dodges from one side to the other of the glider's nose and even the earth slowly tilts from side to side.

Bumble is critical of instructors who refuse to tell him exactly what to do on take off, but, being venerable and most wise in gremlin lore, instructors know that the moment they say, 'As the rope tightens and the glider moves smoothly forward, ease back on the stick to raise the skid from the ground', the *Rope Snatchers* will leap in, the tail will bang down with an almighty thump and the stick will have to be rammed forward, so making them liars. And so they simply say, "Just do whatever you have to, Bumble."

Once the glider staggers into the air the funny men of the gremlin breed, the *Climb Clowns*, get into the act and, however hard Bumble pushes forward on the stick, the glider climbs higher and higher. This has quite interesting side effects on the aerodynamics of the towplane for as the tail is pulled up by Bumble's antics it can be reasonably argued that with a negative angle of attack the take off run will be a trifle long. In extreme instances the towplane propeller will cut interesting and original furrows in the ground – this is not recommended because it is an inefficient method of farming.

The *Down Drafters* usually save the day by suddenly making the elevator effective again and as the glider homes for the daisies the towplane staggers off. At this point the instructor, who has sworn a solemn oath never to touch the controls unless in dire peril, nervously twitches back on the stick and restores a temporary equilibrium. Bumble, now sweating slightly, is given control again and the tow continues ...



# Bumble and the Gremlins

Eric Newsome

## Part 3 The Case of the Elusive Towplane



BUMBLE'S OPINION OF TOWPILOTS IS LOW. Obviously, as they rely on power to drag them through the sky, they must be of a lesser breed. They are not very good pilots either, and instead of flying a steady pattern they fly erratically and seem to take a perverse delight in dodging about the sky in a mischievous attempt to keep him permanently out of position.

What Bumble does not realize is that, contrary to popular belief, towpilots are not a species of gremlin but there are many other gremlin types which specialize in making tows a refined form of torture. These gremlins waste no time in getting into action and, as soon as the wheel has lurched from the turf, the *Wing Wagglers* start to work. They operate by running across the wing from tip to tip and as they do so their weight causes the wings to rock violently. There is no way to beat them for sometimes having pushed a wing down, which Bumble hastily corrects, they retreat only to the centre section and then rush down the same wing again. This is as good an explanation as any as to why Bumble invariably climbs out like a drunken sailor.

The *Wing Wagglers* quickly tire and by one thousand feet they have normally left to find another victim. At this point Bumble begins to relax, his mind slips into its usual neutral and his eyes begin to glaze. It is then that the *Tow Plane Tuggers* begin their sly attack. They have the ability to move the towplane bodily in all directions and are incapable only of putting it dead ahead of the glider. Bumble begins to sweat as his stick hand jabs and weaves with the dexterity of a fencing master while his feet beat an unrelated tattoo on the rudder pedals. None of this has any influence on the relative position of the towplane and the glider but it has a charming effect on the instructor: first he turns white and then pale green, and driven to extreme measures by a churning stomach he lays his hand upon the stick. Curiously, gremlins have respect for grey-beards and once the instructor takes over they cease their tricks. The towplane seems glued to the horizon, the rope is tight and the stick never moves while the instructor says soothingly, "See, it wants to fly in position unless you prevent it from doing so." Again Bumble takes over and miserably wallows upward. One good thing about tows is that eventually they end. Hopefully.

If it is any consolation to Bumble, towpilots are also prey to gremlins. Most exasperating of all are the *Rope Snaggers* who elevate fences in order to break the trailing ropes of towplanes making high approaches.

# Bumble and the Gremlins

Eric Newsome

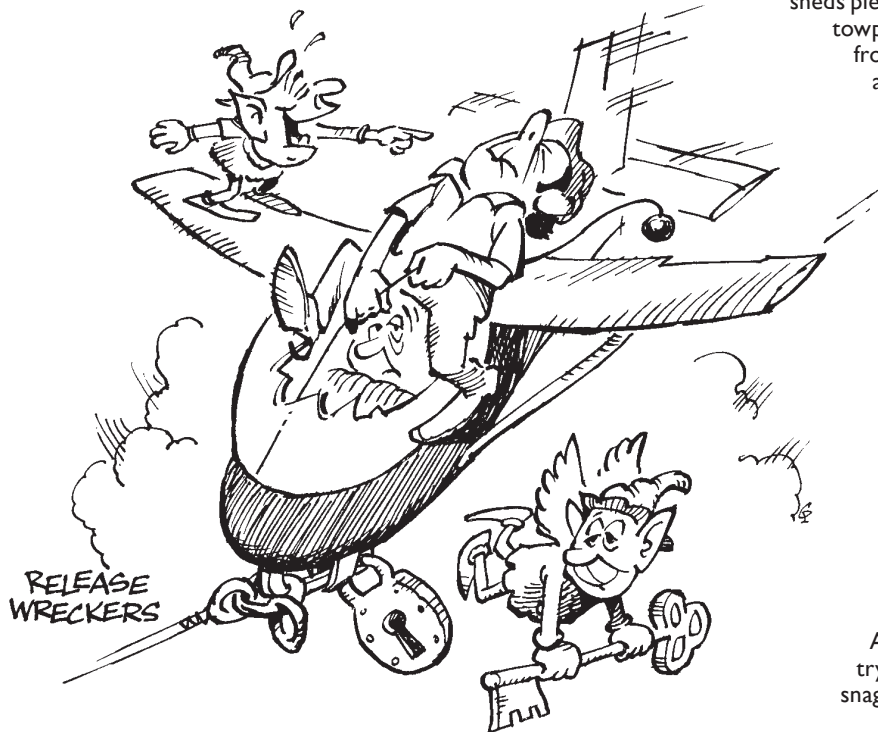
## Part 4 The Case of the Reluctant Release

WITH GOOD REASON Bumble hates tow ropes and all the sundry means of attachment and release that goes with them. Collectively they are awkward and untrustworthy and a prime attraction for the gremlin clan. The *Rope Ravellers*, for instance, can tie knots in ropes faster than Bumble can untie them and the *Short Link Stealers* have a seasonal appetite that is prodigious. Sometimes the gremlins give Bumble a laugh instead of a hard time. When he does remember to check his release mechanism, no sooner has his assistant got his full weight on the rope, a gremlin leaps in and yanks the release, sending the unfortunate sprawling, to Bumble's great delight.



Decency bids me to pull a veil over the tow, except to say that the only time the towrope is straight is when the *Levering Louts* have turned it into a bar with the solidity of steel. By pushing on it, they are able to lever Bumble into embarrassing positions in spite of his contrary control movements. But Bumble is only mildly disturbed, for he knows that the good thing about tows is that they end. At least they always have done to this point.

At two thousand feet Bumble nonchalantly pulls the release knob and with great elan peels off and up to the right. Suddenly something feels not quite right. Looking far down to his left he sees the towplane at an odd angle and from it the rope stretching up almost vertically towards the glider's nose. The *Release Wreckers* have been at it – he is still firmly attached. Bumble pulls on the release knob and sweats. He pulls and sweats some more. No use, the release is jammed. Bumble skitters back into some kind of tow position with a loop of rope floating in the region of his left ear as he dives. He has visions of the towpilot diving away to land while he, firmly attached, sheds pieces of the glider into the slipstream. The towpilot will not dive, he has just recovered from a dive caused by Bumble's, tail jerking antics. He would just like to fly straight and level and most of all he would like to get rid of Bumble.



He waits impatiently for the emergency release signal from Bumble. He is likely to wait a long time for Bumble, never being one for cluttering his mind with useless junk that he will never need, doesn't know what the signal is. Directly over the airport the towpilot finally reaches for his release and gives it a swift tug. Bumble remains in the same place in the rearview mirror. Now he can not get rid of Bumble. He pulls again and the *Senior Release Wrecker* who delights in arranging for multiple release failures for once relents and this time Bumble drops back with two hundred feet of rope trailing behind him.

All might yet end well if Bumble doesn't try one of his famous low approaches and snag a fence.

# Bumble and the Gremlins

Eric Newsome

## Part 5 The Case of the Bitten Biter

THE MOST INSIDIOUS of all the gremlin clan is the *Ego Booster*. In his effect on pilots, the *Ego Booster* destroys all critical faculties and whatever is bad looks good, and the worse the better.

Our ace instructor is hunched miserably in the back seat of the trainer hoping for massive sink to mercifully end the flight. He had endured a nausea producing tow during which Bumble had thrashed the controls to the point where the *Pudding Stirrers* had moved in and helped out by moving the control column in a steady circular motion while allowing Bumble to make only occasional uncoordinated stabs at the rudder pedals. In free flight the instructor had patiently explained how to centre the ball and had groaned as Bumble swiftly and invariably pressed the wrong rudder pedal while burbling, "Now I see." Finally the instructor was reduced to gibbering impotence and limply subsided.

In the circuit, proximity to the all too solid earth roused the instructor to a final effort. From past sad experience he knew that Bumble, in his own mind, always made perfect approaches whether he crossed the boundary fence at five hundred feet or scraped it with the nose skid. Now the instructor knew what he had to do; no comments, no hints, just sit still and let Bumble get into a mess. At the last moment he would, by superior skill and experience, and for the sake of his own neck, extricate Bumble from it. But not before Bumble had been jolted out of his over I confidence. The approach was low this time, but a gust of warm air welled up and made the probable touch down point just before the boundary fence. For once Bumble's airspeed was rock steady and even a little high. Ideal – it would be possible to twitch back on the stick at the last moment and use the excess speed to float over the fence. The instructor relaxed. Skimming the ground just short of the fence, the instructor reached for the stick only to have it dance forward of his grasp. The skid struck the ground and, by the time the instructor finally hauled back, flying speed was lost and the trainer rumbled majestically over the rough ground – straight for the fence.

Fortunately previous generations of Bumbles had long ago removed the fence wires. Oh, My God! – the fence posts were still there spaced about half a wing span apart. Just enough speed remained to sluggishly raise one wing clear while the other wing neatly snapped off a rotten fence post. Damage: one small dent in the leading edge of the wing and a massive hole in the instructor's pride.

"Bumble, why did you push the stick forward?" ..... "My airspeed was falling."

Not only had the *Ego Boosters* been at work but so had the *Airspeed Hypnotizers*. So intent had Bumble been on his airspeed indicator that he had flown into the ground without seeing it was right there. *Ego Boosters* are generally assumed to attack the young and inexperienced. But is it always so? Was a 'Bumble' flying in each of the seats?



# Bumble and the Gremlins

Eric Newsome

## Part 6 The Case of the Rising Ground

BUMBLE WAS AT LAST FLYING SOLO. No one quite knew why. Perhaps it was a combination of his own persistence and a marked lack of desire on the part of Instructors to occupy the back seat of his glider any longer than could be reasonably avoided.

Bumble had a small collection of personal beliefs that made his flying memorable. One belief was that up is not down and so circuit entry should be left to the last possible moment and the circuit should be flown as slowly as practicable for this garners another minute to enter in the logbook. Also, through endless repetition, his instructors had managed to fix in his mind that a circuit must be square and the landing should be carried out on the designated spot. Warnings about modifying this to meet particular circumstances had whistled through his ears unheard.

One fine, cu-dappled day, Bumble dangled and swung at the end of a towrope to two thousand feet then happily released. He flew around gently with his nose off to one side as was his habit, while the *Dragging Devils* yelled, "Straighten up and fly right", into the slipstream. Only when he circled under climbing gliders as he slowly lost height did Bumble feel at all disturbed. But persistence pays, he knew, so he continued his merry circles while the trees grew larger and the airfield rose on his canopy. He looked out at last and firmly started his circuit – only five hundred feet too late.

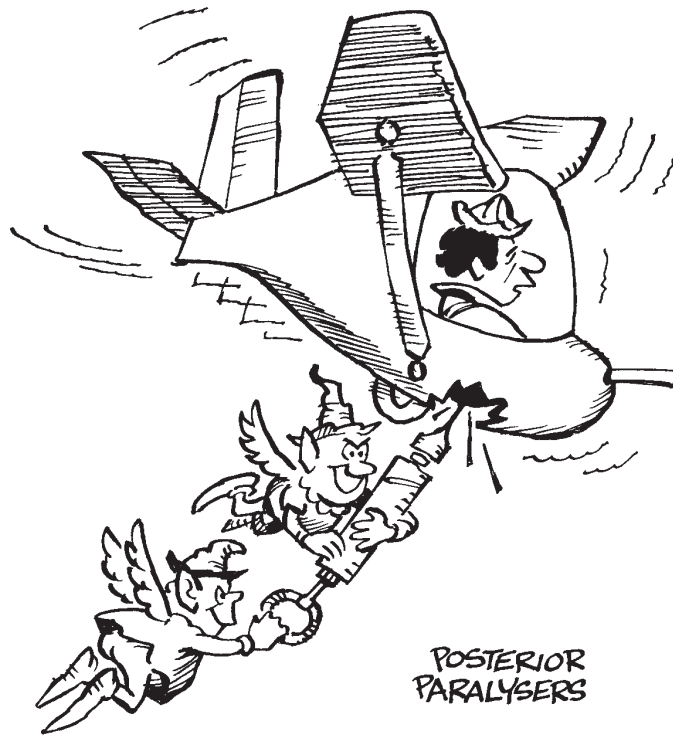
Now his thorough training took over a good square circuit and land in the proper place. He crabbed across the

field slowly to conserve height and get extra log book time and as he did so, he identified his invariable turning point and when he arrived there kicked the glider downwind. He sighted the lone tree that marked his next turning point and flew steadily on. On base leg he saw that his course was good and he was at his usual distance from the field. The watchers had difficulty in keeping him in view against the background of trees and mutters of "Turn in!" and snatches of prayer could be heard.

Almost in line with his intended 'proper' landing place Bumble began to turn, as ever with lots of rudder and very little bank. Indeed, bank was almost out of the question for he hardly had enough height to put the wing down without scraping the wingtip on the ground. Being low, Bumble raised the nose and as speed fell off, the drag got draggier, the lift got lousier and levitation lessened. The gremlins moved in with a concerted attack.

Bumble had no eyes on the ball of his turn and bank indicator, but the seat of his pants might have told him of the degree of his skid had not the *Posterior Paralyzers* moved in and, while leaving the pants normally sensitive, rendered the contents of the pants unfeeling. *Dragging Devils* enthusiastically dragged at his keel surfaces and played havoc with his Lowering Devils ratio. As his speed decayed and his drag increased the *Tail Judders* buffeted his tail surfaces and the *Runway Winders* in a cunning flank attack suddenly raised the runway.

Bumble landed in a dusty heap of sound and fury – right on the 'proper' landing spot.





# Bumble and the Gremlins

Eric Newsome

## Part 7 The Case of the Stolen Lift

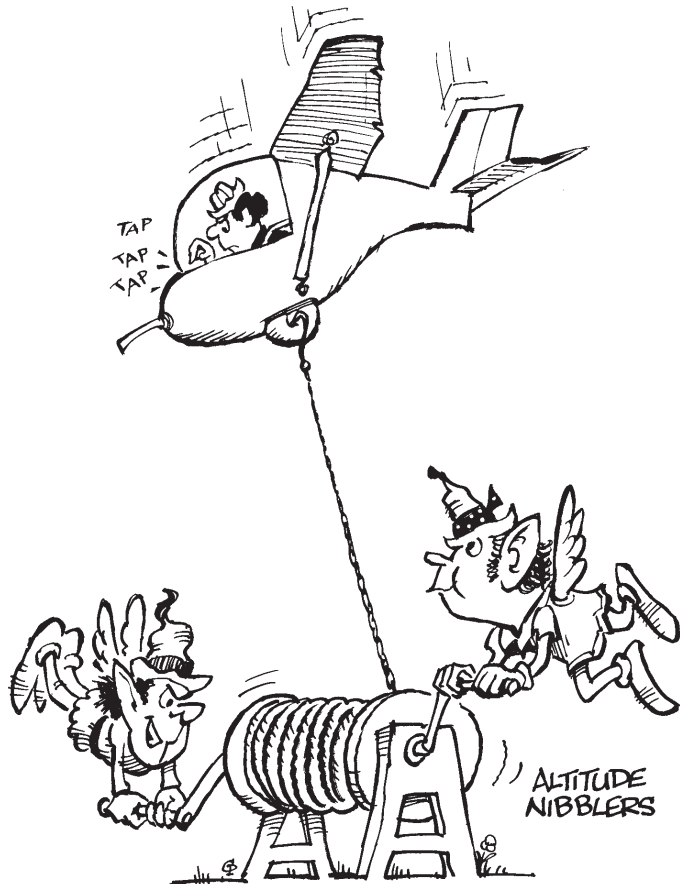
BUMBLE KNEW THE WIND was strong. How else would he have climbed to three hundred feet on tow while barely over the fence. A good thing, wind. Strangely, once in the air the wind didn't seem to matter much, except of course for the wind that always seems to blow from dead ahead – or in Bumble's case from more or less dead ahead. True, he did seem to be spending a lot of time heading back to the airfield as it slipped away from him. The thermals were strange too, strong one moment and vanishing the next as though cleanly cut.

Eventually Bumble joined the circuit. For once he was alert and checked the windsock. Yes, the wind was still from the same direction and the sock stood out from its position stiffly instead of hanging limply like it usually did. The circuit was interesting. On crosswind, the glider crabbed across the ground at a ridiculous angle. Now Bumble knew what drift looked like. Downwind – boy, that was fast! Turning over his usual lone tree, Bumble was really on top of the task: airspeed rock steady and the ball was accidentally in the centre of the instrument. But the wind-blown radius of the turn! Bumble pulled out of the turn smartly after ninety degrees and watched the airfield drift lazily away from his left wing tip. Drift! Bumble crabbed towards the field, so far with lots of height and airspeed. He was sitting pretty.

Bumble turned onto final approach and the trouble began. His airspeed indicator showed fifty knots but he crawled over the ground – no doubt the *Runway Winders* were winching back the field from him. Each extra second cost more feet as the *Altitude Nibblers* industriously nibbled away. But he would still make it. Unknown to Bumble the wind had brought out, as it always does, the *Wind Retarders*. They gambolled and romped in the wind, turning and twisting it near the ground, vying with each other to see who could make the most interesting whorls and eddies. Bumble knew that he had 50 knots of airflow over the wing, but he didn't quite realize that 25 of it was on a short term loan.

Just over the fence and low, the gremlins gave a massive roll to the wind and Bumble suddenly found himself flying into a gentle breeze. With horror he saw his airspeed fall off and even though he jammed the stick hard forward it was too late. The glider dropped in the last few feet, squaring the wheel which played a merry tattoo on poor old Bumble's tailbone.

To placate the gremlins, pay homage of a few extra knots in wind or they'll get you too.



# Bumble and the Gremlins

Eric Newsome

## Part 8 The Case of the Knave in Wave

BUMBLE HAD ALWAYS WANTED TO FLY THE WAVE.

His fantasies were of soaring higher than the eagles and surveying, lord like, vast rolls of mountain ranges flattened from the perspective of his towering height. Besides, it was easy. Nothing to do but find the great, smooth currents riding in the lee of the mountains as the deflected air seeks its equilibrium, nose into wind and hover over one spot while the altimeter winds its message of gain. No doubt he had forgotten the gremlins or perhaps had rashly assumed that they only inhabit the flatlands.

Take off was fine, but once in the air the towplane seemed to be climbing strangely. As they circled, the peak of a small mountain flashed by the wing. Another circle and again the mountain flashed by but it seemed to have grown. Round again and the mountain seemed higher still. The towplane was pointed up but going down! Vague memories of a previous experience trickled into his consciousness and he recalled a gremlin that had made his up go down. Gradually height was gained and the towplane left the air-field area and headed out towards a patch of wispy cloud.

That was when the *Rotor Rollers* made ready. Unbelieving, Bumble saw the wisp of cloud beginning to roll over and over. There was a terrific 'whump' and the towplane disappeared completely under his nose, seconds later he was craning upward trying to find it somewhere over his head. Bumble found his left wing dropping and then, before he could take any corrective action, he was tossed onto his other wing tip. Bumble started to sweat.



His control movements now resembled the actions of the famous horseman who galloped off in all directions at the same time. Whatever he did seemed to be of no avail, and for a panicky moment he wonders if the *Control Crossers* had modified his control linkages. Through all this the Bumble Beaters had been rapping his head on the canopy, floating his maps over his eyes and slapping his face with the oxygen mask which had started out draped negligently on his lap. He would have cheerfully released had he not peered over the side and discovered to his horror that all the landing fields had been replaced with vertical real estate and densely wooded valleys. Having no alternative, he hung on grimly.

Suddenly Bumble got the greatest shock of all – the motions ceased and there was nothing but a deadly silence.

The towplane wings wagged and now he had no choice but to release and go. And still the eerie silence. Bumble looked at the variometer and it was pointing commandingly up. The Wave! He had found it! Sure it was easy.

The lift increased almost alarmingly as Bumble hurtled up ward towards the clouds. The clouds! Now what? But no, there was a hole in which the sky gleamed blue. Caution forgotten, Bumble fixed his eyes on a spot on the ground over which he was hovering and climbed on between the cloudy walls.

He was still climbing when the gremlins darted in and made adjustments to the wave. All Bumble knew was that the

light had suddenly gone out and round him was nothing but a blank wall of grey mist. Instruments! The turn and bank – was it switched on? The needle started to show a left turn. Good, it was working. But it didn't feel like a left turn but more like a steep turn to the right. The airspeed was winding up rapidly and Bumble hauled back on the stick. The airspeed fell off and kept falling, the glider shuddered and heaved and Bumble, ignorant of what was happening and knowing only that he didn't like it very much, started his long spin to the hidden earth below...

With his glider spinning down in the cloud of a suddenly closed wave window, Bumble cowered back in his seat waiting for the crunch which must inevitably come. Where were the mountains? Which part of the cloud had the *Cloud Stuffers* turned into cumulo-granitus?

Suddenly a blinding light shone and Bumble emerged from the cloud base, wildly spinning over a wooded valley. Disoriented, he worked on the controls, and the built-in qualities of the glider (with some help from the guardian angel who looks after flying fools) gradually sorted out the problem and Bumble found himself flying along serenely the right way up. He still had plenty of height and turned for the airport – enough was enough for one day. And yet as he flew the *Confidence Boosters* took over and Bumble began to congratulate himself on the way he had handled a tricky situation. Then again there was silence, and the variometer moved firmly up the scale. He was in wave once more, and once more there was a hole in the cloud above him.

As Bumble looked up at the wave window the gremlins attacked, scattering a small amount of Diamond dust in his eyes. Immediately the cloud took on the hue of a Gold badge in which the cloud opening shone like a solitary diamond luring him on. Bumble started up again, and clearing the cloud, saw a white carpet spread around him as far as the eye could see. It seemed that he had beaten the gremlins this time, but he should have known by now the persistence with which they pursue their prey. Just short of his Gold height gain the variometer once more pointed decisively down. Bumble hunted around but found only greater sink. He turned for the hole in the clouds. There was no hole. The gremlins had carefully zipped it up and Bumble was trapped above the cloud deck. Sinking inexorably, Bumble flew one course after another but there was no clear way down. The cloud neared, and soon he would be in it. Was he headed for the valley or for a mountain peak? He couldn't tell. With seconds to go, Bumble got a misty view of the ground far below and pulling his airbrakes to the full, he spiralled down in a tight turn – right over the airfield!

The gremlins had their final sport as the *Rotor Rollers* were still busy stirring things up at the lower levels. Bumble was tossed from one to the other around his travesty of a circuit but eventually arrived on final approach. He set his glide path to give lots of height over the threshold but at a hundred feet the curl over got him and Bumble found himself suddenly without airspeed. Ramming the stick forward he arrived on the ground with only the top of a small tree in his tailwheel as a memento of his escapade.

So ends the saga of Bumble; may he long survive. Remember, even though his soaring career has been less than meritorious, he has served as a horrible example – that's worth something. ■

## REGULATIONS FOR AIRCRAFT OPERATION – January 1920

1. Don't take the machine into the air unless you are satisfied it will fly.
2. Never leave the ground with the motor leaking.
3. Don't turn sharply when taxiing. Instead of turning sharp, have someone lift the tail around.
4. In taking off, look at the ground and the air.
5. Never get out of a machine with the motor running until the pilot relieving you can reach the engine controls.
6. Pilots should carry hankies in a handy position to wipe off goggles.
7. Riding on the steps, wings or tail of a machine is prohibited.
8. In case the engine fails on take off, land straight ahead regardless of obstacles.
9. No machine must taxi faster than a walking man.
10. Never run the motor so that the blast will blow on other machines.
11. Learn to gauge altitude, especially on landing.
12. If you see another machine near you, get out of the way.
13. No two cadets should ever ride together in the same machine.
14. Do not trust altitude instruments.
15. Before you begin a landing glide, see that no machines are under you.
16. Hedge hopping will not be tolerated.
17. No spins on back or tail slides will be indulged in as they unnecessarily strain the machines.
18. If flying against the wind and you wish to fly with the wind, don't make a sharp turn near the ground. You may crash.
19. Motors have been known to stop during a long glide. If pilot wishes to use motor for landing, he should open throttle.
20. Don't attempt to force machine onto ground with more than flying speed. The result is bouncing and ricocheting.
21. Pilots will not wear spurs while flying.
22. Do not use aeronautical gasoline in cars or motorcycles.
23. You must not take off or land closer than 50 feet to the hangar.
24. Never take a machine into the air until you are familiar with its controls and instruments.
25. If an emergency occurs while flying, land as soon as possible.

# IFR PROCEDURES

This little fable should leave you  
some food for thought

**Phil Thorndyke**

*Thanks to Lloyd Bungey, who found this story for us in  
WIND & WINGS, 3rd printing, September 1975.*

OF THE MANY SKILLS demanded of serious glider pilots, a knowledge of IFR procedures is one of the most useful. Over the years, a wealth of information has come down to us concerning this subject, not the least valuable of which is the meaning of the initials. IFR, of course, stands for In Flight Refreshment. In the earliest days of gliding, In Flight Refreshment training was hard to come by. With the bungee launch from a 30 foot hill, the hapless aviator hardly had time to peel a banana before splintering to a stop. However, as equipment and soaring techniques improved, the store of data on IFR procedures increased. A milestone was reached in 1914 when Helmut Steurer was able to consume an entire apple during a slope soaring flight. The hazards of IFR were demonstrated on this same flight when Steurer hooked a wing tip during a resupply pass at the apple tree.

During the 1920s, a feverish development of IFR procedures occurred. Numerous exhaustive tests proved the infeasibility of such foodstuffs as ice cream, watermelon and pomegranates. By trial and error and scientific deduction, wrapped candy was established as an airworthy snack. Logbook entries made during the tests indicate that candy wrappers were no easier to remove in those days than they are now, and it is significant that scientific papers dealing with recovery from unusual attitudes flourished during this same period. All the test gliders were open cockpit designs, ruling out cotton candy, and it is a curiosity that in spite of today's enclosed cockpits, there is apparently a blind adherence to tradition, for one never sees a pilot carrying cotton candy aboard a sailplane.

Development of IFR procedures slackened somewhat during the early 1930s, nonetheless, there were a few significant developments. Merton Gnepser carried a quart of chocolate milk to 23,000 feet in a wave, and following a descent through the rotor, discovered the chocolate milkshake. Rolf Resnik followed suit by carrying a carton of orange juice to 27,000 feet and discovered the popsicle. Not to be outdone, Harold Veeble placed two gallons of apple cider in the coldest spot of the aft fuselage and discovered the flat spin.

In the years that followed, experimentation showed that for severe turbulence, eating oranges provided the pilot with a non slip grip on the stick. The opening of a carbonated beverage container under these same conditions was found to produce a non-slip cockpit, with the combined advantage of evaporative cooling.

By the end of World War II, most of the dangers of IFR had been documented, ranging from the minor irritations of pop-

ping a large piece of taffy into one's mouth just prior to seeing the ground crew take the wrong road, to the more insidious dangers of licorice whiplash. Inadvertent connection of the drinking water tube to the electric vario and subsequent effects on instrument sensitivity was also studied carefully.

Of recent work accomplished in the field of IFR, that of Dr. Hudspeth Nangle is of paramount importance to glider pilots. The following information is taken from his Technical Note entitled, "*An Investigation of Subsurface Thermoplastic Flow and Cyclic Creep in Nonhomogeneous Isotropic Chocolate Bars Subjected to an Integrated Rayleigh Load Spectrum.*" In this work, Dr. Nangle states:

"Following exposure to solar heating, candy bars subjected to high G loads may suffer stratification of ingredients. The effects of stratification may be minimized by placing the plane of the bar normal to the acceleration vector, so that if stratification occurs, any random bite has a high probability of containing all of the initial ingredients. However, when the acceleration vector lies along the axis of the bar, transverse stratification may occur. In this case, a bite may contain only one ingredient, resulting in unpredictable facial contortions. It is of critical importance to their survival for glider pilots to properly align their candy bars before attempting loops or steep turns."

As a direct result of these findings, an airworthiness directive will be issued requiring mandatory replacement of candy bars subjected to loads in excess of 3Gs.

Also of current interest is the following excerpt from the February issue of the *Dirigible Navigator's Digest*:

... magnetic disturbances affecting the compass were traced to the foil wrapped candy bar placed under the instrument panel. The pilot was found guilty of negligence and fined \$500."

As a result of this, a confection licence is now required, renewable yearly for \$16. The revenue thus collected from pilots will go to the C.P.F.S.O.F. [*Committee to Promote Flying Safety by Outlawing Flight*, ed]. Furthermore, two years hence all sailplanes must be equipped with magnetic candy wrapper warning devices.

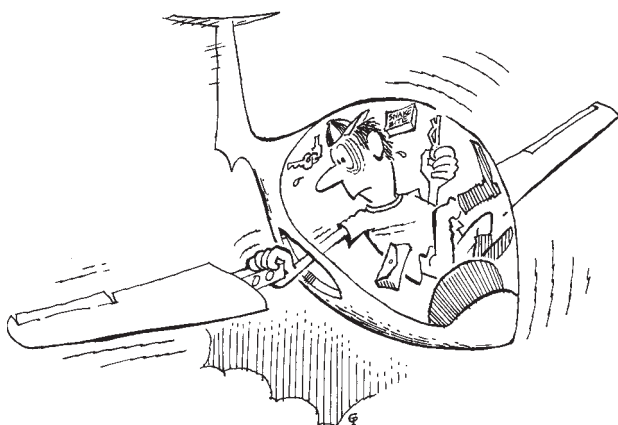
To point out the importance of adhering to proper IFR procedures, the following case history of Max 'S' is presented. Max was widely known as one of those gifted pilots able to fly hither and yon on a day when most others were scratching to stay in the air. There is little doubt that Max would have achieved world fame were it not for his profound ineptitude regarding In Flight Refreshment. His flight of April 14 is typical:

Two hours after release, Max was 205 miles out on course as the first glimmer of dawn lit the eastern horizon. A growl from his stomach reminded him that breakfast had been four hours ago and it was time for a little quick energy. Max vaguely remembered grabbing a couple of candy bars prior to takeoff and was trying to recall where he put them, when a bulge in his right pants pocket caught his eye. The top of the pocket was, unfortunately, sealed by the parachute leg harness and the lap belt.

Up to this point, his hunger had been a mere twinge, but the inaccessible nearness of the food created a gnawing



pain. Max pondered the situation as the sun cleared the horizon and began to warm the cockpit. Thermals had been smooth so far, and Max unbuckled the seat belt and parachute leg clasp. Reaching into the pocket, he withdrew a snakebite kit and the case for his dark glasses. No candy bars. Max gritted his teeth, knowing that the search was reducing his flying efficiency. Unbuckling the chute harness of his left leg, he came up with a pen knife and the keys to the crew car. Were it not for the FAI rules concerning badge flight, and the low drag profile of his ship, it might be said that Max was beside himself. Tearing open the chute chest buckle, Max angrily thrust his hand into his shirt pocket and came up with three chocolate bars and the main wing pin safeties ... the ability of a small wire clip to eliminate hunger, when viewed under the appropriate conditions, is remarkable.



By inventing three anatomically impossible positions, Max managed to install the safeties, but not before making several recoveries from diving turns and incipient stalls. Blundering into a thermal, he gratefully centred it. As his trembling limbs gradually came under control again and the ship climbed, Max began to breathe easier. Things having settled down, he decided that after all that trouble, he may as well eat the candy bars. The bars had been hot in his shirt pocket, and they were now suspiciously soft. Instead of employing the "toothpaste" method preferred by experienced pilots, he carefully unpeeled one blob and found himself holding a piece of chocolate-plated paper. He repeated the process with a second bar with the same results. It was as he sat pondering what to do with the mess that he hit the turbulence.

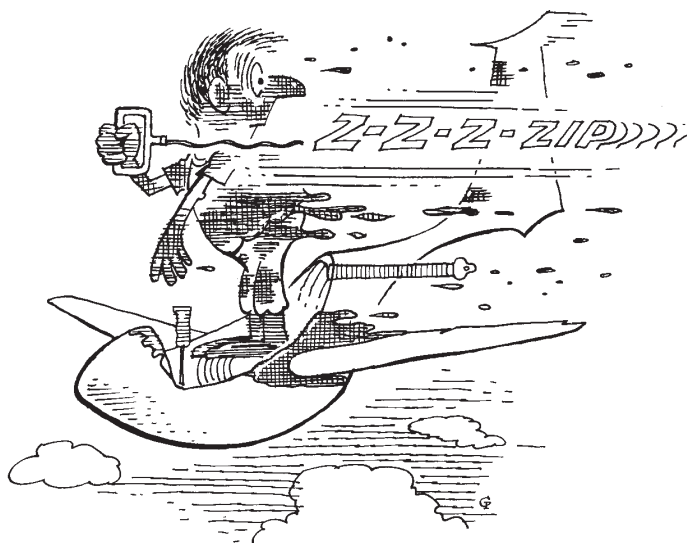
A crunching jolt on the top of the head and a strange floating sensation reminded Max that he had neglected to rebuckle his seat belt. As he was accomplishing this, the nose dropped through in a sharp stall. The two candy wrappers, each with a full complement of Hershey's best, plastered themselves to the top of the canopy, and as the nose pitched down, painted two heavy brown stripes the full length of the canopy. Due to a slightly delayed recovery, a 2.5G pull up was made, at which point the wrappers made the oblique transition from plexiglass to instrument panel, painting out most of the instrument faces as they slithered floorward.

Max tried to wipe the chocolate off the plex with his sleeve, but only managed to smear it. As the sun heated the dark candy, it flowed like syrup until the outside world was viewed through a thin, sticky, yellow brown film of molten chocolate. Distracted, Max' speed to build up

dangerously close to  $V_{ne}$ , and it was at this point that he hit the legendary "Thirty Foot per Second Gust"... downwards ... and all the neglected cleaning and vacuuming jobs caught up with Max in that instant. From inside the ship rose the fine particulate collection of three years of flying: sand, dust, dried weeds, leaves, frayed rope fibres, bits of paper, yaw string scraps, lint, decayed foam rubber, cookie crumbs, metal shavings, paint chips; all rose and were trapped by the sticky film of chocolate covering the canopy and instruments.

The situation had now gone from irritating to dangerous. Max couldn't see out. He couldn't see his instruments. Turbulence was bouncing him about mercilessly. The airstream hiss grew to a roar. Max decided the time had come to abandon ship. He had thought only a little about bailing out in the past, but had decided on a procedure which was risky but simple. Jettisoning the canopy, Max unlatched his seat belt, stood up in the blast of air, and pulled the ripcord. There was a sharp crack, his arms and shoulders were yanked backward, and Max was standing there bolt upright in the cockpit at 9000 feet with no parachute. He had forgotten to refasten the parachute buckles.

For the first time since he thought of those miserable candy bars, luck smiled on Max. Before he could ponder his precarious position, the glider and its vertical occupant struck an up-gust which buckled his knees and plunked him right back down into the cockpit. It then dawned on him that with the canopy gone, he could see well enough to fly. With a white knuckled grip on the stick, Max spiralled rapidly down towards a good looking clear patch next to a road.



Enter the third – and until now forgotten – candy bar. This bar had fallen to the side, absorbing the energy of the sun, and having its wrapper torn by the glider's wild gyrations, it sat waiting, waiting to deliver the final crippling blow commanded by the Great Glider Gremlin. Max set up his approach. The bar waited. Max glided in on final. He wasn't about to release his left handed grip on the seat belt, and without benefit of flaps, he was hot on touchdown. Running water had eroded a rut across the landing path, and the ship bounced sharply. The candy bar leaped up and was caught in the rushing airstream; Max caught just a glimpse of the approaching words, "ARTIFICIAL FLAV..." and the world turned chocolate ...

Seated amongst shards of chocolate fibreglass, 390 miles out, at 8:30 in the morning, looking at dust devils and cloud streets stretching as far as the eye could see, Max began to realize the true importance of In Flight Refreshment procedures ... ■



# The Parable of the Visitor

by **Helix**  
from *Australian Gliding*

IT CAME TO PASS that in those days there lived in the land a good man. For many seasons he had toiled mightily in his fields tilling the earth and selling at the market and thus he had a fine dwelling and a good wife and tall sons and a splendid chariot which his neighbour did covet. And he had many oxen and manservants and a clutch of maidservants who were the fairest for flaming miles and whom everyone did covet, yet his heart was heavy within him.

At each harvest he would render up tribute to Caesar and would set aside for a day when the heavens might weep talents that the Tax Collector kneweth not and still his heart was heavy. So he took unto himself the daily scroll, wherein it was written of a Tribe that were keepers of a Mystery. And he counted his talents and found their number fair, so he straightway went forth from his dwelling to a place that was called Club that he might understand the Mystery.

At the gates of Club he met a guardian of the Tribe who took him hence to the Chief Scribe that he might be examined and his worth known to the men of the Tribe. And he found favour in the Chief Scribe's eyes and had set before him scrolls on which he made his mark that he would keep the laws of Club and would not cause Club to be cast out into the wilderness if the Mystery claimed him.

And the Chief Scribe demanded of him many shekels, this part for the feeding of the beasts of the air, and this part for a new temple at Club, and this part for more tribute to Caesar. The man tore his beard and gnashed his tooth (for he had but one) and wept saying that he already paid tribute to Caesar and the number of the shekels in the tribute was iniquitous in the sight of men and God. And the Chief Scribe wept with him but took his shekels, for he was a wise man and knew of the wrath of the tax collector scorned. And he gave unto the man a talisman scribed with wings that the man might be known to other members of the Tribe in far lands.

And the man was taken forth and given unto the priests and came nigh unto the beasts of the air. And a priest who was called Duty Inst said unto him, "Behold, Man, the lilies of the airfield. They spin not neither do they weave and verily I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory would have sold his last camel to have one of these. I will

show you a mystery, for they are forged from that which you may see through and yet are paler than Sheba. They are forged with great wisdom and cunning, and have unto themselves the strength, I say, of a small private place made of brick. And they go forth through the heavens as it were on rails for many leagues."

The man looked upon them and he was pleased for he saw that they were fair. Then from the North there came the sound of a rushing mighty wind and a cloud came nigh unto the man wherein could be seen the likeness of a beast called a Stinkwing and the man grew sore afraid but the priest Duty Inst said, "Fear Not", and took him forth into the heavens behind the Stinkwing and shewed unto him the Mystery.

For that season the man strove greatly and knew the Mystery. He took unto himself many scrolls of Truth written by High Priests of the Mystery from far lands and he grew wise. And in the fullness of time he knew that the priests of Club sinned, for there was an inner mystery that they had shewn him not. Thus he went straightway to the priest Duty Inst and demanded of him that he be shewn the inner mystery.

The Duty Inst said unto him, "Behold the lilies of the airfield, they spin not and I cannot shew unto you the inner



... and have unto themselves the strength of a small private place made of brick.



*...was taken forth into the care of innkeepers...*

mystery. And the man said unto the priest that he was sorely afraid for the frailty of the flesh and must gird his loins with knowledge of the inner mystery, and the priest answered him not.

Then the man grew exceeding wroth and cried out in a loud voice where he may be shewn the inner mystery, and the priest answered him saying, "Thou must go unto a place called 'Anotherclub' and seek out beasts of the air from ancient times and there thou must look for one beast which it is said doth truly spin and weave. And though shalt take unto thyself a new name and thou shalt be called Visitor." Then the priest went away from the man with a heavy heart for he knew that he had sinned.

So the man went forth and journeyed for many days and nights and drew nigh unto Anotherclub. And a guardian met him at the gates and took him in that he might be examined by the Scribe and his worth known.

And the Scribe brought forth scrolls on which he made his mark that he would keep the Laws of Anotherclub and would not cause Anotherclub to be cast out into the wilderness if the Mystery claimed him. And the Scribe demanded of him many shekels, this part for the feeding of the beasts of the air and this part for a new temple at Anotherclub and this part for tribute to Caesar.

And the man smiled and shewed unto the Scribe the talisman by which he would be known among the Tribe. But the Scribe also smiled and said that the life had gone from it. Then the man rent his garment and generally let it be known that he was getting pretty hacked off with Administration. And the Scribe wept with him but took his shekels, giving unto him a talisman named Temporary.

Then the man was taken forth unto the priests that he might be shewn the inner mystery in a beast of the air which had the name of a creature that laugheth like a fool. And he was given up unto the priests under the name of Visitor Watchit.

And a priest who was also called Duty Inst took him hence into the heavens and shewed unto him the inner mystery.

And when the inner mystery was revealed, the man trembled and grew sorely afraid not knowing where he was, nor where he was going, nor could he remember that which he had been instructed and took on as it were the stillness of a pillar of salt.

And Duty Inst spake unto him in a loud voice of anger saying, "Get your bloody hoof off the left pedal – that's why we are spinning, idiot!", but Visitor Watchit heeded him not. Thus the beast of the air descended from the heavens and the womenfolk of Anotherclub wept and the menfolk turned aside and the High Priest did wail and lament that his beast would be bent.

And Lo! Duty Inst laid hands on Visitor Watchit so that he cried out and gave back control and the beast came safely back unto the earth.

Then the priest Duty Inst was taken forth into the care of innkeepers that he might be comforted and Visitor Watchit was brought before the High Priest See Ef Eye who commanded that his wounds be bound and spake unto him saying, "Thou hast lived in sin too long and thy wickedness is legion. Thou art possessed by the demon Ignorance and thou shalt come in unto my charge and I'll bloody straighten you right out."

And thus for four days and for four nights Visitor Watchit laboured with the High Priest in the heavens above and on the ground which was below the heavens, in divers beasts of the air and from scrolls of truth and on boards that are black.

And he performed again that which is Basic and learnt about that which is Secondary and the demon Ignorance was cast out. And on the fifth day the High Priest sat in judgement in the heavens and Visitor Watchit found exceeding favour in his eyes.

Thus the High Priest drew nigh unto him and said that from henceforth he would be known as Visitor Mate. And the man rejoiced and went forth from Anotherclub to his own dwelling and to his own family.

And the man straightway sold his dwelling and his fields and his oxen. And his menservants he did put aside (but his maidservants he did not put aside) and with his wife and his sons and his splendid chariot he went hence to the country wherein was Anotherclub and there he made unto himself another dwelling and toiled in other fields.

And at each harvest he would render up tribute to Caesar and he would lay aside talents of which the Tax Collector kneweth not and his heart was light for there was no fear in him save that of the Tax Audit.

And Anotherclub became known to the man as Myclub and Myclub knew the man severally as Visitor Mate, Goodonya Member Mate and in the fullness of time as the new High Priest See Ef Eye.

And unto him was brought one day a man who was called Visitor Watchit from a far land where the lilies are fair – but that's another story and this sort of thing could start getting repetitive. ■

# RANDOM THOUGHTS

**Angelos Yorkas**

*from Sailplane & Gliding*

Angelos reveals our secret thoughts – “to word the unutterable and mention the things we know we shouldn’t”.

**“PLEASE GOD JUST ONE MORE CLIMB**, just one more. Is that really too much to ask?” It’s funny how most of us only pray when we desperately need something. On this occasion, I could see my goal but my glider needed another tantalizing 500 feet to make it for sure. If I didn’t make it this would be my fourth 500 km attempt to complete the dreamed of “all Three”. There is something magical about all three Diamonds that I haven’t experienced since going solo or when I felt like a pundit when my Silver C was completed in an old Olympia.

There is no question though, it still remains an achievement, glass gliders make the 500 km much easier. Why else create the UK 750 km or the FAI 1000 km? What is so great about the 500 km, even with the super ships? I suppose it has some thing to do with the sense of retracing the steps of the old greats, you know, Philip Wills and that lot. A bit like getting in a souped-up Range Rover and tracing the route of Scott in the Antarctic, easier but nostalgic. It’s a sense of zip-ping around the country seeing what used to be seen and knowing that only those others who have done a 500 km have seen what you have seen in any flight. It’s difficult to put into words, but hopefully you know what I mean.

My first 500 km started on a less than classic day. I suppose I was desperate. I say less than classic day because it wasn’t all easy. I got very low twice. I suppose it shouldn’t be all easy, after all, a 500 km goes through an awful lot of climate and in England, you are bound to hit some grot somewhere. The trick is to fly around it or very carefully through it.

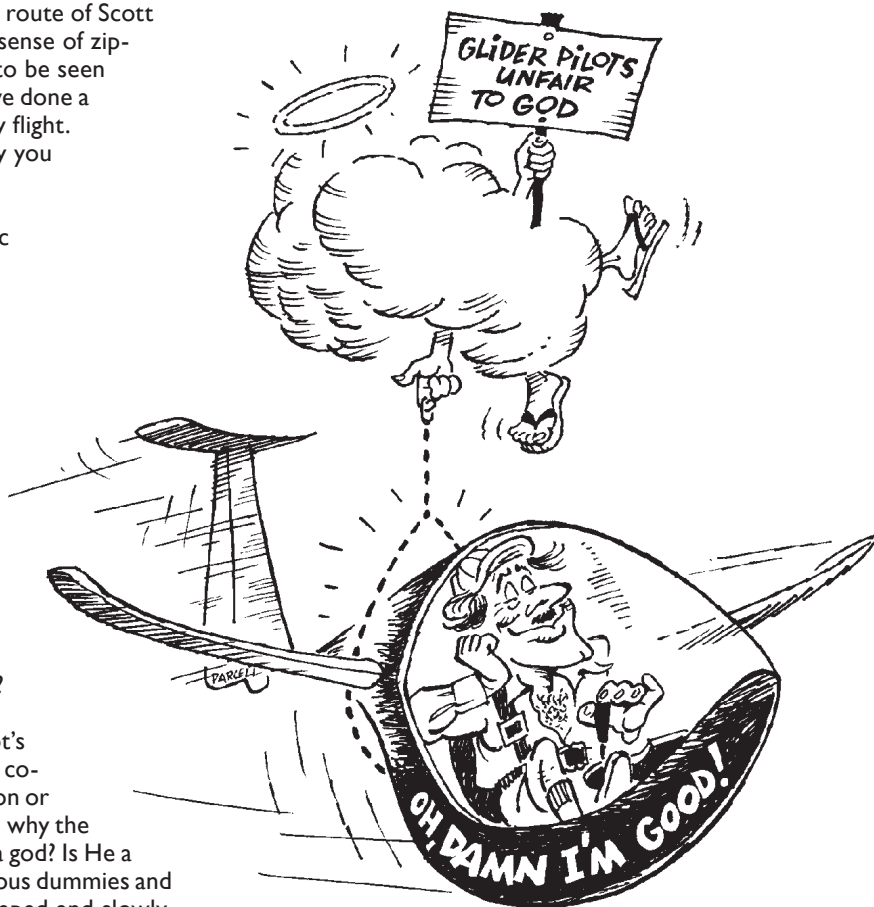
Have you noticed how long you had to wait for your Silver or Gold or both? It’s the same with the Diamonds. It’s funny, but as soon as you get that Diamond badge flight over not only do you end up doing a string of them on subsequent days, but faster also. Is it experience or is it just our Heavenly Father letting us know who’s boss?

What I’m trying to convey is the glider pilot’s secret thoughts. We all wonder if it is just coincidence in being held up in badge completion or when it rains on just your days for the glider, why the second 300 km is much easier, etc. Is there a god? Is He a sadist? Perhaps we are just selfish, superstitious dummies and yet my prayer was answered. The vario peeped and slowly, yet surely, I not only got the 500 feet I needed but 1500 feet and my last climb had a Diamond sitting on top of it. So off

I set on final glide saying to myself, “Gosh, that was lucky.” I really am a selfish little drip. Next time, God will make me crash. Not even a thought of a thank you but, “It was my skill and judgement and it had nothing to do with old what’s his name.”

Competition pilots hate losing. Don’t let all that dribble about “winning doesn’t matter, it’s the competing” fool you. Comp pilots just want to win. It’s all about treading on your friend’s face and letting your faithful and trustworthy friend know that you are better than him. You hear plenty of, “Oh, bad luck old chum. Looks like you had some hard lines” with the reply of: “It’s the way the cookie crumbles. Congratulations on winning old sport.” The truth is more like, “Ha! I beat you – yet again. Why don’t you just pack it in?” And the more truthful retort is something like, “You lucky bastard, if it wasn’t for that timely stubble fire, you would have been massacred.”

All fine stuff though, for without competitions gliding would stagnate. Man really is a two-faced swine. Come on, you’re just the same. Everyone likes to fly faster than their pal, climb higher than their mates, aerobat cleaner than their buddies, instruct more efficiently than their colleagues, etc. It’s all competition, but I guess it’s all good stuff. Can you imagine never trying to compete? Of course, I am committing a form of sacrilege by uttering the unutterable.



Not even a thought of a thank you ...

It took me six years, but now I own my own ship and I don't have to deal with partners any more. I used to share a Jantar with John Bridge. We were a great syndicate. I hated him and he hated me. We really understood each other. We both knew how we understood each other, but we never admitted it. When he had the glider, I would stay at home and bawl my eyes out, praying he wouldn't crash the glider. He would do vast cross-countries and remain airborne from dawn to dusk. When I had the glider it always rained. I could never figure out how our annual hours and kilometres were always the same. I would always congratulate him and he me. Truth be known, I always hoped a bus would knock him down so that I could have the glider to myself, and he had the same plans for me.

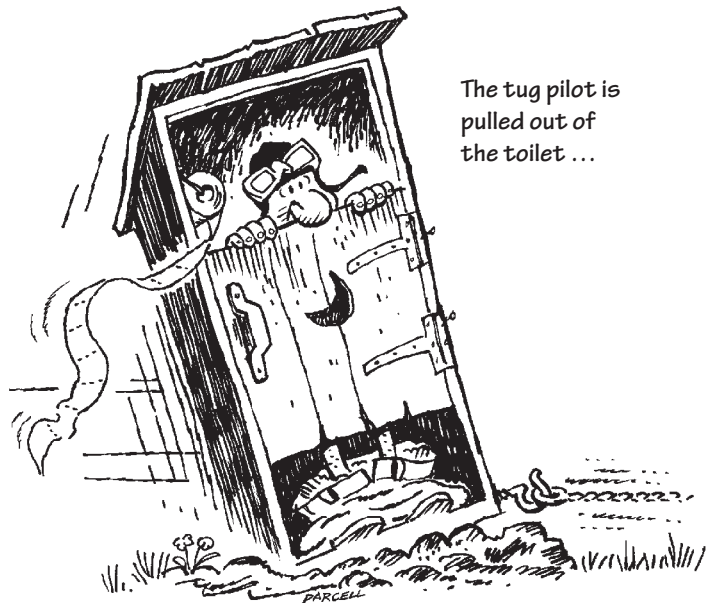
I hear many pilots wishing their partners well and good flying; pardon me while I choke. The best syndicate is made up of four members: number 1 works abroad during the summer, number 2 suffers from summer ailments like hay fever and can only fly in the winter, number 3 isn't too keen on flying but likes to own a glider, and number 4 is you who complains because you have to share the glider in the winter. The other problem with syndicates is that the glider is always left in a dirty condition for you. The seat is in the wrong position. The oxygen has run out. The wing spar lever has been misplaced and the trailer tires and batteries are flat.

Launch time is always interesting. No one likes to go first. The club fleet is taken out and the grid looks like the Nationals, but launching doesn't start until the two-seater is visibly going up. The excuses range from, "the time isn't optimum yet" to "I haven't finished my DI", but what we really want is for someone to go first and risk making a fool of themselves. So we all stand around wearing sunglasses and floppy hats waiting for the right time.

Actually, us clever ones usually con some poor novice into spending his life's savings on a tow. "What are you waiting for?" we ask. "It's cracking. If you don't go now you'll never get your Silver." Ten minutes later he's back and we decided that 9:30 isn't trigger time so we have to work on someone else. Meanwhile, the poor chap, having flown, is banished to the winch for the rest of the morning with absolutely no sympathy from the rest of us.

Next comes pandemonium. The two-seater is thermalling and everyone fights to get into the launching queue. The tow pilot is pulled out of the toilet and we become a mass of hissing teeth, clenched fists, and generally unsporting types. Oh, how I love this sport. Finally, some cretin is towing you towards a sink hole instead of a cloud street. Even though you hate him, you make a point of thanking him on the radio at release. If you don't, he might not tow you again.

All glider pilots like their CFIs when face to face with them. We crack jokes and listen attentively. When the CFI isn't around, we always hate him, especially because he is always right. Mine stopped me doing beat ups! I love doing beat-ups. I love soaking the launch point and pulling up at the last moment causing everyone to duck for cover. Why did he have to make me see it was dangerous? Now I come screaming in at 500 feet keeping a good lookout. Boring! Actually, have you noticed how many glider pilots come in



with their wings screaming doing the old beat up? Glider pilots love to waste time and climb a little higher in the last thermal. This is usually followed by the supposedly thoughtful radio call on final glide so you can be advised on base traffic and to keep gliders out of your way.

Search deep in your mind and the truth is more like "Final glide, five minutes so get out your cameras, stop whatever you are doing and watch me impress you." Why else subject yourself to smashing through thermals at Vne, watching food, drink, and mints fly around. Go on, admit it to yourself if not to others. You love to show off.

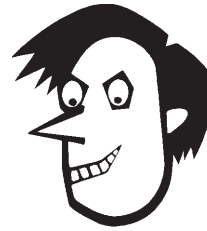
You know, we glider pilots have large egos. We don't admit it but we believe we are an elite. Not everyone can hack gliding, after all. Most people have the ability to learn to fly, but they can't stand the waiting around, cold days, heights, flying without an engine, etc. Most people think there's something unusual about glider pilots and we take that as a compliment. We make ourselves believe we are on some higher understanding than most of the earthbound. They don't know what they are missing.

It may be true that there are probably hundreds who don't know what they are missing, but millions don't care. They have interests that we don't understand. Mention gliding to them and try to describe its wonders and you'll send them to sleep. I can hear you screaming at me now – "You're not much help in promoting gliding." Oh, but I have tried and had some success, but the fact is most couldn't care less. We are a minority.

So there you have it. Some of the most secret truths about glider pilots. When you next see me, I shall deny my knowledge of this article. But let me leave you with some sobering thoughts. You may kid yourself that your glider is an investment. It isn't, it's a pure luxury. Money spent just for fun. It can't be for physical fitness, not cooped up like that. At best, you get dehydration practice or bladder enlargement. Is it the view? Surely you can get that on top of a mountain. Is it the age old desire to fly like the birds? Maybe – I don't really know. I only know that I sink hundreds of pounds a year into the sport, get nothing material in return but while my money has gone forever I know it isn't wasted. I don't know why it's not wasted, I just know that it isn't. I love to soar up there on my own. You see, we are romantics, but for heaven's sake, don't admit to it. ■



# the dark side of competition



**“Platypus”** from *Sailplane & Gliding*

**I**N GLIDING, it is the passion not only for openness but for unaided individual achievement that is very American. In my first soaring contest in the USA I heard one pilot innocently say, “I’m at Sweetwater and doing fine”, and a voice boomed out of the sky which could have been God’s, rebuking the pilot for giving out information that might help some contestants to the disadvantage of others. I was impressed by this sportsmanlike discipline and the blessed radio silence that is the result (the chatter during a British competition is unbearable, but I can’t bring myself to switch off in case I miss something tactically useful), but I also pondered, “Is this the way to produce World Champions for the 21st century?”

One disconcerting moment for me in that same first US competition was when we were all struggling halfway down the mountainous first leg of a triangle in weak blue thermals, and suddenly it was announced “the Contest Committee has unanimously agreed to change the task to a POST.” Of course I had not read the rules for a POST (pilot selected task, loathed by us Europeans as far too chancy, because you don’t know whom to follow), thinking that if one were announced I would have twenty minutes or so on the ground to get up to date with the rule book. It turned out that the Contest Committee then lit off in six different directions. Bereft of ideas, I pressed on with the assigned task and ended up soon after in a horse farm.

The point is, in any other country I would have suspected skulduggery. No other country would entrust a selection of the competing pilots with the authority to make such a decision, especially in the air. Whether it gave the Contest Committee some quiet satisfaction to leave the visiting Brit to find his own lift for a change, I don’t know – I’d rather not think about that.

## **Gentle, parfit knight**

That brings me to a ferocious article I once read in *SOARING* by a Mr. George Moffat which really made my ears burn. Surely this cannot be the same person as the charming, somewhat shy man of the same name that I met at the 1996 SSA Convention, twice World Open Class Champion. This article denounced the contemptible practice of “leeching” in competitions, and said that pilots who were not smart enough or brave enough – or honourable enough – to go and find their own thermals should stay away from contests altogether, and stop impeding the progress of the real pilots. His advice has obviously not been heeded, otherwise every contest or ganizer in the world would have been bankrupted, and championships, even at the highest level, would have become very lonely events.

So aristocratic was the tone of this piece that I was not surprised to find in the history books several distinguished knights and barons called Moffat across hundreds of years of English and Scottish history.

In my mind’s eye I see the year 1296: a mounted crusader, accompanied by his squire, is proceeding along a dusty road in the general direction of Jerusalem, but, as is traditional, pausing enroute for the occasional duel and the loot, pillage, and other customary perks of the job. Suddenly he stops and looks ‘round:

“Squire, what is that rabble trailing half a mile behind us?”

“Those, my lord Moffat, are a bunch of peasants who are waitin’ for you to do battle, then just as you are about to enjoy the spoils of victory they’ll be all over you trying to pick up what they can get for free, without ‘avin’ ‘ad to fight for it.”

“Ugh, how disgusting! Tell them if they get in my way they’ll feel the point of my lance. They’re nothing but a lot of, er, um...”

“Leeches, my lord?”

“That’s just the word, leeches! I shall issue a proclamation in the next edition of *Jousting* banning these parasites from all tournaments and crusades.”

“It won’t do no good, my lord. The leeches you have with you always.”

And it came to pass that the squire was right. The leeches have bred like wildfire. They are a very successful lifeform. Not surprising really, survival, not heroics, is the name of their game.

Let’s hear it for us leeches and hangers-on. Can I say in mitigation that we second and third rate pilots do not go to contests for the joy of grinding the other fellow’s face, which is what I know motivates the top guns. We go for a soaring holiday in which we get what many of us don’t get at our home airfield – organized launches, expert weather forecasts, intelligent task setting and, best of all, lots of thermals marked by pilots better than ourselves. We peasants keep the contest from losing money and give the real pilots somebody to triumph over.

## **The complete cads are at the top**

The real problem nowadays – and here I would like an ominous rumble of bass fiddles like the music in *Jaws* – is the behaviour of top-rate pilots to each other in the world at large. I once had an angry letter from a friend in another country who says he was robbed of first place in his National Championships by blatant leeching. In other words he was looted, pillaged (and the rest) not **p 56**



# The Master Versifier revealed

Kemp Ward

THERE COMES TO THE SOARING WORLD on too rare occasions writing like that of Bach, Lincoln, and Wills which conveys the mystery and challenge of our special kind of flight. It is, therefore, with great satisfaction that I present to connoisseurs some of the short poems of a hitherto unknown writer whose words burst upon your unsuspecting correspondent last night. What inspired Tom Matthews, a glider pilot in training, to this explosion of creativity was the completion of a friend's Marske flying wing (C-GUMY).

With typical modesty, the poet introduces his work as "an anthology from the quill of an unknown master poet", and the standard of the collection is immediately made apparent by the first poem:

*Lettuce is good,  
Cabbage is yummy.  
It's hard to find.  
The rhyme to GUMY.*

This quatrain requires careful analysis. One can see here the first Wordsworthian stirrings of the creative mind, while Mr. Matthews sits pensively amongst his vegetables. Once in motion his mind produced yet another still motion verse:

*Milk is good  
In bottle or cup.  
Hope it flies  
Rightside up.*

Here we notice a broadening of theme, the expression of concern for the newly completed aircraft, as well as its pilot (an indication of the common reaction to tail-less aircraft).

In the next poem there is a reference to a particular item of the machine, its go-cart main wheel. The apparent triviality of subject is an effective device which emphasizes the theme of this selection:

*Fall is coming,  
Winter's ahead.  
Glad your tire's  
Got a snow tread.*

The inevitable passage of time, that eternal force which overhangs and frustrates the homebuilder's efforts, could not be more succinctly phrased.

From the universality of this poem, the poet returns to the social level in this next offering, and shows more clearly than ever before the scope of his talent:

*While you're in the air  
Risking your life,  
Permit me to comfort  
Your worrying wife.*

It is just this quiet, yet feeling, expression of fraternal affection of pilot for pilot that must find its way into aviation poetry for it to receive the wider recognition it deserves among poetry lovers.

A demonstration of a Shakespearean range of topics available to Mr. Matthews may be seen in:

*A beer may be lager  
Or even an ale.  
Does your glider miss  
Its piece of tail?*

which, with a characteristic subtlety refers, of course, not only to the flying wing design but to the glider pilot's appreciation of a tall, cool one at the end of a long day.

No great poet is without his minor weaknesses, and it is perhaps unfair to point out the quibbling tone in the author's penchant for teasing (really a rotten side to his personality) that creeps into the next series, numbers 13 to 16, of which only two are given:

*Roses are red,  
Violets are blue.  
Trust you used,  
Quality glue.*

and:

*Snake slithers,  
Bird sings.  
Is it s'posed to  
Flap its wings?*

However we can overlook this lapse in taste when we consider the elevated quality of the whole. Giving further strength to the collection are several "theme" poems of which "Soaring 3" and "Soaring 5" are especially noteworthy.

Soaring 3      *Soar? More!*

and:

Soaring 5      *Wheel chirps,  
And one with three dimensions  
Becomes  
One with two.*

Undoubtedly the masterful technique seen in these two poems serves to point up the outstanding value of Matthews' writing to aviation literature.

A slim volume is available to those who wish to possess first editions. These are tastefully bound in white paper, in sizes 3" x 4" and 3-1/4" x 4-1/2", suitable for inclusion on the shelves of the most discriminating collector. ■

# A wider world beyond

## Kemp Ward

“FROM MY POINT OF VIEW”, my wife Mary said, “most of the excitement comes before the competition. Why don’t you write about the anticipation, the pouring over charts, the interchange of phone calls with Tom.” I lived with Mary between weekends, and had just finished reading her account of my last summer’s gliding experiences. “Okay”, I thought, “a new angle is always worth trying,” and I set to it. Some time later it was clear that this approach was being crowded out by the REAL story, the preflight frenzy should be described by the crew. So here, for the pilots who haven’t tried competitive flying yet, is an account of two novices in the “big time”.

In the spring of ’81, Tom and I worked over my homebuilt Pioneer II, GUMY, and its trailer until we were confident we could manage assembly alone. The radio had been repaired, the wings smoothed. As for flying we had been practising together over Mansonville, Quebec. We seemed to be ready. Weather before the meet was superb, and we pulled into the MSC grounds under a cu filled sky. A stocky man dressed in shorts, a T-shirt, and a golfer’s hat was cheerfully mowing burdocks near the driveway. “Thought we’d spruce up a bit”, said President Gordon Bruce, “glad to see you.” GUMY was assembled with help from Montreal Soaring Council members, and pulled to the field. We were ready to fly.

Before our arrival I had been told stories about L-19 tows (vertical) and buzz saw gaggles, tales designed to destroy sleep, but from this first day everything went smoothly. After take-off and release, a quick climb to cloudbase brought to view a panorama of fields, a novice cross-country pilot’s dream come true. I could hardly wait for tomorrow and Day One.

Next morning Tom, my crew, and I hurried to the field and wandered about admiring glass beauties until the pilot’s meeting in the hangar. Each team received a navigator’s kit, and instructions Lindberg would have appreciated. The Sports class (a Libelle, a Ka6, and GUMY) was coolly instructed to fly to Buckingham and back. Good God! 110 km over rivers and forests through a cloudless sky – impossible! Tom and I pretended nonchalance however, while the other pilots spoke of crossing the Ottawa River to higher ground and proceeding directly to the turnpoint. “No sir”, I thought, “I’ll stick to the safer side and cover some distance at least before trying to cross the river towards the dam.

Oh, the excitement of being part of a starting grid! Ten years of reading about it in *free flight* or *SOARING* was nothing to this. First a Kestrel lumbered off, then others, and soon I was bobbing up there amongst the rest. With fewer than twenty gliders over the field none of the thermals was crowded, but to a country pilot used to plenty of space there seemed to be white wings everywhere. We were all circling near 4000, waiting. The others swept around, seemingly covering five times as much distance as GUMY and I. Before the gate opened my head must have twirled like an owl’s more than once, keeping a lookout. Then a flurry of “IP’s” and “Mark’s” indicated that the race was on. I sat in my observation bubble impressed as graceful aircraft flashed downwards towards the start line.

One flew past my nose, over the field, and out on course until he was a speck in the distance – still at my altitude. Incredible!

When the stampede was over, I ventured across the line and plodded away into the empty sky. It felt like being on a high diving board for the first time. I didn’t want to disgrace myself by flopping down after a straight glide, and three miles later a thermal wafting up from the wire factory lifted GUMY. I was grimly trying to centre when the Libelle abruptly appeared below me. I had imagined everyone else half way to the turnpoint by this time. He swept in, climbed around me, then zoomed off on a beeline over the Ottawa River, leaving me still climbing and envying his “savoir faire”.

Time stopped. There was only the slowly changing landscape below, the endless feeling for thermals, the sun swinging above as we circled. Over Alfred a hawk joined GUMY. He was company in a lonely sky. By the time I had reached a point almost opposite Thurso, about 40 km from the start, the lift from the low land below was weakening. Being well over the river I changed plans, took a chance, and turned downwind towards the town. Surely there would be a thermal over the pulp mill. Crossing at an angle to the wind seemed to take forever. Finally over Thurso at 2000 feet, I beat over the wide parking lot (full of confidence), then the mill (surely here), then even over the smokestack (prayers) searching for lift to carry on – Nothing!

Well, where to land? That field under the transmission lines west of town looked green and faced the wind, but perhaps there were other lower wires. Turn around and look east. Nothing level enough.... Cattle in that one....



Getting low, time to decide .... there.... it's flat and big enough. Forget the wind direction, just get in! Over the pine trees on approach, open the brakes.... wait for it.... thump to a stop.

Phew! I looked at my watch, 1:50 pm. Down and safe, that was the main thing. When my heart had settled I opened the canopy and breathed in the scents of the hay field and the forest 30 feet away. Behind the glider the paper mill smokestack seemed comfortably near. No cattle anywhere. A light breeze only. Getting GUMY home should be easy.

I started walking through the sun soaked field towards town and a phone. Twenty minutes later I was nursing a cold "50", MSC had been called, and my partner was probably tearing out of the gate and down the highway. Afraid of missing him on the main street I left the cool dark and strode down to Rue Principale, ready to flag Tom when he appeared with the trailer.

Three hours later the intimate details of life on Main Street, Thurso had been burned into my mind. Everyone else seemed to have a purpose, but I was reduced to mooching along here or there, wherever there was a seat or shelter from the sun. Under the maple trees in front of the Catholic church I slumped in the shade. Overhead the cirrus had drifted away and two late afternoon cu floated mockingly. When the police car stopped and a cop scrutinized me lounging half a block from the bank, I got up and plodded back to the Chinese restaurant to watch the flow of traffic. Discouragement is not falling out of the sky; it's slowly cooking, waiting on Rue Principale, Thurso, forever, hoping your partner really is coming to your rescue.

My legs felt like poles before a gold painted Maverick pulled into sight, white trailer behind. I was a castaway sighting a sail! In no time we were bouncing over the hayfield towards the glider. Half a mile from it we came to an unfamiliar gate. Confidently we walked over to open it. A huge padlock was chained to the frame. Tom gave me a fishy eye implying there had been time to see to this before he arrived.

Leaving the trailer behind we back tracked to find the owner of the field. A nearby haying crew shouted over the rattle of their tractor that it was Monsieur Touchette who owned that field. "Non", he didn't live nearby, but five miles out of town. "Demandez à la troisième ferme à droite", they shouted. Thanking them we sped hopefully through the countryside to the third farm. No luck. Two boys and a dog recommended going back one farm. Actually we didn't mind doing this as it might give us another glimpse of the golden nymph in the bikini chatting with a friend by the roadside. You can measure our enthusiasm for cross-country soaring by the fact that after passing the same spot three times we were still enjoying ourselves.

Several farms later we neared our goal. At a neat house overlooking a valley and the forest we met the equivalent of Florence Nightingale. Marie Rose Carrier, an attractive mother of four happy children, invited me into her kitchen where I sat under a two foot crucifix while she phoned her landlord, the elusive Monsieur Touchette. Not surprisingly, he was four miles on the other side of Thurso haying for elderly Monsieur Tremblay. Madame Carrier called her son in to keep the baby company while she drew an accurate map (still in my log book), then smiled us on our way. No glider pilot could imagine more helpful people than Marie

Rose and Monsieur Touchette, who when we found him loading hay bales into a barn, simply fished out the important key and asked us to drop it off on our way back.

The rest of the day's flying was routine. A few photos of the glider, a slow retrieve across bumpy ground, through the infamous gate, a late supper in Thurso, and a quiet drive back in the dark brought our first day's competition experience to an end. Eight hours after the outlanding we stepped into MSC's club house just in time to hear the director say, "Anyone hear from GUMY?"

Two days later on the drive home to Mansonville after the meet had ended Tom asked, "What about next year?"

"Tom, we'll both be in it."

Too many years have been spent circling within sight of the field. Only cross-country flying in competition can give the excitement of new skies, the test of our skills, the comradeship in the evening after a challenging task. We have entered a wider world of soaring. See you there. ■

Perceptions ... perspectives – my noble captain, Kemp Ward flying his fine homebuilt Pioneer II, sees things from a loftier view than this earthbound writer, this pragmatic toiler – his crew. How perceptions may be interpreted depends upon the position, the location, the perspective of the observer. From field level with two feet glued to the ground and rotting with envy, Kemp's crew tells all ...

### ... few crew ...

flush riveted metal  
carbon and glass  
disdainfully circle  
what's still on the grass

Kemp's glider is made  
of wood, fabric and glue –  
to those in the know  
it's a Pioneer "Two"

a nod of command  
crew jumps to obey  
preflight all done  
he's off and away

sigh of relief  
tyrant's off on the trail  
time for a brew –  
a long cool tall ale

doze and relax  
with nothing to do ...  
my captain breaks in  
with, "landing in two"

we do it again  
but this time for real  
(the first time, of course,  
was just for the "feel")

again he's away –  
away and aloft  
the hayfield's nearby  
so sunny and soft...

warm breezes blowing  
this crewing's for me –  
an hour drifts by  
then two and then three

soon he'll return  
telling wonderful tales  
his obedient crew  
awaits without fail

dreams shatter like glass  
a message, you say?  
he's down in a field?  
some distance away?

the rest is a blur  
of images past  
some fences, some farmers,  
a fair country lass

a little wee field  
in a field on a farm  
a sailplane at rest  
(it came to no harm)

dismantle, retrieval  
down cliff and cross bog  
mosquitos, wet shoes,  
the peep of a frog

through gates, over ditches  
hot, wet, hungry, weary –  
(despite all discomforts  
stout crew remains cheery)

at last at the club  
and to crew's infinite sorrow  
my brave captain says  
"there's always tomorrow".

Thomas R. Matthews  
3 February, 1982

# Another work of the Master Versifier uncovered!

## Kemp Ward

YOU MAY RECALL receiving from me several years ago a quasi-scholarly essay on the poems of a newly discovered soaring poet. In spite of the fact that Thomas Matthews showed unusual promise, only one further writing of his was ever published ( ... *few crew* ... ), to the disappointment of all, I am sure. Recently, however, another of his inimitable verses was discovered in a dusty corner of my business desk (resting concealed like a long lost scroll) amongst the dry leaves of past financial indiscretions. Not only did this work cause the local literati to quiver with delight and laughter, but it occurred at a most apropos moment, judging from the account of the first day's flying at our Nationals this year. So here, to the anticipated satisfaction of all long distance soaring pilots is another, and we hope not the last, of Matthews' works. (The title is a phrase used by St. Exupéry in one of his evocative essays.)

### THE GOLDEN BOND

*To what great heights does man aspire?  
What is his fondest dream?  
What is his hope when day is done?  
Where have his musings been?*

*A climber thinks of Everest,  
A diver – a coral reef.  
A poet – immortality,  
A rancher – of prize beef.*

*But what of sailplane pilots  
Who soar aloft so free?  
A dream of record altitude,  
Of flights two hours – or three?*

*Of flights a thousand miles or more?  
An aerobatics prize?  
Of staying up despite the grey  
And leaden, sodden skies?*

*What is it that my good friend John  
Had left to conquer o'er?  
He'd made the longest flight of all  
In miles, and by the hour ...*

*But soft – let's ask him now he sits,  
The triumph on his face  
Is proof quite clear of challenge met,  
Of winning some great race.*

*He sits in cockpit, Cheshire smug  
A grinning ear to ear.  
What is it that he holds aloft  
For all the world to see. Come near ...*

*A plastic bag tied 'round the end  
Glints gold in sun's rays soft  
And suddenly it dawns on us  
at LAST he's pee'd aloft!*

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## The dark side of competition from page 52

by third-raters but by other highly competent pilots. And I know the same has happened in World Championships. These days it's not the unwashed peasants who bushwhack the nobility, but the princes of soaring. No wonder Hans Werner Grosse turned his back on such shenanigans.

### It matters not how you play the game, but whether you get the other fellow

Here is a lovely (if that's the right word) example of the modern competition mentality. In a foreign Nationals some while ago they set the first ever 1000 km task set in any country. Imagine the excitement! You might think they all would have set off on the very first thermal of the day to make sure they had any possibility of getting around. You would be wrong.

The peasants and those in old gliders and the other no-hopers started early, but the experts, the only ones with a real chance – they indulged in gamesmanship, making dummy starts, then coming back for another go and

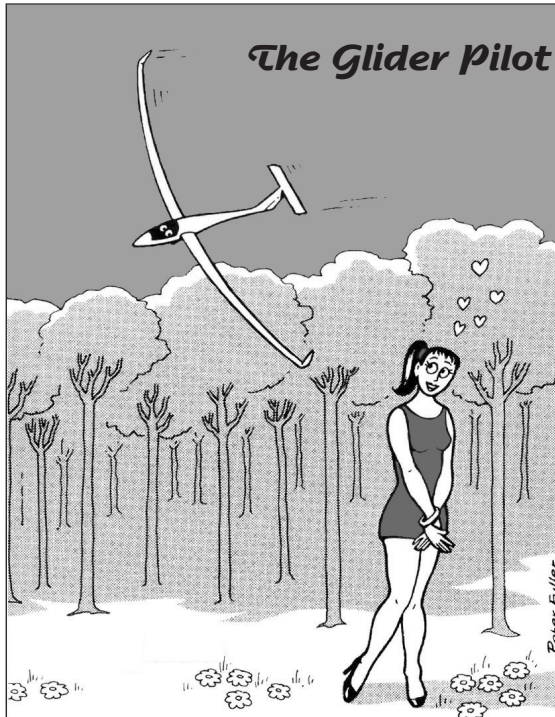
generally fooling around watching each other. Not surprisingly, nobody got around. The top pilots ran out of daylight, falling short by just about the amount of time they had wasted before the start.

When I heard of this awful exhibition, I said to a senior competition pilot, "How stupid of them all!" – and he went quite mad. "Don't you see that it's perfectly intelligent behaviour? It doesn't matter if everybody ends up in crocodile infested swamps in the pitch dark and takes three days to get home. So long as your tactics result in the other guy getting fewer points, you have flown brilliantly. That is what competition flying is all about!"

All I could say was, "Pass me a bucket, I think I'm going to throw up." All the same, Platypus loves competitions, despite the way they bring out the worst in human nature.

(... my spell checker says, "Delete *despite*, replace with *precisely because of*." This damn computer is getting ideas above its station. Does the thing think it's an editor?) ■





## *The Glider Pilot and the Maiden* by Pat Wood

*But there he was quite safe and sound,  
Her dainty heart it gave a bound,  
To see him stand so debonaire,  
The answer to that maiden's prayer.*

*They dallied there for many hours,  
Among the birds and bees and flowers,  
And when at last the trailer came,  
Alas, she'd lost her maiden name.*

*What followed, it is sad to tell,  
He drove away as darkness fell,  
And though devotion he did swear,  
He soon forgot that maiden fair.*

*Till after many moons there came,  
A letter headed with the name,  
Of "Swindle, Swindle, Son & Sinn"  
"Solicitors of Lincoln Inn".*

*Dear Sir, our client wishes us,  
To state that though she wants no fuss,  
10,000 dollars more or less,  
Will save this matter from the Press.*

*The moral you may clearly see,  
The ordinary flying fee,  
Is less expensive than you thought,  
Compared with other forms of sport.*

*A glider pilot bold was he,  
A maiden unsuspecting she.  
He landed one day near her home,  
Requesting tea and telephone.*

*Her dainty heart had missed a beat,  
Steep turns at five and ninety feet.  
The field was very, very small,  
The trees were very, very tall.*

### CROSS-COUNTRY (with a little help)

*Could it be but ten minutes ago  
On singing uplifted wings,  
Triumphantly brushing the streeting cloud  
I rode the invisible springs?*

*Now, 20 k out and a thousand feet up  
In a bowl of arid blue,  
Lord of the Skies,  
Give me just one more  
and tonight I'll drink to you.*

*When did elation fade?  
Becoming bleak despair.  
As steady sink replaced wild rush  
Through the buoyant air.*

*Dull, lifeless, flat, like long poured beer!  
What causes the air to die?  
Lord of the Skies,  
Breathe life again  
Into this turgid sky.*

*A murmur, a lift, a cautious turn  
A rising joyful shout!  
Lord of the Skies,  
(Just between you and me)  
Thank you! Over and out.*



"Au Yache" – the Cu Nim  
Outlanding Trophy mascot



# The Parable of Joe

anon.

*Let us consider the ground crew,  
Too often forgotten by all.  
They get to do time out on every flight line  
But never to carry the ball.*

*Joe is a chap who is needed,  
A problem that won't go away,  
But remember of course that the knight on his horse  
Would tell you the same in his day.*

*He'd say he was lacking in armour,  
And his new iron pants weren't quite right,  
And did he show pity to the overworked smithy?  
You can't expect that from a knight!*

*"I must have a bigger brick privy,  
Ye drawbridge is terribly short,  
And get me a steed with a little more speed,  
My chargers must never abort!"*

*"Don't tell me thee can't find the money,  
Those problems don't move me at all.  
Why I've got a notion to block thy promotion –  
Get snappin' and get on ye ball!"*

*So the vassals and serfs got to sweating  
And bending their backs a bit more,  
'Cause it wasn't the rage in the chivalrous age  
To ask the lord why, or what for.*

*But suddenly – horror of horrors!  
The knight was knocked from his mount,  
Pierced to the marrow by a little ol' arrow,  
And down went m'lord for the count.*

*There lay the lord and the master,  
Flat on his back on the field,  
And he yelled and he howled that he must have been fouled,  
And he swore he'd remount ere he'd yield.*

*Well, sure enough, centuries later,  
A couple of vassals named Wright  
Glued a few things to a couple of wings,  
And handed it all to the knight.*

*Up into the cockpit he vaulted  
And tried on the saddle for size.  
With throttle full bore and a rush and a roar,  
He tore a few holes in the skies.*

*But the Joes were back where they started,  
And they put down their tools with a sigh,  
'Cause they knew sure as fate when he landed the crate,  
They'd have to perform the DI!*

*"Build me another big hangar,  
I need one more mile to take off.  
This aircraft won't do, I must have Mach 2.  
Attend to it will you, old toff?"*

*So the chargers grew bigger and faster,  
They belched out their fire and smoke.  
To the knight it was pleasant – but not to the peasant,  
Joe never could savour the joke.*

*Then up and spoke an old boffin,  
He of the rapid slide rule,  
"I have in my pocket the plans for a rocket,  
I'm telling you, knight, it's real cool!"*

*"It's almost as big as a mountain,  
With cockpits and saddles galore."  
(Now surely by rights we should fill it with knights,  
And we shall be bothered no more!)*

*Now after all was assembled  
And the brass gathered 'round for a look,  
You could tell by their sighs and the gleam in their eyes,  
They were ready to swallow the hook.*

*Into the rocket they clambered,  
Each to his own private place,  
And eager as beavers they played with the levers  
'Til the monster roared off into space! ...*

*Thus the Joes did the old world inherit,  
Mountains and river and plain,  
While the knights in the sky go hurtling by  
As they circle the sun once again.*

Not about gliding but I couldn't leave this out. I found this in a 43 year old issue of "Roundel", the RCAF magazine of the time. The poem was probably imported from the RAF – thus the reference to boffins (research scientists). I leave it to you to discover what "slide rules" were. Tony

# Span is for wimps

Chris Davidson, from *Sailplane & Gliding*

**T**HERE IS MUCH TRUTH spoken these days about many things: wide screen TV, the need for 'Dolby ProLogic Surround Sound' as a bare minimum, or why a 24X speed CD ROM drive is an absolute must on a modern computer. We are told that without these essentials, life will not continue. The normal way to discover such truths is to pop into W.H. Smiths, buy a copy of *What Big Telly?* and spend the next few days getting to know the difference between your '100 Hz refresh rate' and your '400 memory fast text'. There is a downside of this process. Whereas before reading *What Big Telly?* you would have happily walked out of the electronics store with a £400 colour model, you now realize that, at a bare minimum, any new purchase will cost £1200 and even that is skimping a little.

To some extent gliding has always been isolated from this phenomenon. I don't suppose many people read *Sailplane & Gliding* and then order an ASW 27 from your local dealer. Most people who are in the market for a glider tend to have spent at least a few winters having the glamour and glossy pictures being frozen out of them. They know that you can have as much fun in a Ka6 as in a Discus and, after all, fun is what it is all about, isn't it? Yes, what a sensible, knowledgeable lot we are. Not to be swayed by marketing or the desire for toys and gizmos that are anything less than essential.

My last statement is of course utter piffle. Ever since the Wright brothers went down to the *Old Duck & Crummet* and discussed a new idea for wingtips over a couple of beers, 'Gliding Man' has sought to eke every last percentage point of performance out of his pride and joy, and when ekeing just isn't good enough, then a quick phone call and a new bundle of carbon fibre and joy can be yours for a few zeros. TINSFOS (There Is No Substitute FOr Span) rules, it always has done, it is the only way to fly. So many trees have been felled to support the writing of it, and so many beers have been drunk to support the talking of it, that the entire German economy is flourishing to support the making of it. Span must be the king. What other guiding principle can there be? Well folks, the time to rise up and reply has come, TINSFOS is dead, long live SIFOW.

**Span Is FOr Wimps** There are a number of avenues by which I can advance my case. I will start with the basics: why do you glide? For the purposes of brevity, I will dispense with the 'inner freedom', 'fly like a bird' and 'just for fun' brigade, as clearly all their ambitions can be satisfied with any glider, regardless of size – TINSFOS holds no claim over these fine pilots. The, "I fly for fun therefore I need a big glider" school of thought doesn't offer a leg to stand on. Please read on and redefine your argument or, to paraphrase a popular football chant, "you are wrong, and you know you are". If, however, you are in the subset that says, "I fly for fun, and I can afford

a big glider, so tough luck", then I have no argument – skip the rest and go to the ads; I doff my cap to you. So, where do we look to find candidates from the TINSFOS set ripe for the plucking? They have to be among the "I live to fly cross-country" clique. An upwardly mobile bunch if ever there was one. Are they the real "push myself to the edge and beyond, press on regardless" type or are they all GPS and turbulator tape? The game goes like this:

**White** I worship at the TINSFOS altar because I live to fly cross-country.

**Black** You can fly cross-country in any glider ...

**White** Ah yes, but I want to fly further and faster.

**Black** Why? (excellent move this: White now on back foot). The alternative response is "Further and faster than what?", then follow with the question "Why?"

**White** I want the thrill and challenge of flying further.

**Black** But, more of a thrill and challenge can be had doing the same in a small span glider.

**White** Ah yes, but I want to keep up in the pecking order of our club by flying the bigger tasks.

**Black** Why not go for the real kudos – fly the same tasks in a smaller glider?

**White** You don't have the good glide angle in a small span ship to make the best of a good day.

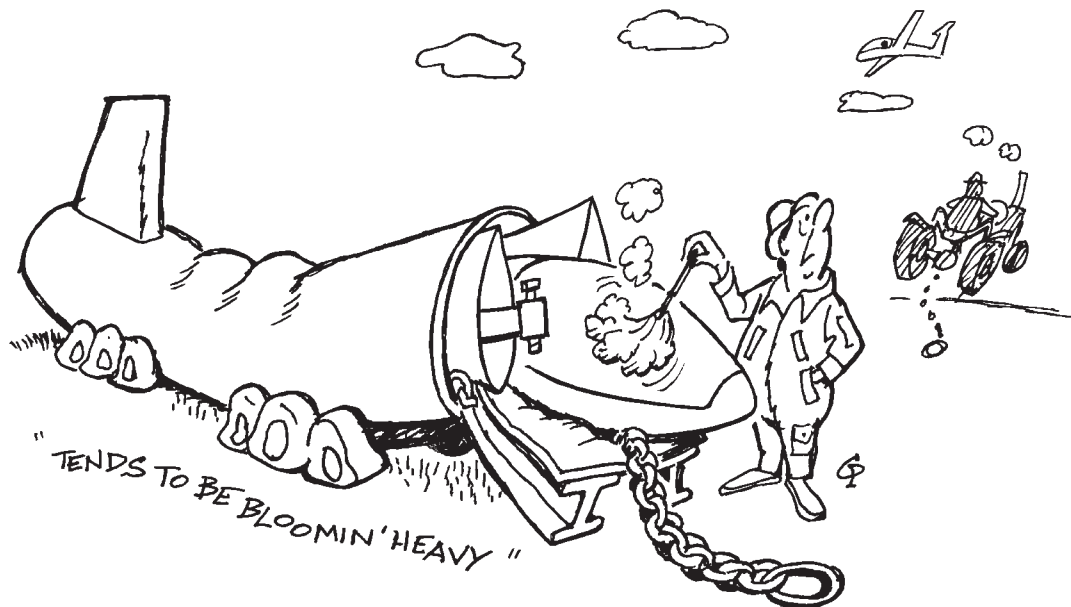
**Black** Try flying in lift then. 10% more skill on your part could mean 20% more time in rising air, and a 30% improvement on your distances.

After this, the end is inevitable. Either White responds with, "Yes, but I'm not capable of 10% more skill" (unlikely), or "Yes, but I want to spend lots of money on a new glider", in which case Black has won by default as the original game was around White's love of cross-country flying and pushing himself further, not his love of new toys.

**Span, span, span, span ...** The real heart of the TINSFOS/SIFOW argument is, of course, not span at all, but performance. If R&D Aviation could sell a £5000 widget that would improve any sailplane's performance by 30%, we would suddenly have TINSFOWidgets instead. No, the question of span is the fixed battleground. For newcomers this argument is as follows:

**Glider** I is a small span ship (read 15m maximum) with a glide angle of 35:1. Glider 2 is an 20m span model with tips on, and screams along at 45:1. "Mister 15m" and "Mister 20m" are flying in the same air on the same summer's day. From this you can deduce the following:

1. Mr. 20m feels smug that he has 5 metres more than Mr. 15m and even more smug that he has the latest wingtips.



2. Glider 2 can cover more air, looking for more thermals using up the same amount of height than Glider 1.
3. Point 2 is the reason for point 1, apart from the tips which (probably) add no value at all – just cost a lot.

After half an hour, Mr. 20m looks out and, for reasons he cannot fathom, sees Mr. 15m in the distance, ahead of him and higher; how can this be? The laws of thermodynamics, subatomic physics (or whatever) clearly forbid this? Pah! This is just the flawed thinking we have come to expect from the TINSFOS pilots. The truth is out there.

4. Mr. 20m was flying along at a glide angle of 45:1. However, for reasons unknown, he was doing so in a mixture of sinking and still air with the occasional wobble into the edge of a thermal. His achieved glide angle, in relationship to minor things like the Earth, was something other than 45:1.
5. Mr. 15m, seeing Mr. 20m sinking on a linear path as dictated by his Garmin thought, "I'm glad I don't have a GPS to tell me where to fly. I'm off to find some rising air."
6. Neither pilot found a decent core, but Mr. 15m used his inferior glide angle to descend through superior air masses and consequently thumbed his nose at Glider 2 and said pilot. His effective glide angle was far better than Mr. 20m (now known as Mr. Sink). Mr. 15m was a gentleman pilot and he had followed the energy.

Afterwards, in the bar (Glider 2 had been retrieved by this time) the two pilots chatted:

- Mr. 20m "Ah yes, I saw you go by, I just missed that thermal. It arrived before I could centre in it. Still, press on, that's what I say".
- Mr. 15m "Uh-huh".
- Mr. 20m "Yes, still I marked it for you, saw you weaving all over the sky, thought you might need some help".
- Mr. 15m "Uh-huh".
- Mr. 20m "Still wingtips are fantastic, honestly, the difference it makes when the MacCready is set to 5 knots is really noticeable".
- Mr. 15m "Uh-huh".

Mr. 20m "Ever thought of getting a proper glider like mine? There really is no substitute for span you know."

This is exactly the same argument that keeps the golf industry so healthy: "I've been playing for years, but I can't seem to get my handicap any lower. I know, I'll buy a new set of clubs." Brilliant! Obvious! The fact that, rather than shelling out £400 on a new set of bats, our golfer could shell out £40 on a couple of lessons is clearly irrelevant. The fact that the new skills would make a real difference whereas the new kit will be out of date in a year is also beside the point. It's not what you've got, it's what you do with it!

The last point I will make in my case for SIFOW is that span tends to be bloomin' heavy. For technical engineering reasons they don't make long wings out of marsh-mallow – they use really light stuff in the middle then use so much of it it becomes heavy, then they surround it with stuff that has always been heavy, and then they stick metal pins in it.

This is the reason that on 'marginal days' (read MacCready set to less than 4), TINSFOS pilots only get as far as rolling the fuselage half way out of the trailer and pretend to fiddle with the vario or install a new GPS bracket. Those of us with small gliders can get the fuselage and wings out and rig. The point being that whilst the big boys are on the ground, thinking about their better performance, ... the SIFOW brigade is flying.

**Actions** I could go on, but I won't. I will now assume, for reasons I cannot hope to justify, that after reading this far you have thrown out the lore of TINSFOS and become an acolyte of the SIFOW truth. What is the path you must follow to become a true believer? There are three paths you can take to fulfilment and enlightenment:

1. **Do nothing** This is a cheap option, as you don't have to buy anything bigger or better. You could try to pick up a few flying tips from those that know, but don't worry too

much. As long as you no longer drool over tips or dream of span, I am happy and you are a SIFOW believer. Well done.

**2. Do something** This is still significantly cheaper than the road to TINSFOS, but a tad more expensive than option (1) above. The 'something' you should do is to go and fly with someone better than you are, and engage your brain. The choice of guru is up to you, but I can think of worse places to start than a week at another club, flying new gliders, at new sites, and drinking new beer. Anywhere that can offer you a new challenge is a good place to begin; just remember to learn something. The inevitable outcome of this is that you will become a better pilot, and hence fly further, faster and happier (or whatever your plan is) when you get back into your same spanned ship. Next week: World Peace.

**3. Buy something smaller** This is the path that most appeals to me. I'm sure that for most people, their flying

performance has mental, not glider related, limitations. This means that if you buy something smaller, but in the future can still fly the same tasks you fly now, your skills will have increased, not to mention the extra points to be earned in a handicapped competition. You also have the added advantage of walking tall amongst all the pilots that took the TINSFOS route and have not actually improved. "I could have bought an ASW-27, but traded in my Astir for a Russia instead." If you had flown 300 kilometres in the ASW-27, no one would have given you any credit (snide remarks may be along the lines of, "anyone being able to fly 300 with twelve miles of plastic"). Fly the same task in the Russia and you are SIFOW personified. Your wave flights will be talked about, your ridge flights will have the hang glider crowd bemused, and you can rig the thing single-handedly.

Wow! I want one, where's my pen. "Dear Sir, I'd like to order a ..." TINSFOS is dead: long live SIFOW! ■

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## Stop press! – Environment Canada in forecast scandal

IT WAS CLAIMED TODAY that Environment Canada issued a 24 hour weather forecast on Friday, 23 April that subsequently proved to be correct. The forecast for southern Alberta predicted strong southwest winds, easing in the afternoon. At 10 am on Saturday, 24 April, an eyewitness near the town of Okotoks observed that the wind was indeed from the SW and noted windspeeds of up to 30 knots using a handheld windspeed measuring device. Subsequent recordings clearly established a decrease in the velocity, to an average of 10-15 kts at noon.

A spokesman for Environment Canada strongly denied the allegation, claiming, "Weather forecasting is an inexact science in which there is a statistical probability that a forecast and the actual conditions may coincide; however, we cannot be held responsible if such an unlikely conjunction between it and our official forecast actually occurs."

He also called into question the validity of the report by noting that the eyewitness was observed to assemble a

flimsy craft made of aluminum tubes and cloth, to which he attached himself. In attempting to move this craft while on a hillside, it was caught by a wind gust, lifting both the craft and the eyewitness into the air. What followed was a horror ride lasting more than an hour, with the craft at times observed to be at least a thousand feet above the ground. Miraculously, the gusts abated and the craft and its hapless passenger were wafted into the nearby valley where they came to earth without apparent injury. "After an experience like that, I would think that the eyewitness is in shock and unlikely to have a clear recollection of the facts," the spokesman claimed. The eyewitness appeared remarkably cool after his ordeal, claiming to have 'enjoyed the ride, even though it was a bit rough at times.' He insisted that his actions were based on the forecast.

The spokesman expressed grave concern that such an attitude sets a dangerous precedent: "We can't have people going around and making plans on the basis of our forecasts, can we?" ■



# Hee hee!

Kai Gertsen, from SOARING

## *Contests were a bit different in the old days*

ONCE I WAS ASKED TO MAKE A SHORT AFTER DINNER SPEECH at the banquet for the annual Seniors Contest in Florida, and was told to say something funny. After thinking about this for a while, I came to realize that today's competitions do not tend to offer up a lot of material in this line and that I'd have to resort to earlier times.

Nowadays our competitions consist mostly of chasing each other around closed circuits for a couple or three hours, then smartly rolling our glider up to the trailer in ample time for cocktail hour. Here is a sample of a winner's How-I-Dunnit speech: "I drove into the first turnpoint where seven knots took me to 7000 feet. Then I drove on to the second turn where eight knots got me to cloudbase. Then I went home." Exciting, but some of the adventure of former days is gone.

In the distant past we used to have a little more variety in our tasks, such as Free Distance and Race to a Goal. Race to a Goal was popular as it got everybody in action – the finish gate crew was the first to leave for the goal, as it was obviously a good thing if they arrived first. Then all the crews took off in a huge convoy.

On the second day of the 1962 Canadian Nationals in Regina, Saskatchewan, the task was Race to a Goal – 167 miles to the airport at Virden. After a long struggle the goal finally came in sight. One more check with the map. Yes, there were the railroad tracks, there was the town and the airport – exactly where they were supposed to be. I had altitude to spare, so down came the nose and the airport soon lay before me. But wait – something was wrong. I promptly hauled in the reins. I knew for certain that a handful of competitors had been ahead of me. Where were they? They should definitely be at the goal by now. Could I have passed them? No, that was beyond the realm of possibility. Even in those days, the thought of me getting ahead of anybody would boggle the mind.

What I thought to be the goal was now in plain view, and nobody was there. Obviously, this was not the place. A little bit of zero sink here, good. Out came the map again. Checked and double checked again. Everything looked exactly as it should. Where had the others gone? Could they have all got lost? That didn't seem possible. If anybody were to get lost it would most likely be me. Another check on the map and scenery – it sure looked right. What to do? Finally, I made up my mind: I didn't know what the others had done or where they'd gone, but this was where I was going to land.

I hadn't even stopped rolling when a whole troop of guys came running out from behind the hangar in full sprint. "Stay in, stay in" they hollered. I had no choice as they seized the Ka6 and shoved me, at a smart trot, up behind the hangar where the other gliders were hidden. As I got out of the glider one of them said, "Wait till you see this – you'll love it."

We didn't have to wait long, and he was right – it was beautiful. Another glider had come into view, approaching with purposeful glide. Then all at once he slowed up and proceeded to waft about aimlessly. Having been through that same process a short time before, it didn't take supernatural powers to read his mind.

It was absolutely marvelous. Eventually, he reached the same conclusion as the rest of us, and came on in. With him safely stored behind the hangar, we looked for the next one, and so on. All in all, a very entertaining afternoon. Those were the days, my friends.

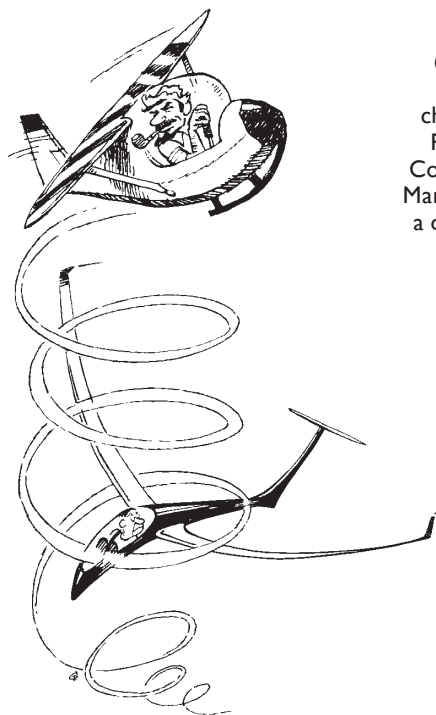
PS You may wonder what possessed me to fly in the Canadian Nationals. Well, we lived in Hamilton, Ontario in the early fifties where I flew with such Canadian icons as Charlie Yeates, Wolf Mix, Albie Pow, Gordon Oates and Jack Ames. At that time we operated out of Mt. Hope airport for a while, then Kitchener briefly before moving on to Brantford. As a result, we felt more at home in the Canadian soaring fold. We had such a good time in 1962 that we came back to Regina in '66 when we were guests of the Audettes, the period that Julien was the driving force of gliding in Saskatchewan. Presently I fly my ASW-27 out of Harris Hill, NY. When I am not in the '27, I teach cross-country in a K-21. ■



# the *REAL* soaring pilot

## Origin unknown

from a 1987 *Vancouver Soaring Scene*



... loves to outclimb  
the wimp in  
an LS 4.



... holds a Heineken like his stick.

In the book, *Real Men Don't Eat Quiche*, author Bruce Fernstein has attempted to define the traits that characterize the "Real Man". Typical Real Men are Clint Eastwood, Sean Connery (but not Roger Moore), and Margaret Thatcher. In the same spirit, a definition of a Real Soaring Pilot has emerged, thus providing us with a standard towards which the next generation of soaring pilots can progress, and perhaps bring back the era of heroism and mystique, when one flew solo in a simple primary on the very first flight and wimps disappeared for ever after their first launch.

**His flying** A Real Soaring Pilot only flies cross-country. Scratching around the home airfield is not for him, and the sweaty hard grip on the stick or brilliant remarks to the lady in the front seat is left up to the wimps.

A Real Soaring Pilot flies solo on long cross-country flights, preferably over unlandable terrain, and returns hours after the wimps have tied down and gone home. If he has an evening engagement he'll simply fly faster, or settle for 300 km that day – the Real Soaring Pilot rarely flies less than 300 km except during contests, when a wimp CD has laid out a shorter task. He will not fly in bad weather unless he can fly in clouds. Not just any clouds: Real Clouds with ice, turbulence, and thunder. No wimps there.

**His sailplane** First of all, he never flies a motorglider. He also avoids forgiving types like the Schweizers, preferring character builders like the ASW-12 and the Standard Cirrus (not just any Cirrus mind you, it has to be one of the early models with the pendulum elevator and no feel). Other sailplanes acceptable to a Real Soaring Pilot are the Nimbus 3, LS-3 (but not LS-1 as there's inadequate room for him to flex his muscles), ASW-20, and most vintage types. If he has borrowed the Grunau Baby, he loves to outclimb the wimp flying an LS-4. He is rarely heard on the radio.

A Real Soaring Pilot has short tows, and climbs swiftly in tight turns whether or not the thermals are strong. If he misses, he'll be back on the ground before the towplane, and runs to his car to get a second barograph while claiming record setting soaring conditions. When he returns from a task, it is never with waste excess altitude.

**His cockpit** Silly computers are for wimps – a Real Soaring Pilot will only use one if he has built it himself (see "his profession"). Otherwise, all he needs is an old PZL with a home-made MacCready ring. No yaw string; he is always coordinated. Actually, with his sensitive feel and great experience, he does not need any instruments at all. No relief tube is needed; he can hold it until he lands.

**His appearance** A Real Soaring Pilot smells of sneakers. No cologne. He never wears a jumpsuit with sewn-on club patches all over, he leaves that to the Air Force types or former Air Cadets. He does not change his clothes before he flies; his everyday jeans and T-shirt are quite sufficient for the simple task at hand, although he may add a windbreaker if he plans to fly above 25,000 feet. His hat commands special attention and respect. It was white once before many years of sweat and grime accumulated on it. A Gold C with three Diamonds is, at times, casually pinned on at some random spot. A Real Soaring Pilot frequently sports a beard of the stiff and rugged type.

**His profession** He is not likely to be a physician (not enough time), a lawyer (too much risk), an air line pilot (too conservative), or a banker (way too conservative). Most likely, he will be an engineer, as this profession seems to attract the eccentric types with the necessary personality traits of the Real Soaring Pilot.

**At parties** We will find the Real Soaring Pilot in a small group where the results from the 1931 Nationals are discussed, along with winch maintenance and Pratt-Read restoration. The Real Soaring Pilot holds a bottle of Heineken the way he holds his stick. When the music starts, he'll dance with Real Women and other men's wives. After wards, if he can't find his tent or camper, he will sleep in the cockpit of any available Real Sailplane.

**In competition** You will find the Real Soaring Pilot high up on the score sheet. You can also recognize him by his flying technique. He always takes off with full water tanks, retracts his wheel so the gear doors brush the runway, and flies the course by himself. Leeches are promptly led into strong sink. His finishes are described by the wimps as "worm-burners" and dangerous, but they are actually precisely calculated maneuvers performed with great proficiency. On impossible days, he will finally drift in to finish near 7:30 pm, about the same time the wimps are hosing the mud out of their wheel wells.

Finally, the Real Soaring Pilot can be recognized by the quality of his crew (that is, if he has any at all!). These are Real Men or Real Women who hold up a wing tip without complaint, and will have cold beer ready for our Real Pilot as he rolls to a stop right at his tie-down point. ■

# The perfect partner

David Howse, from *Sailplane & Gliding*

Single sailplane, young and good looking, great curves, cheeky winglets. Would like to meet well-off caring partners with cosy trailer. Love weekend outings, trips away and maybe more. Write soon with photo of trailer to Box 100, free flight.

**T**RAWLING FOR THOSE IDEAL PARTNERS to share your gliding pride and joy can be hit and miss. For some reason, I've been selected to guide you through this potential minefield, although I must admit to feeling smug on the subject, since all of my gliding syndicate relationships to date have been deeply meaningful, enriching experiences. Getting to the point, selecting suitable partners by the Howse method requires close attention to a single, simple technique – detailed observation of your fellow human beings. This will be found to be most productive in three areas of the airfield: the launch point, the trailer park and the bar, not necessarily in that order. What we are looking for are individuals or groups with very specific traits or habits which may be of benefit (or otherwise) to your fledgling group. Pile your plate high from the following à la carte menu:

**Body language** Observe different groups carefully as they assemble their toys. Close-knit groups will generally rig their sailplanes at great speed with minimal comment or discussion. The slickest can even rig in total silence: with only a few hand signals required to complete the task. (It's always possible that partners are not actually on speaking terms, but the nature of the hand signals ought to give you a few clues here.) Contrast this model of harmony with the dysfunctional partnership from Hell. Rigging for them is a contact sport, with copious pushing and pulling, shouting and gesticulation, usually culminating in muffled hammering and the sound of something, or someone, or both, getting broken.

**Aspirations and expectations** Think ahead and, assuming that you are not going to go partner hopping every year, choose partners with complementary or simi-

lar aspirations, expectations and budget. A few examples (fictional of course) might not go amiss:

1. A partner mentions over a beer that he thinks an instrumentation upgrade will be required over the winter. You nod enthusiastically, volunteering to shampoo and starch the yawstring and buff up the balls in the Cosim vario. Your partner, top lip curling with contempt, indicates that the minimum upgrade consistent with safe operation would be an Internet enabled fully integrated flight management system with three axis autopilot and graphic user interface.

2. You catch your syndicate partners in a conspiratorial huddle around a brochure detailing the groundbreaking features of the new Schempp Schleicher Phallus 2 sailplane. Your love affair with your beautiful little Ka6 is still fresh and passionate; feelings only deepened by a whispered telephone number, which turns out to be the price of the new glider.

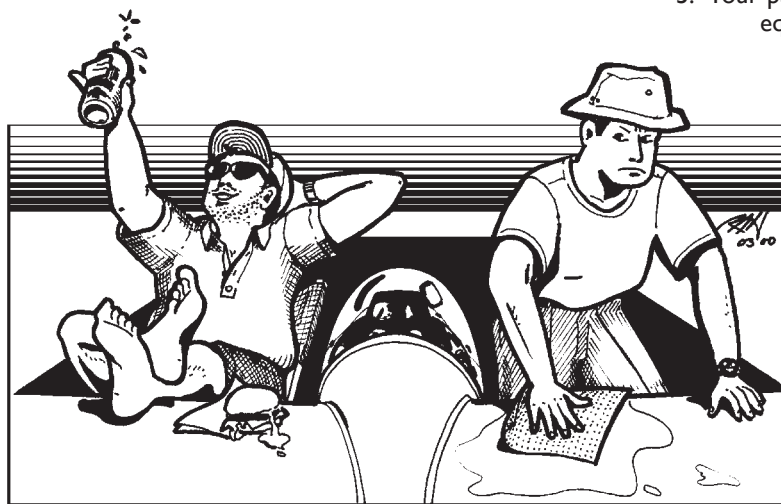
3. Your idea of a gliding holiday is two weeks in Scotland, flying when you feel like it. Your partners favour driving to Spain for three weeks, thrashing around huge tasks at just subsonic speeds every day, and talking about it every night.

4. Your partners nominate you as member responsible for the flying roster. You feign reluctance. After a few months your partners notice that you get all the good days and are doing ten times as much flying as anyone else. Things become ugly, you are accused of wearing out the glider, and your partners signal their annoyance by taking the main wing pin home with them.

5. Your partner is a keen competition pilot and you are equal partners. She (note the gender balance) takes the aircraft away to all the competitions and has convinced you of her urgent need to practise in between, on any remotely promising day. You are permitted to retrieve her vast distances away when her record attempts go pear-shaped, and have unrestricted use of the aircraft in April and September. You have full fettle rights during the winter whilst she is hard at work, making up all the time taken off during the summer.

**Housekeeping** If you're the fastidious, considerate type, make sure your partners are too. It is not unknown for a keen pilot to abandon their ship on the airfield after an epic flight

next page



# THE GREAT PILOT HIERARCHY

**I**T IS A WELL KNOWN FACT that there is a hierarchy among pilots. This hierarchy crosses international and cultural boundaries for it follows strict and logical rules that depend upon the type of aircraft and mission that each pilot flies. It may be all but invisible to those who do not fly, but among pilots, this hierarchy is widely recognized and is the chief determinant of status and respect. In an effort to shed light upon this aspect of aviation, and make it more comprehensible to the general community, I present a description of that hierarchy, starting at the bottom and working towards the top.

## Astronauts

Astronauts are at the bottom of the list for their job is quite easy. Not only is their every effort supported by a huge staff down at Mission Control, they don't even do much flying. They spend most of their time just floating around in orbit. Proof of their low status is shown by the small number of people who are willing to become astronauts: just a few dozen in the whole world.

## Fighter pilots

Fighter pilots only rank slightly above astronauts. They have big powerful engines to get them out of trouble, they are supported by teams of trained mechanics, and their aircraft have many conveniences – radars, missiles, guns – to make the pilot's job easier. Most modern fighter jets are even equipped with computers to help the pilot maintain control.

## Other military pilots

The aircraft these pilots fly may be more demanding than fighters, but their job is just as simple: drive the aircraft to a site, unload troops or bombs, then turn around and drive home. Like fighter pilots, other military pilots are supported by such an extensive bureaucracy that they have little need to be resourceful.

## Airline pilots

Their aircraft may be as luxurious and well maintained as those of their military brethren, but their job is more interesting, for unlike the bomber pilots, the airline pilots actually have to land when they arrive at their destination. Still, these landings are facilitated by such a wide variety of navigational aids that they are not particularly challenging, and can even be done by the computer.

## General aviation pilots

GA pilots rank ahead of airline pilots for their aircraft are more demanding – in many cases, these aircraft are powered by mere piston engines – they fly in a wider variety of conditions and to a wider variety of destinations. Still, they do use engines.

## Sailplane pilots

Sailplane pilots dispense with engines and depend upon their skills to stay aloft. Their status would be even higher if they didn't make so many compromises in the process. The capabilities these pilots demand of their aircraft – 50:1 glide ratios, reclining seats, control surfaces, flight computers, and their need for a tow to get into the air – all suggest some lack of commitment to pure flight.

## Hang glider and paraglider pilots

While there is some controversy as to which sub-species ranks higher, there is no question that hang glider and paraglider pilots rank at the top of the aviation hierarchy. Disdaining engines, control surfaces, tow vehicles, and the like, these pilots rely upon the power of their own living muscles and brains. Few in numbers because of the demands of their craft, these pilots fly head and shoulders above the rest ... especially if they fly supine! ■

and sprint straight to the bar. Here they will celebrate their success, and regale everyone with a thermal by thermal analysis of how it was done. This can result in the glider being derigged in the dark, in a rush, in a state of reduced consciousness. Hapless partners, rigging next day, will be confronted with a cockpit looking like a dumpster, flat batteries, a leading edge resembling an entomological graveyard, and vital rigging tools lying around in the grass. The tail dolly, nowhere to be seen, will be located on the airfield during the day by someone driving over it. This all gets sorted out just as soaring conditions collapse, and has the cumulative potential to produce the modern equivalent of pistols at dawn.

**Bold pilots ...** Choose partners who are most likely to keep your lovely glider in one piece. If you possess an instructor's rating, then you may already have a valuable insight into the airborne skills of your potential suitors. If not, then spend some quality time at the launch point on a nice day and observe the CFI or Duty Instructor closely as pilots lug their gliders into line. A rolling of eyes

to the sky may not necessarily indicate a check on conditions. Nervous pacing and nail biting may also betray anxiety about certain pilots' plans for flight. Take careful note. Happily, nature often appears to contrive to concentrate these 'differently gifted' pilots into their own ghetto syndicates. This is excellent news for everyone else since generally only one per partnership will be airborne at a time.

**And finally** Having selected your future partners, you might feel the need to come to some sort of written agreement, bearing in mind that you will most likely be juggling breathtaking amounts of cash in the course of this exercise. This needs to cover such sordid details as, for example, division of shares, allocation of costs, and what happens if someone leaves. Write down your thoughts collectively on a single sheet of letter paper. As a rule of thumb, if you need to go to a second sheet, tear it up, and get different partners. If the agreement needs to come out of the drawer regularly, get different partners. If a partner persists in quoting from the agreement on the airfield, get a gun. Happy hunting! ■

# Flyin' the Cowley Wave

**Anon.**

adapted from a tale in "Evergreen Soaring"

ME AND MY GOOD FRIEND Glider Bill decided to go to Cowley to fly the wave last year. I am pretty new at flyin' gliders but Glider Bill is an expert. Glider Bill isn't an instructor – he says that he knows too much about glidin' to be a good instructor. He says that by the time he learnt a student all he knows that the student would be too old to fly. I'm sure lucky to have Glider Bill for my friend.

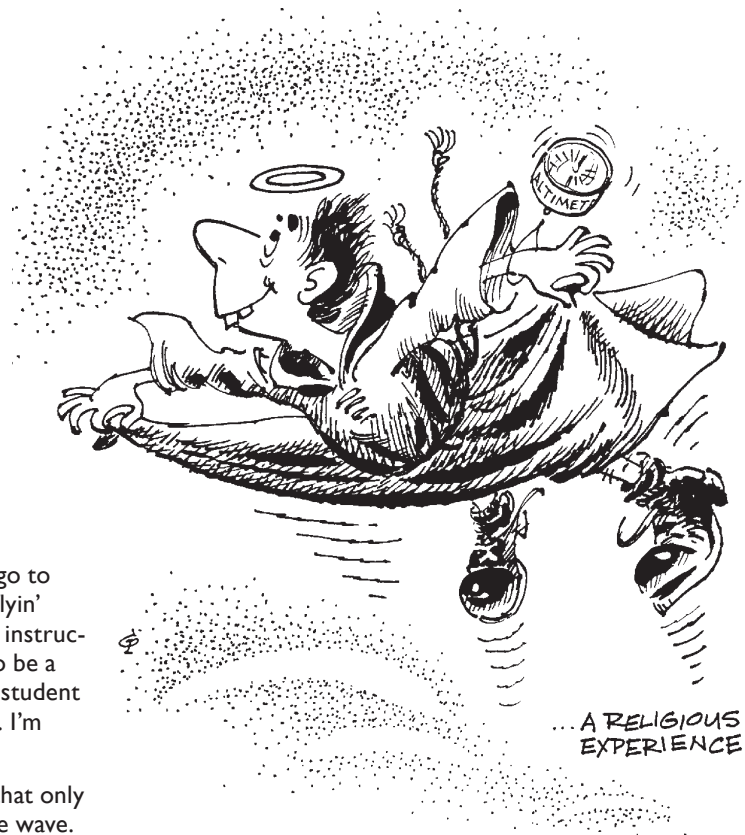
I asked Glider Bill about flyin' the wave. He told me that only a few of the pilots who goes to Cowley gets to fly the wave. I wanted to learn all that I could about the wave so I asked a lot of questions. He said that flyin' the wave was like a religious experience. The wave has mystical qualities. I wanted to know how I would find the wave. He said that only pilots of pure hearts would find the wave and that only I would know how. This didn't make much sence to me. I have heard tell of pilots getting tremendous lift from the Cowley wave and I sure wanted to be worthy enough to fly it. I tried to get him to tell me more but he only said that I would have to experience the wave myself to really appreciate it.

I sure was confused. Now I am new at flyin' gliders. Glider Bill has been flyin' them things for years. I knew that Glider Bill was just about the best glider pilot around. But he would hardly talk to me any more about the wave all the rest of the way to Cowley. He said that he had to meditate and cleanse his heart so that he would be able to fly the wave.

Well we arrived at Cowley and took our gliders out of their boxes. There was lots of other pilots there and everyone sure seemed real serious. Glider Bill launched ahead of me. I didn't see him the rest of the day. I took four flights that first weekend and tried to find that damn wave but I guess my heart wasn't pure enough.

I asked Glider Bill if he flew the wave. He looked like I'd slapped him in the face. He said that real glider pilots do not ask other glider pilots that question nor does real glider pilots talk a whole lot about the wave. He said to be one with the wave was better than sex and you don't talk about that either. Well, I apologized. I told him that I was still learnin' the finer points about being a glider pilot. I sure didn't mean to talk out of turn and I would be more careful like about talkin' of such things.

I felt real down in the dumps all that next week. We went back to Cowley the next weekend. A lot of those same guys was there again. I was real careful not to mention the wave to anyone lest they be offended. There is lots of edequit



about glider drivin' that I have to learn. Well we launched a whole bunch of them and I set off to find the wave. I flew all day Saturday, but I didn't find no wave. I was real discouraged. I didn't talk to a soul about it tho'. I may be from Saskatchewan but you don't have to hit me in the head with a 2 x 4 morin once for me to learn something.

Sunday was a bright and beautiful day. I don't know why but I felt different that morning. I somehow knew that I would find the wave that day. We launched them gliders again. I was one of the last ones off. I flew my little heart out but I couldn't find the wave. I was feelin' like I would never be a real glider pilot just because I learnt flyin' in an airplane with an engine. I was trying real hard not to let that interfere much. I was about to give up when I got into one hell of a thermal. I figured that if I couldn't find wave that I might just as well fly thermals. Well, out of nowhere an other glider appeared. It was a beautiful little white glider, probably one of them glass ones. I could see this big guy all cramped uplike in the cockpit. We circled together in this big thermal for a long time. After a while he decided to leave the thermal. As he swooshed by I saw this big fellow grin at me. He extended his arm and tipped his hand to and fro at me. My heart soared! I finally knew what Glider Bill had been talkin' about.

That night I proudly put into my log book, "Sited the Cowley Wave, flew same". I knew enough not to talk to the other pilots about me havin' found the wave. But I couldn't resist writin' down this story for others to read. I sure hope that I haven't broken some other glidin' edequit by doin' so. I have heard tell of pilots getting tremendous lift from the Cowley wave. But I also have figured out that them real glider pilots are horrible liars. Do you believe them other storys about finding good lift low over smoke stacks? I do know that the "wave" from the big friendly glider feller sure made me feel good. Maybe next year I'll be able to help some other newcomer fly the "wave". ■



# Recent Discovery in Europe

*this was no ordinary airplane – these dusty frames were Leonardo's*

## **Paton Cleckheaton**

*Australian Gliding*

AFTER MY RESEARCH into the activities of Madame Defarge and Les Tricoteuses, I travelled to Italy, where since a disastrous escape of poisonous gas from a chemical works in the north of the country occurred, there has been a movement away from modern technology and, at the same time, a search for Italian rather than American know how. I found that both impulses have been combined in the production of a new Italian glider, although perhaps it is wrong to call it 'new'.

The 1966 floods in Florence have produced more than one unexpected bonus. Cellars which had not been turned out or even entered for centuries have been explored and, in one such place the remains of a flying machine were found, with plans revealing it to have been a glider.

People in aviation have often wondered why Leonardo da Vinci never designed a glider. With the technology at his disposal, gliding flight would have been possible, but he seemed to have only contented himself with drawing fantastic flying machines, birds and parachutes. Now it has been discovered that the great man was hidden in the cellar of a wealthy friend for several months during his stormy career and that he whiled away the time by not only designing, but actually building a glider. Once able to escape, he lost interest in the project. It was impossible to remove the glider from the cellar, Leonardo never returned to Florence and soon no one even knew of its existence.

Those who rediscovered the machine in 1966 did not know what it was. But for its size, it would probably have been removed from the cellar and taken away with the rest of the debris from the floods. However, the plans were recognized as being of possible value and were taken to be dried out with many other flood damaged books and manuscripts. Scholars sorting and cataloguing this material soon recognized da Vinci's famous 'mirror writing' and aviation historians were called in to peruse the plans. They decided that they were of a flyable glider. Careful records had been kept of where all damaged manuscripts came from and a legal battle developed as to who owned these valuable relics of the master genius.

The present owner of the building in whose cellar the plans were found, Signor D'Oro, eventually established his rights over them and was able to sell them to the National Aeronautical Museum for an undisclosed but obviously large sum. He then realized that the large wooden structure which had been left in the cellar might also be of value and looked it over with an antique dealer friend, who fortunately is a power pilot and realized the dusty, neglected pieces were parts of a flying machine. Signor D'Oro established his legal right to it before getting in touch with the National Aeronautical Museum and asking if they were interested in a second purchase from him.

An expert was sent along and realised that this was no ordinary old plane. He called in colleagues, who were working on the manuscript plans, and they had the great thrill of seeing what the plane had been built from – these dusty frames were Leonardo's glider. It was decided that it must be studied in situ. It would be vandalism or sacrilege to cut up a da Vinci masterpiece merely to study it in greater comfort in the museum's workshops.

Signor D'Oro has not sold the remains, he charges the National Aeronautical Museum men for letting them work in his cellar. Because they needed powerful lights and electric sockets for their equipment, they had the whole building rewired at no cost to him and he charges a fee to the tourists who now chatter and walk on a wooden gallery he has had built around the cellar, while the experts try to work.

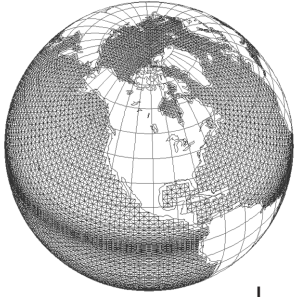
At first it was assumed that the glider was of wooden construction, although it seemed puzzling that timber had stood up so well to nearly 600 years of damp, fluctuating temperatures and neglect. As they uncovered the structure from its coat of flood borne oil and ancient grime, it became apparent that it was not made of wood. As a sculptor, Leonardo was familiar with casting of bronze and other metals and indeed made some technical innovations in this field, as in so many others. Yet the structure was too light to be of any metal known at that time and anyway, how would a fugitive hiding in a cellar be able to arrange the casting of large metal structures there? No, if this was a cast construction, it would have to be of some cheap, readily obtainable material whose presence in a household would not arouse suspicion.

Signor D'Oro eventually gave permission for small pieces of the glider to be cut off and removed for laboratory testing. The results were pleasing to every Italian nationalist. What could be more home grown, more part of 'Italia Nostra' than the material which Leonardo had used to make his glider? It was pasta, cast in moulds (which have not been traced), allowed to cool and harden and then coated with varnish. As the tourist leaves the cellar gallery, he goes through another room where Signor D'Oro sells souvenirs. Besides the expected photographs of the stages of recovery of the glider, portraits of Leonardo and reproductions of his other works, one can buy facsimiles of the plans and miniature replicas of the glider, mostly made of plastic, but some, more expensive one, of Pasta D'Oro.

Meanwhile, out at the local gliding club workshop, Signor Nanda and some other enthusiasts have nearly completed two full scale pasta gliders – one from Leonardo's plans and the other to Nanda's own design. Test flights are scheduled for the coming northern summer.

Glider made of this fascinating new material are fully serviceable unless they are allowed to get wet. Hangars and trailers used for storage should be mouseproof. ■





# The Genesis of the Geoid

the story of the 7 level headed scientists

Alan Murphy

*A little tale for the topographically challenged GPS owner.*

- 1 In the beginning there was a great **Mathematician** who invented the sphere – a massless figment of his imagination.
- 2 He soon grew bored with the sphere and wanted a more challenging shape for his deliberations. By making one axis shorter than the other two he created the ellipsoid. The points at which the axis crossed the surface he named the North and South poles. The line on the surface which was an equal distance from the poles he called the Equator.
- 3 Along came a **Physicist** who had been thinking heavily about mass. He filled the ellipsoid with a perfect fluid. However, in order to maintain the mathematician's ellipsoid shape he had to rotate the body at a uniform speed.
- 4 Now the Physicist soon discovered that if he rolled an apple on the surface from the North Pole to the equator, he did no work at all. In other words he needed no energy, not even a bite from the apple!
- 5 He weighed the apple on a spring balance and found it weighed more at the pole than at the equator even though it had not left the surface of the ellipsoid – a curious result. He explained that the centrifugal force created by the body's rotation had helped to move the apple further from the center of the body and against the force of gravity.
- 6 The Physicist needed a new word to describe this surface of different gravities but which had no “uphill”. He called this surface equipotential and he was pleased to find it was identical to the Mathematician's ellipsoid.
- 7 A **Geologist** arrived on the scene, but thinking that all new words should begin with “geo”, he coined the word geoid for the equipotential surface.
- 8 The Geologist liked big lumps of rock and so chucked a few into the rotating body creating local anomalies. The geoid was no longer an elegant mathematical shape, but it had bumps in the surface. The Physicist could still roll his apple over all the bumps without consuming or gaining any energy. However the equipotential surface was no longer identical to the Mathematician's ellipsoid.
- 9 Next came the **Chemist** who thought that the body would look much nicer covered with a sodium chloride solution, but because he had not stirred the solution very well, the liquid was not of uniform density. This meant that the liquid surface did not fit the geologist's geoid exactly. The new surface became known as the chemist's level (or C level for short).
- 10 It was now the turn of the **Meteorologist**. He added winds, temperature differences, and lots of other nasty things. This changed the shape of C level to the Meteorologist's Special Level (or MSL for short).
- 11 Not to be outdone, the **Oceanographer**, who had been circulating, then chipped in that he had just discovered currents (and because he discovered them he called them Ocean currents) – but this just made the whole story even more complicated.
- 12 And the last to appear was the **Environmentalist** with his dire warnings of global warming. He talked of melting ice and great changes to the MSL. He said that in 100 years time everyone else would be wrong anyway!

*That explains why the seven level-headed scientists are not the same height.  
And if you want to know your height, it depends in whose shoes you stand.*

## Standard Units of Measure

When, oh when, do you think we shall ever see a world wide standard set of measurements in aviation? And what should they be? (sound of can opener and worms escaping).

Phil Swallow

- Start with gallons and pounds. I saw an explanation once of how much one gallon of water is in pounds. One litre equals 1 kilogram is much easier, isn't it?
- Ah! But those were US gallons. A proper (UK) gallon of water weighs 10 pounds.
- I'm also familiar with readings on the ASI and vario both being knots – a simple mental division gives an idea of achieved glide ratio. (Even sink in 100's of ft/min is good enough.)
- Now, when the ASI is km/h and sink rate in m/s, all one has to do is the same mental arithmetic, then divide the answer by – what is it, 3.6? or is it multiply?
- In the UK it's simple. We measure height in feet, speed in knots, and distance in kilometres. What a cocktail!
- And in New Zealand it's height in feet, ground distance in kilometres, air distance in nautical miles, runway length and width in metres. It keeps one thinking.
- And if you have an engine, you measure fuel in litres when you buy it, and gallons per hour when you burn it.
- Did you hear about the astronomer who had his vario calibrated in microparsecs per millennium? The reader is invited to do the conversion. (answer #1 below).
- Once, flying a glider in Germany, it took a little while to get my head around the altimeter which was calibrated in kilometres with zero at the bottom of the dial.
- Or the UK glider pilot with a vario calibrated in furlongs per fortnight. (answer #2 below).

*I just under 2 knots  
2 1116 ft/min – good only for British thermals, I think!*

## Canadian Air Regulations – introduction

- I.000A** No pilot or pilots, or person or persons acting on the direction or under the supervision of the pilot or pilots, may try, or attempt to try, or make an attempt to try to comprehend or understand any or all, in whole or in part, of the hereunder published Canadian Air Regulations (CAR), except as authorized by the Minister or an agent appointed by, and acting for, the Minister.
- I.000B** Any pilot, or group of associated pilots, on becoming aware of, or realizing, or detecting, or discovering, or finding that he, or she, or they, are or have been beginning to understand the CAR, must immediately, within three (3) days notify, in writing, the Minister.
- I.000C** On receipt of the above mentioned notice of impending comprehension, the Minister will immediately rewrite the CAR in such a manner as to eliminate any further comprehension hazards.
- I.000D** The Minister may, at his pleasure, require the offending pilot(s) to attend remedial instruction in CAR until such time that the pilot is too confused to be capable of understanding anything.

## Spring has sprung – 2

Marty Slater



*Spring has sprung  
Da grass has riz  
Lookit how sticky my fingers is.*



*Da sap is sticky  
I know not why,*

*But it's great for my grip  
On da stick when I fly!*



*Spring has sprung  
Da grass has riz  
I wonder where da boidies is.*

*Da boids I guess  
Iz on da wing.*

*Now ain't dat absoid ...  
Da wings is on da boid!*

## Let's make a law!

There are always legal fossils in town bylaws. Laws controlling airport activities are no exception. For example:

- In Yarmouth NS, citizens aren't allowed to board an airplane within four hours of eating garlic (sounds reasonable to me).
- In Calgary, pilots and passengers shan't play checkers on an aircraft "lest they acquire a taste of gambling".
- In Lethbridge, only officers of the law are allowed to carry a slingshot in an airplane without a special permit.
- In Regina, it is forbidden to read a Sunday paper at the airport while any church service is being conducted.
- A Moncton law says that you can't fly while wearing pants with hip pockets, because the city fathers figured a hip pocket was an ideal place in which to hide a pint of liquor.
- Lingerie cannot be hung on a clothesline at the airport at Powell River, BC unless they are carefully hidden from prying eyes by a "suitable screen".
- Quesnel, BC lawmakers would have "no female appear in a bathing suit at the airport unless she be armed with a club" (this was later amended to exclude females weighing less than 90 lbs or more than 200 lbs).
- In North Bay, ON, a husband isn't allowed to fly without the company of his wife within the first twelve months of wedlock.
- Single, widowed, or divorced women are banned from taking flying lessons on Sunday in Winnipeg.
- Beware the laws concerning female flying students in BC – in Prince George, no flying instructor "may place his arm around a woman without a good and proper reason" and, in Gold River, a pilot is forbidden to tickle a female flying student with a feather duster to get her attention.

Robert Pelton, from *Aviation Today*

# No one gets lost these days!

## nostalgia for the bad old days

Val Brain, from *Convictor*

THEY SAY GROWING OLDER makes you nostalgic for the Good Old Days. Not me. I'm nostalgic for the Bad Old Days. No one today gets lost, even when told to. At least, no one with 100 bucks or so to spend on a WalMart GPS. For 100 measly dollars and \$3 worth of AA batteries you can be permanently and precisely Found, absolutely located to within about ten metres by our new guardian angels – not the stars in heaven but man made satellites, artificial fixed stars that not only tell you exactly where you are, but also where you are headed, how far you have to go and how fast you're getting there – and also say “beep!” when you get there.

Hitch your GPS to an in flight computer and it'll tell you how high you need to be to make it home or to the nearest airport, so you never again have to tell a farmer “the wind quit” and ask to use his telephone, borrow his tractor, or ask him to navigate the retrieve crew from the known world to Dogpatch via highways, byways and dirt tracks that have no names or markers. In other words, today one is no longer lost as in the bad old days, and gliding is thereby diminished by experience, adventure and adrenaline.

My cross-country seminars used to spend time on map reading and dead reckoning: how to plot courses and note landmarks and mark charts, how to locate an invisible turning point within a framework of roads, rivers and railroads, so that somewhere down there, there has to be a grass strip amid a thousand others where you must make a precise turn while pointing your wing tip at an aiming point identified by a fuzzy black and white image in a turning point booklet that is likely to be upside down. Today all you have to do is read the numbers and wait for the beep – about as close to navigation as microwave cooking is to haute cuisine.

What we have lost, fellow pilots, is the experience of being lost – the helplessness, the humiliation, the essential human angst of knowing only what you do not know, trapped in a goldfish bowl with an unfoldable chart, while trying to figure out whether the town beneath is really (A) Littlestown, or (B) Taneytown, or (C) Uniontown, or (D) Somewhere Else. If A, then the big highway is to the north, the river to the south, and the race track to the east. The airport must then be straight ahead where the road forks, but it isn't. So how about B, etc?

**In danger of fluttering down like a wounded bird**  
Meanwhile the altimeter is winding down and the Anxiety Meter is rising to panic and one is in danger of just

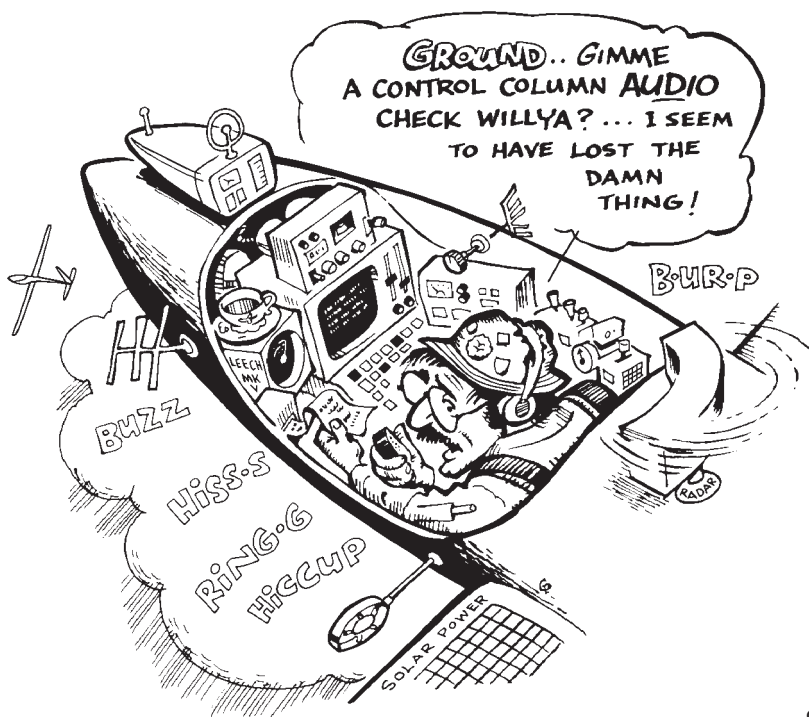
fluttering down like a wounded bird to flop into a field soon filled with people who all know exactly where they are. Sometimes this scenario is not confined to the private hell of the cockpit but broadcast for all the world to hear, as the ingénue pilot blurts out his predicament to a panel of would be advisors who ask him, “Can you see the quarry?” No. “What about the power station?” No. “The bridge over the river?” What river?... and so on until an exasperated voice says “Cut the chatter – this is a contest frequency”, and the bleating of the lost sheep is finally silenced.

I speak with some authority because I was always prone to getting lost. On my first cross-country, back in 1957, which lasted six and a half hours, for the last six I was lost, staying up because I had no permission to come down – at least, not anywhere other than Lasham Gliding Society in the UK, where I had taken off. It was a perfect summer's day, and I was flying a red Olympia imaginatively called *Red O* to distinguish it from the green Olympia called *Green O*.

I took a winch launch and joined a gaggle of other gliders that climbed to 5000 before heading off and, of course, I followed them. A few miles on we all started circling again and I climbed up with them, except that when I got to the top of the thermal they had disappeared, and so had Lasham. For as far as I could see the trim cultivated fields of Hampshire extended to the horizon. I had no radio, no chart. Fortunately lift was plentiful, so I was able to sport in this nowhere for another six hours before the sun began to sink in the west.

I had drifted to the outskirts of a large city and below was a huge church, a cathedral with its Gothic towers and flying buttresses, which I reasoned must be Winchester, not much more than 20 miles from Lasham to the south, or possibly the southwest, or even the west, which meant heading to the north, or possibly the northeast, or even the east, after due deliberation. In the end the matter was decided by landing more or less directly underneath according to the “flutter down” principle, on a school playing field, by adroitly avoiding nets, goal posts and other obstructions. To my surprise, a horde of little girls in school uniforms surrounded the glider, followed by a tall and very severe schoolmarm who said loudly, “Don't touch it, girls. You don't know where it's been.”

Actually the retrieve went smoothly and I was given only a mild tongue lashing (hence the name “Lash 'em”) by Derek Piggott, who was clearly relieved I hadn't



should be. The wooded hills stretched on as far as the eye could see in every direction, and I cruised on for mile after mile, altitude bleeding away.

Then, Halleluia! At less than 1000 feet, the airstrip at Harris Hill, almost level with the horizon. My palms were sweating – 500 feet and a mile to go, then 200 feet. The airport boundary was approaching and at the finish line a crowd of on lookers were all waving – those good people!

I resisted the urge to wave back, dropped flaps and landed straight ahead on the runway. My satisfaction was short lived: I had just grounded the tender belly of the glider on the most abrasive runway in North America.

rolled Red O into a ball. When I discovered the New World in 1958 and bought into a I-26 group with cross-country ambitions, I found it even easier to get lost. All the little American towns looked exactly alike and none had cathedrals, so I just had to keep going until I ran out of air. That's how I got my Silver distance.

On one flight out of Westminster (USA) I reached cloud-base at not much more than 2000 feet agl and headed east. Much of the flight was in cloud, using a turn and slip I had purchased while in England, and on emerging some time later looked down to see only water beneath. I was on the edge of the Bay, and landed at Weide AFB, where a pilot obligingly flew me back to Westminster so I could retrieve myself.

Later, in the 70s, I recall a 300 kilometre attempt while headed down to Culpepper, Virginia from Frederick in my Austria SH I, when I encountered an enormous lake south of Leesburg which shouldn't have been there. Could I have overflown the turning point? Should I turn back? To heck with it, I pressed on and found the airport at Culpepper with its glider operation that I had visited only two weeks earlier while on vacation. I was able to take my photo and return to Frederick, and on landing I asked about the mysterious lake. The advice was: "Get yourself an up-to-date chart". The entire valley had been dammed and flooded. But for a while I was again lost.

#### **Cruised for mile after mile, altitude bleeding away**

In those days flying in a contest at another site was always a challenge, requiring charts to be studied, courses marked, and landmarks noted. I recall once flying out of Harris Hill near Elmira over unlandable terrain running fresh out of landmarks with only the vaguest idea of which direction to fly home. I was climbing slowly in what was likely to be the last thermal of the day, and when it topped out I headed into the murk on a compass course in the general direction of where the airport

The grinding went on for an age, and a wisp of smoke filtered up into the cockpit. I was quickly surrounded by helpful spectators uttering pleasantries about "Those who Have and Those who Will", but humiliation does not love company. The good news was that Tom Smith, the PIK dealer and fibreglass repair expert, was on hand to work much of that night replacing three out of the four layers of glass left on the runway, so that by launch time I was ready to go again.

Three years ago I finally broke down and bought an entry level Garmin 38. Designed for campers, it quit at 90 kts, which was unhelpful on final glides, but it introduced me to the new world of the permanently Found. My long-honed navigational skills eroded fast, and my charts were no longer marked with courses and turning points. But one day, on a task from Fairfield to York, Carlisle, and back, I followed the numbers out of York and sometime later found myself approaching Three Mile Island – a landmark as unmistakable as the Eiffel Tower.

#### **Deceived by technology and abandoned to my own devices**

Suddenly I knew again the terror of the unknown, the awful truth of *Garbage in, Garbage out*, the mantra of computer programmers. My Carlisle coordinates were rubbish, and I was lost, lost, deceived by technology and abandoned to my own devices, and the lost art of dead reckoning. In fact, what I did was to change my GPS turning point from Carlisle to Roxbury Dam, a turning point in the same general direction, and follow the numbers until Carlisle hove in sight.

A close call. I could have fluttered down into a field near Dillsburg or East Berlin or wherever. With one difference – today you know exactly where you are in latitude and longitude, to three decimal places, within ten metres.

And that's progress! ■

# A not so short history of the development of a “Dual Unit Motion & Balance Interpretation Device, Environmentally Acceptable for Sailplanes”

**JJ Jinx**

from *Vancouver Soaring Scene*, 1977

THE DAY AFTER I HAD SOLOED the club 2-33 the first time, it became obvious that, well-intentioned though they were, the club instructors could teach me nothing more about the art of soaring. Therefore, I decided to give the world the benefit of my vast experience. I would enter the next Nationals.

Almost immediately I ran into a problem. My wife refused to go back to work full time. That ruled out plan “A”; buying an ASW-19 and cleaning up Standard class.

Falling back on plan “B” (never let it be said that I’m not flexible), I surveyed the club I-26 with some mistrust. Not that the aircraft itself was not sound. After seeing the beating it took from some of our less talented pilots, it was no thing if not strong. No, it was just that even with my superb piloting, I had to be realistic, I wasn’t going to be able to stay with the 19s and H301s at over 100 knots. After all, the I-26 is redlined at 97. Even allowing for ASI position error, parallax and lag, I reckoned 125 knots was the best I could expect. I’d likely be a couple of points down on L/D too. Clearly, something else was needed to even the odds.

A chap at the club who’d done his training in England provided the answer. Cloud flying! Over there they do it all the time. “Best lift’s in the cloud, Old Chap,” he said to me one day. “Stopping at cloud base is like saying goodnight at the door. You’re wasting the best part.” Of course, why didn’t I think of that sooner. With better lift and overall

altitude advantage I’d have by using Cb’s, I could bypass all the weak stuff and only stop once for every three times the gaggle needed, while all the time cruising at red line plus 30%.

Next morning, after pulling the plug to free me from our trusty L-19 tow plane, I made a bee line for the juiciest looking Cb I could find. A couple of minutes of superb thermalling brought me to cloud base. With the rate of climb increasing with every turn we entered cloud. The I-26 and I spent the next few minutes perfecting our inverted spin recovery technique, plus recoveries from maneuvers they haven’t named yet.

The fifth time into cloud I decided that since I was always coming out inverted, I should try rolling first and climbing into the cloud inverted. It didn’t work! I came out backwards. I-26s tailslide surprisingly well. Obviously what was needed was some blind flying instruments.

My motion at the next club meeting to equip the I-26 with a full blind panel was narrowly defeated by a vote of 83 to 1. My wife chose this moment to announce in front of witnesses, that she would not even go back to work part time. Do you realize how much a full blind panel for a glider costs? Once more, back to the drawing board.

An old copy of “*Interceptor*”, a USAF magazine, provided my answer this time. The old “Cat and Duck” trick. I’m sure most of my readers are acquainted with this method of blind flying, but for those who are not, a quick recap is in order.





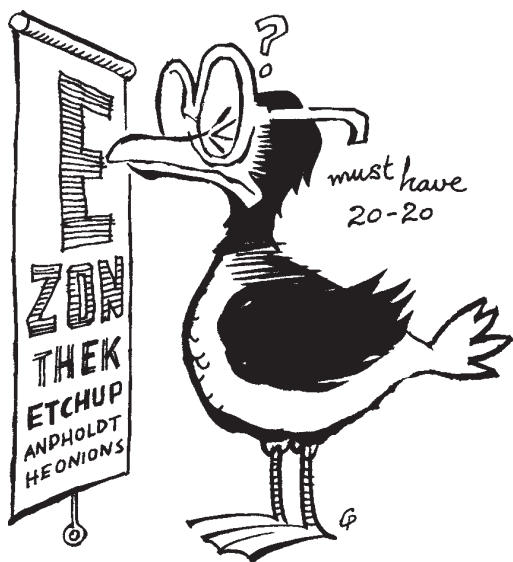
It is very simple. All you need is a Cat and a Duck. The cat is placed on cockpit floor and, on the theory that cats always remain upright, just watch the way the cat leans and correct accordingly. The duck is used for instrument landings. Since ducks will not fly IFR, simply fling it out of the aircraft when ready to land and follow it down.

Considerable research was done on this several years ago and some serious drawbacks became apparent that caused the project to be abandoned. However, no research was done pertaining to the use of this method in gliders and I felt that it was worth another try. Some of the problems encountered before were as follows:

1. Cats get tired easily and go to sleep. A large dog had to be carried to keep the cat at attention.
2. Get a clean cat. Dirty cats spend all their time washing. Trying to follow a washing cat results in a snap roll followed by an inverted spin.
3. Young cats have nine lives and get careless, so get an old cat with only one life left. He has as much to lose as you.
4. Get a well bred cat. Avoid strays. A vet or reputable breeder of house cats will help.

Being somewhat of a cat expert, having had a total of six cats and eight kittens (2 active, 4 time expired, 8 status unknown) in our house over the last four years, I felt I could solve most of these drawbacks. Also our resident met man and chief towpilot, who works at our gliding site, has said on several occasions that he knows of a couple of good cat houses in the local town; so I planned to call on him in regard to point 4 above. As far as the duck is concerned the problems are somewhat different.

1. The duck must have 20-20 vision. A nearsighted duck may not realize he's IFR and go boring into the nearest hill. This is a real problem at Hope, of course, which is surrounded by mountains. A very nearsighted duck will not realize it has been thrown out at all, and will descend in a sitting position. This is hard to follow in a sailplane. It also upsets the cat.



2. Use a duck certified for land touchdowns. It is disconcerting to break out of the overcast and find yourself on short final for a farmer's pond. Especially in duck hunting season.
3. Get a domestic duck. Remember ducks migrate. If you find yourself heading for Inuvik or Louisiana, depending on the time of year, then check back in six months with your nearest travel agent for a refund.
4. Get a medium sized brightly coloured duck. A small, dull duck is hard to follow in a dark cloud. On the other hand, trying to stuff a large duck through the small clear vision panel of a sailplane can be both distracting and messy. Despite the drawbacks outlined here I felt the system had much to recommend it. Not the least of these was the fact that it would not be obvious to the contest officials what was going on, whereas they would immediately become suspicious of anyone sauntering around with a full blind flying panel under his arms. The chap wandering around with a cat on a leash and a duck in his lunch kit would be regarded as exhibiting perfectly normal behaviour for a competition pilot.

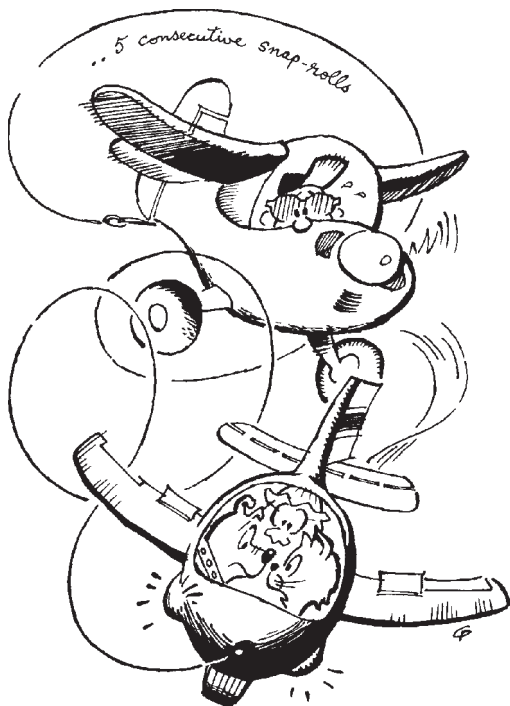
Now I will recount a few of my experiences during the certification of my "Dual Unit Motion and Balance Interpretation Device, Environmentally Acceptable for Sailplanes", or as it quickly became known – DUMB IDEAS!

Once I had decided to go ahead with my "Dual Unit Motion and Balance" system, I decided to draw up a comprehensive test flight program. After all, one cannot expect everything to go perfectly the first time. I've watched enough test pilot movies to know how it goes. Just ask John Wayne. I reckoned the actual program would need six flights to complete, occupying two days. The test program was designed as follows:

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| Flight 1 | Cat only – Evaluate cat's response to normal flight maneuvers. Acquaint cat with its duty station (on floor ahead of seat and in front of rudder pedals). |
| Flight 2 | Cat only – Unusual attitudes and actual cloud flying.   |
| Flight 3 | Cat and dog – To evaluate cat and dog as a team, and condition the dog to look for signs of sleep or tardiness in the cat.                                |
| Flight 4 | Duck only – Familiarize duck with flight envelope of I-26, so he doesn't fly too slowly (or fast?) while on approach.                                     |
| Flight 5 | Duck only – Actual approach initiated from within a cloud.  |
| Flight 6 | Full system test – At least 30 minutes cloud flying to check cat's stamina finishing with a full D.L.S. (Duck Landing System) approach to minimums.       |

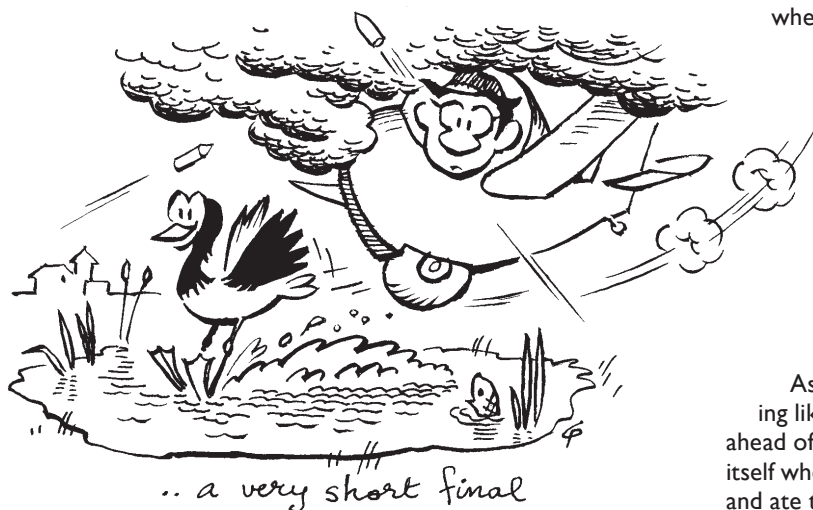
I felt that if we could accomplish the program as laid out, it could be operational in time for the Nationals in Hawkesbury at the end of July. Preparations for the first test flight included getting a suitable cat. No problem there. One of my children's cats volunteered to be the test unit. That will teach her to hang around the food dish out of meal times.

The first flight started well enough. The cat was installed in position on the floor of the I-26 and a normal hook up and



take-off was performed. That's when the problems began. As soon as we left the ground, the cat felt it was time to see just what she was getting herself into and poked her head up for a look. When she saw she was actually flying she assumed a most ungrateful attitude, namely, wrapped around my face with her eyes (and mine) tightly closed. The tow pilot later commented that he had never before seen five consecutive snap rolls done in a glider, especially one on tow. Order was restored in the I-26 with only a couple of moderate lacerations to my face to show for it. By the time we had gotten off tow the cat had gotten used to flying and settled down to work quite well.

We performed some turns up to 45° of bank and were starting to try for 60° when she got bored with the whole thing and decided to take a look around. Naturally she chose the back of the fuselage and despite my dire threats of selling her to the local Chinese restaurant, chose the most comfortable spot just aft of the wheel well and went to sleep. I had no option but to cut the flight short and land.



Obviously there was no point in proceeding with test number two without a "Cat Alert System", ie. dog, so it was decided to proceed directly to test number three. Acquisition of a dog was a little more difficult. Only two dogs were readily available at the field. One was a sometimes white poodle of undetermined mental stability. The drawback here was that this dog and my cat were already acquainted and the cat was not afraid of it, so it was decided to go with the other one, a Newfoundland puppy named Bonzo, a strange name for a dog but there you are.

The biggest, and I do mean big, problem with Bonzo was his size. Not only was he big, but he was getting bigger so quickly that a new C of G had to be calculated for the I-26 twice daily. It took us an hour to cram everybody in the cockpit. First the cat was installed in position on the floor, then Bonzo took his position just aft of the cat, and then I squeezed behind Bonzo. It took me ten minutes just to find the control stick, but finally it was located just aft and slightly to the right of Bonzo's rear fuselage. By bending Bonzo's head full left and mine full right we were just able to close the canopy and still see the cat and where we were going.

A normal take-off was made but I soon found that because of Bonzo's rear end I could not turn left and descend at the same time. Since I couldn't see left because of his head I decided it didn't matter anyway. A relatively uneventful thirty minute flight followed, consisting of nothing but right turns except for three slow rolls to the left caused when Bonzo barked at the cat. Not only did this wake the cat up but it blew her completely off her supports and wrapped her around my left foot and the rudder pedal.

Since time was running short, it was decided to skip flights four and five and proceed directly to test flight number six. The only modification to the previously mentioned configuration consisted of taping Bonzo's mouth closed and installing the duck, captured the night before in Stanley Park, behind my seat.

A 2000 foot tow to Hope Mountain, followed by a snappy climb and transition to wave via the "Mumford Method" (a hammerhead stall followed by an outside loop through the rotor), brought us rapidly to cloudbase, climbing at 6 knots. The team swung into action like a well oiled machine and we were rapidly climbing through 12,000 feet when Bonzo initiated the "Water Ballast Dump Test", an unauthorized modification to the program and clearly exceeding his authority. Beyond his authority or not, Bonzo proceeded with the test to its (and his) limit. It's incredible just how much water ballast a Newfoundland pup can hold. Actually the water itself was not as much of a problem as the violently shifting C of G as the water sloshed back and forth from one end of the I-26 to the other, alternating sending the aircraft into terminal velocity dives and near vertical stalls.

As the cat emerged from its third inundation, looking like a drowned rat and desperately trying to stay ahead of the rearward rushing stream, the problem solved itself when the ammonia content of the water did the trick and ate the bottom out of the aircraft.

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# Beating the system

who says you have to be a private owner to fly 100 hours per year?

## **“I’d rather remain” Anonymous**

(Who’d want recognition for a bunch of dirty tricks)

MOST PRIVATE OWNERS CLAIM that the only way to fly 100 hours per year in Canada is to become a private owner. This is just a load of propaganda designed to get the novice into the used sailplane market so that the said private owner can unload his latest mistake and use the money so obtained to move up to his latest dream. Not that I am against privately owned ships. They have their place. But they are not the sole way of building time rapidly. My timebuilders have been the club ships, but now that I have finally succumbed to the lure of an expensive toy, I can share some of my secrets. Prior to now I didn’t dare; who wants to spoil things for themselves?

### **Timebuilding Method No. 1: Watch the skies and jump the list**

Most club operations have a list of one kind or another to determine flying order. Generally, it is based on ‘first on the field, first to fly’. Ours worked on the principal that those with their name highest on the list had the first choice of whether to fly or not. Until the soaring started, anyone could fly without losing his position on the list; but once soaring started your name was crossed off the list when you flew and was added to the bottom of the list after you landed. Fair to all or so it was thought.

Shortly after I soloed I decided that there had to be some way to short circuit the list. After all I was generally number 3 or 4 on the list and, while that usually gave me a soaring flight, those in the number 1 position usually got two. Obviously I had to find a way to get the number 1 slot consistently. Some of you will say I should have arrived on the field earlier. But why? There was another method which, incidentally, had a side benefit of making me a more observant pilot and didn’t require ridiculous exercises like getting up at 4 a.m.

I had noticed that one of the older members of the club was always first to soar. He would push his ship out to the line, then stand around chatting to the other private

owners for quite a while, then without creating a stir, he’d decide it was time to go. Quietly, he would move his ship to the take off line and be gone. Usually, it would be half an hour later that the others would realize someone was soaring and then the mad rush would start.

I started using this old hand as my trigger. As soon as I saw him start moving towards his glider I would quickly ask all the guys above me on the list if they wanted to fly. Since no body was staying up, there was little chance that any of them would want to waste money. Usually I got the go-ahead to take the glider up and see for myself. I didn’t waste the opportunity. Most times I would finish up getting the tow after my trigger, the old hand, and, with him to mark a thermal for me, I rarely failed. Anyway, if I did it obviously wasn’t soarable so I was still number 3 or 4 on the list. If I soared, however, my name was crossed off, but then became the first on the list for the second round of soaring flights.

I couldn’t lose! Of course there was always the problem of the days when the old hand didn’t come out. Initially, this caused problems. However, as time went by, I found myself developing a sixth sense about the start of lift. Obviously I was starting to recognize the small, subtle changes that my old hand was sensing. Finally, I didn’t need him at all.

### **Timebuilding Method No. 1a: Jump the gun and let others jump the list**

After using my method No. 1 for a year or so I noticed a change in the attitude of some of my fellow pilots. When I came around asking if they wanted to fly, there was now the odd one who did. I started losing the advantage of the early flight. Obviously these pilots had come to the conclusion that I never flew if it wasn’t soarable and were using me as their “trigger”. If I was to regain the advantage of the first soaring flight I needed to modify method to account for the behaviour of these one or two who were spoiling it for me.

**next page**

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## **DUMB IDEAS, continued**

A quick decision was made to abandon the flight and follow the duck down for a landing. After about 800 feet of near vertical descent the duck realized it was swimming in mid-air and instantly reconfigured itself into the flight mode, necessitating a 12G, rivet popping, cat flattening pull out on our part. About an hour of relatively successful IFR formation work followed and just when I was thinking it was taking a hell of a long time for the duck to get back to Hope, we broke out of the cloud and immediately flew into heavy rain and then just as quickly into the clear again! The rain was really a fountain and we were on a

very short final for Lost Lagoon, the duck’s home base.

Several hours later, with a muddy 1-26 retrieved from the lagoon, cat rescued from the highest tree in Stanley Park, and Bonzo coaxed away from 89 delighted kids who had witnessed our spectacular arrival, we were sitting in the car on the way back to Hope. I was drawing up a new test program to try to rectify some of the minor snags that had become apparent when one of my crew said, “Why don’t you give up your DUMB IDEAS program and just enter the 1-26 in the Sports class?” “Sports class?” I said, “What’s Sports class?” ■

Very soon I came up with the “jump the gun” variation. For this to work I relied on the “method 1 spoiler” using me as his trigger. Now I merely asked around an extra 20 minutes ahead of the time I normally would have (I was getting pretty good at estimating the time when lift would start). The spoiler would quickly jump in ahead, but since he was 10 minutes early, he would only get a circuit. When he landed, no one else waiting for the soaring ships would want to follow his example so it was free for me to go up, and at what was in reality the time I really wanted.

It took only a few weeks’ using method 1a and the “spoilers” confidence in my infallibility was shaken. They were no longer using me as their trigger and I could revert to the standard method 1.

### **Method 1b. The long delay**

During the period I was forced into using method 1a, I had the good fortune to be able to use another variation. With only one towplane and this being hand-refuelled from barrels, there is usually a 30 minute interruption when refuelling is necessary. A couple of times I knew the towplane would have to go for fuel before the soaring was due to start. By timing it right, I was able to ask for my ship at a time which was obviously way too early, pull it up to the launching line behind a couple of trainers, get strapped in, only to have the towplane head off for fuel just as my launch came up. By the time refuelling was completed the cu’s were starting to pop. I had asked for my aircraft almost an hour too early, yet the two trainers ahead of me and the 30 minute refuelling break meant that I got airborne just as the lift got going.

Method No. 1, in its three variations, does not lead to longer flights, but increases the chances of making more than one soaring flight on a given day. There are ways of getting longer flights than normal which may be used under favourable circumstances.

### **Method No. 2 The five hour rule**

Most clubs have time limits of about an hour for flights in club equipment. Some, however, have arrangements whereby this rule is waived for bona fide 5-hour attempts provided they are pre-booked. Such was the rule where I flew. We had a list of those wishing to try for 5 hours and, each day, whoever had his name at the top of the list was permitted three launches in the solo ship of their choice before 1 p.m. If they were able to stay up then they could try for their 5 hours. After the third launch, the ship reverted to normal (off the list) club flying. After an unsuccessful 5-hour attempt your name went to the bottom of the list again.

When I was really hungry for time (my first two seasons) I was fortunate that the 5 hour list was short. This made it very attractive not to get 5 hours but to use the list as a time builder. I must have made a dozen attempts of over 4 hours before other considerations made me decide to finally get it. Of course not all those dozen flights were cut short deliberately, in fact it was not until the first three had been cut short by natural shortage of lift that I realized that I had a surefire timebuilder begging to be abused.

### **Method No. 3 Considering the club’s finances**

This method works only if your club has radio equipped ships. I was fortunate mine did. Most clubs can use every cent they can earn, but proceed to cut down their revenues unnecessarily. They have a one hour time limit (or some such) on the

club ships which duly land after an hour regardless of the length of the line waiting for tows. They then sit on the ground for up to an hour waiting for a launch. My club was no different, then we got radio. Now things could be changed.

We did have a rule in the club that if the ship was not needed, it could stay up with no penalty to the pilot. As soon as we got radios I started to use this rule to extend my flights. If I saw a line-up waiting for launch when it became time for me to land (a frequent occurrence when the lift has just started), I would radio in and ask for an extension of the flight until the line got shorter. Soon I wasn’t the only one who did this, and sometimes we would practically have an airline type stack overhead with three or four ships flying around waiting to be called down.

It amazes me that clubs don’t adopt this as a standard operating method. Once soaring starts all ships should be allowed to stay up until they are called in. There should be no long lineups for take off except at the start of the day. Staying up hurts no one if the extra time is simply that which would have been spent on the ground waiting for a tow.

Well, there you have it, the basics of getting more hours on club ships. In addition to these methods there are other more specialized techniques like the “take a ship away for a week” method, and the “go fly a cross-country” method or its cousin, the “get a ship for a contest” method, but these may not be possible in some clubs. Of course every club has possibilities for the “instruct a lot” method but usually by the time you reach the stage of being qualified to instruct you are not so keen to do simple time building and, in any case, instructing is a chore.

The biggest advantage of time-building on the club ships, compared with getting sucked into the private owner routine, is that you get to fly but the club gets to do the maintenance. How many private owners have you seen busy with the maintenance chores on a superb soaring day? If you want to fly, join a club; if you want to maintain an aircraft, become a private owner. ■

### **Czechlitz des Oberleutnant Pfelz – Kommandant der Ka6 –**

1. Ist die Wingen solidisch ongetaped?
2. Auf both Sides?
3. Ist der Tail still in dem Trailer?
4. Goes die Floppydingenaufdenwingen up und down?
5. Und die other Floppies: Elevator, Ruder, ...?
6. Ist die Parachute nicely gestarched?

Perhaps it fliegen vill!

Getaken by Lloyd von Bungey  
from der Hope segelflugplatzklubhaus





*"Soaring thrills and agonies". I thought you might get a chuckle out of these 14" high ceramic wall hangings made by Norm Taylor of the Winnipeg Gliding Club. They are beside the fireplace in their clubhouse.*

## Other than that, it was a great flight

FOR SOME REASON I was the only one flying in the Columbia Valley on Saturday. As I was scraping low along the Steeples I passed a large Golden Eagle sitting on top of one of those ridges. He was watching me because he turned his head and I swear I heard him say, "this guy is nuts". Being low on the Steeples is just what I had told others never to do. The lift, such as it was, was quite turbulent close to the rocks so I had to fly fast, and with over a 10 lb/ft<sup>2</sup> wing loading [of my PIK-20E] this was not a fun time. I was too involved with staying up to eat my lunch. Later I made a desperate move to get on top of some lower ridges in order to get to the bubbles off the top of them and that seemed to work.

After leaving the Steeples and while making a run for the Elko Ridge, I thought I had time to grab a bite of my chicken salad sandwich. These sandwiches are from Extra Foods in Fernie and they have over an inch thick of slimy filling and this squirted out and a big lump fell onto my external catheter (condom). This was a retread (second use) and the adhesive was not too good. I reached down to grab this lump of filling so it wouldn't get all over the place and partially pushed the condom off and it started to leak. Things were not going well. I decided to land because of the condom dilemma.

Normally I switch hands when I put the gear down but this time because my left hand was busy trying to stem the leak I reached over quickly with my left hand and unlocked the gear handle. My bum little finger on the left hand hangs down and it got caught as the gear handle slid forward. I must have severed a small artery as blood was pouring out and getting on everything. It looked like an axe murder had taken place. I had to lock the gear with my right hand anyway. Then I wrapped the plastic bag that the sandwich had been in around the finger to contain the bleeding. ... Other than that, it was a great flight.

**Dick Mamini** ■

## First solo – or the instructor appreciation flight



### *The Glider Instructor*

*The instructor stood at the Pearly Gate,  
His face was scarred and old.  
He stood before the Man of Fate  
For admission to the fold.*

*"What have you done," St. Peter said,  
To gain admission here?"  
"I've been a glider instructor, Sir,  
For many and many a year."*

*The Pearly Gates swung open wide,  
St. Peter rang the bell,  
"Come in and choose your harp," he said,  
"You've had your share of Hell!"*



## *The Ten Commandments of Gliding*

- I Put not thy trust in weather prophets, for when the truth not be told, they shall not accompany thee among thine ancestors.*
- II Ignore not thy checklists, for many are the handles, gauges, and other daemons awaiting to wreake cruel vengeance upon thee.*
- III Thou shalt abstain from getting far out of tow position, lest thine eyes lose sight of thy towpilot, as he will surely depart.*
- IV Thou shalt cast thine eyes to thy right and also to thy left as thou passeth through the heavens lest fellow pilots bring flowers to thy widow and comfort her in other ways.*
- V Circle not against thy neighbour, for their righteous fury shall surely be called upon thy head.*
- VI Be thou ever mindful of thy lift lest there be nothing to sustain thee upon the air and thy day be made short.*
- VII Trust not thine eyes to lead thee through cloud lest the arch angel Gabriel await thee therein.*
- VIII Thou shalt not trespass into the thunderstorm lest the tempest rend thy chariot and cast thee naked into the firmament.*
- IX Often shalt thou confirm thine airspeed on final lest the earth rise up and smite thee.*
- X Linger not upon the active runway lest thou become as ground sirloin.*



*"... now I know what 'au vache' means ..."*

# **SIMPLE SUGGESTIONS**

## **8 rules to happy soaring**

An open letter to the new club executive from the past-President

- Rule #1     **Remember, we are all here to fly gliders and have fun.**
- Rule #2     **When things get tough, and the whiners and the complainers start to get to you, remember Rule #1.**
- Rule #3     **When the persons mentioned in Rule #2 really start to get to you, ignore them and refer to Rule #1.**
- Rule #4     **Consider the source. If someone whose views you respect tells you that there is something wrong, maybe there is. But, then again, maybe there isn't. In case of confusion, refer to Rule #1.**
- Rule #5     **There is nothing so important that it cannot be postponed to a non-soaring day. (This is really Rule #1 stated differently).**
- Rule #6     **Insist that all your directions be obeyed promptly and to the letter – particularly, *"Take up the slack"* and *"All out"*.**
- Rule #7     **Delegate authority. Nobody will listen to you anyway, so they might as well not listen to somebody else while you go follow Rule #1.**
- Rule #8     **Keep your sense of humour. People will try to take it away from you, but it's hard to follow Rule #1 without one.**

If I can be of some help this year, please don't hesitate to call. You'll have some trouble catching up with me though. I will be at Hope, or Ephrata, or on the safari, or anywhere glider pilots gather to follow Rule #1.

**Dave Baker**, Vancouver Soaring Association

