

# Vintage Times

Issue 98 April 2005

## Newsletter of Vintage Gliders Australia

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**Membership** \$15 every October

Articles for Vintage Times are welcomed



PHOTO BY THE BORDER MAIL

## **OLD MATE'S WEEK 2005**

Frank Tippl, Alan Patching and Max Carpenter, hooking on the Longwing Kookaburra GRN during the 2005 Gliding Club of Victoria Old Mate's Week at Benalla.

The Rally ran from Monday 7<sup>th</sup> March until Friday 11<sup>th</sup> March, and followed the successful pattern of previous years, with social flying each day, a dinner on Wednesday evening and a regional bus tour on Thursday.



EDNA AND KEITH NOLAN SHARE A HAPPY MOMENT IN THE VANSTAN MODIFIED KOOKA  
BORDER MAIL PHOTOGRAPH

Old Mate's Week aims to encourage older and inactive pilots to take the opportunity of maintaining contact with gliding and renew old friendships in the gliding fraternity. Two seaters are made available for flights and older single seaters are also encouraged to come.

Two seaters in attendance were the Long-wing Kookaburra, GRN, and the Vanstan modified Mk 2 Kookaburra, GFK as well as the Gliding Club of Victoria aircraft, with the IS28 and Duo-Discus being put to good use. Many early members of GCV showed up including Leo and Rob Dowling.

Dart 17 GLT and Ka6 GNB made good use of the conditions and many modern single seater pilots also enjoyed the availability of the Callair and Pawnee tugs.

Briefing was arranged for 9.30 in the morning, and professionally presented by Graham Garlick and Jim Barton. New visitors were introduced each day and made to feel welcome. The weather co-operated for the five days with pleasant calm sunny days, although the mild temperatures put the lid on thermals to about 5,000 feet on most days.

The Wednesday night dinner was again a sellout, with 105 in attendance. The spirit and camaraderie present during the evening was wonderful, as evidenced by many guests remaining long into the night – and for quite a few, the early morning! Despite this, all seats on the bus tour organized by John King the next morning were occupied. Visits included the Wangaratta fighter aircraft factory and

museum, the El Dorado gold dredge and a winery.

Many thanks are due to Organiser Jim Barton, who ensured the smooth and hassle free running of the event with support from Graham Garlick. Alan Patching brought the Longwing Kooka from Bacchus Marsh, he and John Ilett took many of the passenger flights and Doug Lyon provided a lot of assistance to the whole operation. Keith Nolan and Dave Goldsmith took passengers up in the Vanstan modified Kooka. Max Carpenter, Peter Presnell and Jim Barton flew the tugs. Many thanks also to The Gliding Club of Victoria members and staff for their support of the rally, hangarage, and the catering by Louise Preiss and her team, and Jim and his bar assistants



THE 17 METRE SLINGSBY T51 DART GLT WITH ALAN PATCHING AND OWNERS JOHN KING AND STAN HENDERSON. THIRD SYNDICATE MEMBER IS DON RIDGEWAY.

## OLD MATES' WEEK

From Graham Garlick

There was a record response to the call for 'Old Mates' to meet at Benalla in March 2005.

Some of the faces at the muster were the Dowling brothers Leo and Bob. Bob flew the Duo-discus, a contrast to the Grunau Baby, which he last flew in 1949. Bob still has a good pair of hands and a sensitive feel for thermals. Reg Pollard put in appearances on the field and at the dinner. Three of the Barton brothers attended. Jim delegated operations to Ken Boland except on Wednesday when Ken waggged; flying solo with a heavenly flight over the mountains.

Alan Patching President of the Vintage Gliding Association flew and fettled during the week and delivered a weight and balance course at the weekend as an extra.

Pilots from England, Ireland, Queensland and South Australia were represented. Along with Tumbarumba's

Ralph and Jan Walker; there were lots from Locksley, a duo from Mt Beauty, Eugene Blunt from Corowa, and Brian O' Toole from Boonah. The 'Squared Headed Group' with memories from the German weeks of the early 70s were well represented with Tipple, Leitner, Preiss, and Richter.

Faces from another era Eddie Maddern, CFI Tocumwal; Peter Johnstone, CFI Locksley; and Benalla professional instructor Doug Robinson. All GCV boys who have had huge impact on flying training in Victoria for over 30 years. The three were joined in animated conversation by the Worboy girls Evelyn and Sylvia along with Doc Ferguson and Terry Ryan.

Missed this year were Dick Duckworth, Dave Darbyshire and Peter Hooks. Others who were unable to attend were talked about.



BRIAN AMEY SETTLES INTO Ka6 GNB

When not flying or talking, pilots were eating. Catering this year was under 'chef' Louise Preiss, the angel who coped with all demands. Louise was deservedly released on the Wednesday when a record dinner attendance of 105 demanded extra catering.

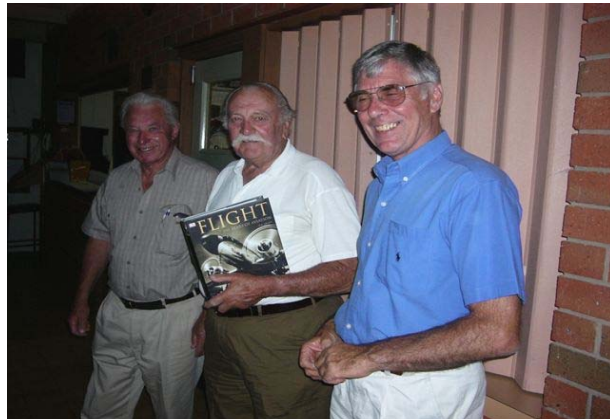
On Thursday John King battled a tired clutch and bussed a batch of Old Timers [BOOT]! Visiting the Wangarrata aviation museum, and the Eldorado gold dredge before lunching in Bright.

Active on the field were octagarians Keith Nolan a 62-year veteran of flying who flew his Kookaburra with Edna. Frank Jordan also with 60 years plus flying, former GCV instructor and Lancaster pilot. Frank joined Geoff Cox in the Is28. Murray Evans former National Champion flew the Duo-discus to Mt. Buffalo and return.

Max Carpenter put in a busy week towing his Old Mates. Most GCV pilots have had an attachment to Max! [by aero tow rope] and others a close association, believe it, it's close when Max and a trainee tug pilot are

crammed into the Pawnee. The 'squeeze' has been his successful training of almost 100 tug pilots for GCV and other clubs. This was recognized at the dinner when former GCV president and 'Old Timers' convener presented Max on behalf of his 'Old Mates' a 'History of 100 years of Flight'.

Old mates will again gather in March 2006.



JIM BARTON, MAX CARPENTER & GRAHAM GARLICK

## LETTERS

From Allan Ash

Dear Editor,

I am writing to express my thanks and appreciation for the card sent to me with greetings and signatures of the VGA members who attended this year's rally at Bordertown. I was very touched by the kind thoughts and action this demonstrated. I haven't been able to attend the rallies for the past couple of years and it is nice to know I have been missed.

Several factors have contributed to my absence. My dear wife, Freda, has suffered increasing difficulty in walking in recent years, and has lately been diagnosed as having osteoporosis, which is a degeneration of the spinal column, resulting in her being more or less housebound. In addition, on the advice of my doctor, I have given up driving and have sold our car, all the result of a gradual degeneration in my eyesight. These problems have left us rather isolated from activities outside the retirement village where we now live.

However it has given me some pleasure to have been told verbally and by letter by a number of VGA members that they appreciate and enjoy the occasional articles I have submitted to "Soaring Australia" magazine, with requests to "keep 'em

coming". Over the past couple of years, each time I have written an article I have thought to myself "that's the last I'll be able to write, as I've run out of ideas". But a month or so later, I've started on another one. There were just so many interesting things that happened in the early days! I often think they must be boring to a lot of people, but nobody has said so yet.

It is also interesting to note the number of people who continue to refer to our current national soaring magazine as "Australian Gliding" or A.G. There is a deep psychological significance in that.

With my greetings to all VGA members and a wish that they all enjoy their continued involvement in our great sport,

Allan Ash

Editor's comment Thanks Allan from all of us, and best wishes for yourself and Freda to enjoy your retirement. See in this issue "The Quasimodo Caper" – keep 'em coming!

#### **FROM Peter Raphael**

David, Some information you may be able to use. I bought two pictures of the Duster in A4 format, taken at the Vintage Regatta by Peter Chatfield. I was so impressed with them that I suggested to him that if could supply me with the website I would let others know via the Vintage Times so they could order some themselves. Peter emphasises that the images on his site are a quick crop and he later does what is necessary to bring out the best quality in the chosen images. These are then professionally reproduced on photographic paper. He now has a site at [www.petechatfield.com](http://www.petechatfield.com) and you can view the photos via this. Mainly the K4 and Kookaburra and some notable faces. Can't wait to get mine framed and on the wall!  
regards  
Pete Raph

Ed. Note see also [www.brookmanonline.com](http://www.brookmanonline.com)

#### **LEIGH BUNTING'S Grunau project**

the saga continues:-

#### **Rex Booth wrote to Leigh:-**

I have just read the VT and was interested in the article on your restoration of the Grunau, this is because I was a member of Southern Cross when the club bought that glider. On the 2nd April 1960 as a naive 15 yr old I did my first solo in the Grunau, the Kookaburra being too valuable to allow first solos to be flown.

As I recall the Grunau was purchased in an unfinished state and George Detto completed what work was required to get it flying. Many modifications had been made during construction which made it interesting to fly such as excessive dihedral and shorter than normal ailerons. These two features meant that on my first soaring flight some weeks after my first solo I found it difficult to turn into thermals as there was insufficient roll control to put down the rising wing. The elevator from memory was fitted with a strong spring which meant one was always holding back stick to stop from diving.

When it was pranged later in the year George was heard to say that now he could make it fly like a Grunau should.

#### **Leigh replies:-**

Hi Rex,

Great to hear from you. That was very, very interesting.

The curious thing is that you have confirmed that it was purchased by SCGC unfinished. However, if that is the case, then what are the several pages of flights pinned in the front of the log book that gave dates as early as May 1956, as I indicated in the article?

The plot really thickens now!

As regards the dihedral, that has gone but the ailerons seem to be standard size for a Grunau 2, not a 2A or 2B. There is no longer any evidence of a spring on the elevator control, but I have noticed that at some stage the tailplane/elevator was totally rebuilt using the old ribs. But it is 400mm shorter in span than is standard. With the other 'modifications' it certainly is a strange hybrid.

My flying GB seems to require a lot of elevator load, so maybe GLW with the reduced elevator area, gave for an even higher load.

If you have any other remembrances, let me know. Thanks for that info. Another little piece of the jigsaw.

Regards,  
Leigh Bunting

EDITOR'S POSTSCRIPT: For Rex it was all downhill after the Grunau, as he went on to complete a distinguished airline pilot career and now flies helicopters - however he has recently seen the light and is becoming more active in vintage gliding!

Leigh has also received assistance from Ged Terry regarding the weight problem.

## VINTAGE REGATTA AT GYMPIE

From Ron Geake

We are planning to hold a Vintage Regatta from Saturday 11 June to Saturday 18 June for all us Northerners who are troubled by the tyranny of distance that made us envious but unable to attend Bordertown. On the weekend 18/19 June we will be hosting 40 Air League Cadets but launching will still be available.

We have on hand an ES59, ES60, K7, 2 Cherokees at Gympie with others at Boonah and North Queensland but of course all will be welcome. We will launch by winch and Auster aerotow. I would really like a Kooka, GB and a Primary ( even for static display )

Plans include Hot Air Balloons and we should be able to have TV and other media coverage. The weather should be superb.

Local soaring is superb with the Ranges stretching to the west and a vista of lakes, 5 pyramid shaped 1000' hills to the east and south and above 3000' Fraser Island, Rainbow Beach Sand Dunes and Noosa Heads become visible - Gympie Town is to the North. We have a height limit of 8500' above the Airfield and 12500' just to the north.

Camping will be available on the field at no cost - our Clubhouse has a fully equipped kitchen and barbeque, Ladies and Gents Toilets and shower but very little sleeping accommodation - there is plenty of caravan park and motel/hotel accommodation in the area as well as a number of historic sites and we are only 40 minutes from Noosa. We have various plans for interesting events including pylon racing around various courses from 30km to 60km with carefully surveyed landable areas clearly marked on large scale maps.

Subject to the response we will arrange catering on Site - there will certainly be refreshments but we will provide a full service at cost or byo if necessary. Launching will be by Auster MSP (ex Midlands) and winch ( using 8mm rope) at normal Club rates.

I am confident of arranging TV and print media coverage if we have a good roll-up and am still working on getting Hot-Air balloons especially over the first week-end. We do not want to over-organize - we will have a morning briefing each day with a number of evening events including Ib Braes (Ex World Masters Champion) presenting gliding in Denmark with reference to historic

gliders.

My contact details are Phone / Fax 07 5486 7247; Email [rcgeake@tpg.com.au](mailto:rcgeake@tpg.com.au)

Everybody is welcome with or without a Glider - local flights at Club Rates. June is normally a dry period with temperatures in the mid-20's and good soaring - cloudbases around 5000' but wave is possible early morning. Prior advice of intention to attend would be appreciated but come anyway!

Ron Geake  
President  
Gympie Gliding Club

## Coming events

**The VGC UK National Rally 2005** at Challock, Kent. T21 Theme. 21st to 28th May 2005 with visitors welcome to stay for the remainder of the Bank Holiday week end if they want to. Kent Gliding Club, Contact Bob Lloyd at [Bob.Lloyd@ukgateway.net](mailto:Bob.Lloyd@ukgateway.net)

**Gympie Regatta** 11<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2005  
Contact Ron Geake, 07 5486 7247

**Rendezvous Rally Oerlinghausen**  
16<sup>th</sup> July -26<sup>th</sup> July 2005  
Visit [www.flugplatz-oerlinghausen.de](http://www.flugplatz-oerlinghausen.de)

**33rd VGC International Rally** Eggersdorf-Muncheberg (just East of Berlin) 27 July - 6 August 2005  
e-mail [gliders-eggersdorf@t-online.de](mailto:gliders-eggersdorf@t-online.de)

### *IVSM 2005*

**20<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> August, 2005**

Harris Hill, Elmira, New York State.  
At least five VGC members will be representing Australia at this 5 yearly event. They are Alan and Lorna Patching, John Ashford and Dave and Jenne Goldsmith. GFA are providing some support.

## **300 Km in a Shortwing Kookaburra!**

**From Ray Ash**

The week after Christmas was not particularly good, with wind and high overcast conditions inhibiting much soaring. Before this setting in, however, Neil Bennett, who is now a syndicate member in our Kookaburra VH-GLM, managed a very creditable 300 km flight in it.

The flight, which he did solo, was around three turning points, ensuring that he was never more than 60 km from base, to avoid a long retrieve in the event of an

outlanding. Neil had intended to launch by 11am, but a kink in the launching cable ensured a rare cable break at 100 feet on the first launch. A second attempt was little better with the Kookaburra back on the ground in a very short time. The third launch at midday proved successful and he was on his way to the first turn point of Mendooran an hour behind his intended departure. He had planned on averaging 50 km an hour to have any hope of completing the task and this is what he achieved. The task was Mendooran Silo, Wellington, Coolah, and Gulgong. Neil said the day was not exceptional and his speed between thermals was never more than 60 knots. He only had one low point, this was about halfway to Mendooran on the first leg when he got down to below 2000 feet. His maximum height was 8,500 feet QNH, 7,000 feet AGL. The flight was fairly uneventful until he was on final glide which proved to be into a 10 knot headwind, and he unfortunately landed about 5 km short of the home field after nearly six hours in the air. Henk Meertens and Bob Hare had flown out to meet him in the latter's Ximango motor glider, even marking a 4 knot thermal for him, but Neil failed to contact it and was forced to outland.

After the initial disappointment of having failed the task and thinking he had only covered about 295 kms, it wasn't until investigation of the data logger that he carried with him showed that he had actually covered 302 kms. It appears that he had overflowed the silo at Mendooran, which is several kms out of town, and had actually turned over the town itself, adding a precious 4 or 5 kms to his distance. Neil is an experienced cross country pilot in modern sailplanes, having completed many flights of up to 600 kms, and commented that he had never worked so hard on a cross country flight as he did in the Kookaburra.

Editor's Note See also Soaring Australia, March 2005, page 31

## **VALE Mike Valentine**

by John Ashford

Mike died last Christmas. We will never know why. He leaves behind a superb training system fully documented which reaches every Australian glider pilot. Mike held a repairs major-wood and loved old gliders. He did not dislike modern gliders but felt they had no character. He said of the ASH 25- "The performance is astounding but after an hour of it I still felt as though I was operating it rather than flying it"!

## **THE K2b RESTORATION**

Mike found VH-GHO at Northam WA about as far away from its birthplace, Illawarra NSW as you can get! The K2 had smashed fuselage and damage to one wing. The trailer was a huge wooden, plywood skinned affair. On the way back to Melbourne the aluminium foil covering the ply peeled off and Mike joked that he must have left an interesting radar trail across the Nullabor. Over two years Mike restored the K2 in the VSA workshop and syndicated it with me and Chris Cullinan. He spent every spare hour restoring the K2, researching colors of gliders of the era before deciding on the present scheme. The only K2 in Australia was built from plans by the Illawarra Gliding Club, if it was not for Mike it may have finished up in a bonfire.

## **THE OLYMPIA REFURBISHMENT**

The badly crashed Olympia VH-GLY had been rebuilt by Kevin Sedgeman who foreshortened the nose as he had ideas of an engine installation. (Just as well you didn't Kevin as a gang led by me would have probably done for you!) This gave the Olympia a poor C of G range quite apart from the fact that it looked like it had run into the back of a bus. Keith Nolan restored the nose shape by inserting a plug in the cockpit area. Mike acquired it and set about recovering it and painting it in vintage colors. Reckoning that it would never spend a lot of time in the sun Mike set about making it a transparent glider in the manner of so many of the really older gliders. He found that Ceconite was available with the maker's stamps only down the edge whereas the Stitts product had stamps plastered all over it (I believe you can specially order it now without stamps.) The finished glider made it onto the cover of AG and was later sold to a syndicate at Locksley where it is today; worth a look if you know when it will be out flying.

These are two gliders which stand out as fine examples of Mike's love of old gliders. We will all miss him.

EDITOR'S NOTE: See the cover of Australian Gliding, April 1996.

## **Vintage Glider Club (International)**

[www.vintagegliderclub.org.uk](http://www.vintagegliderclub.org.uk)

## **Vintage Sailplane Association (USA)**

[www.vintagesailplane.org](http://www.vintagesailplane.org)

"Bungee Cord" Vol 30, number 3, has lots of snippets and photos including the VSA Eastern Regatta in Kutztown, Pennsylvania. The cover photo shows Richard DuPont preparing to fly his Minimoa in the 1937 US Nationals.

**The Australian Homebuilt Sailplane,**  
3 Magnolia Ave., Kings Park, Vic., 3021  
[www.geocities.com/capecanaverall/hangar/3510](http://www.geocities.com/capecanaverall/hangar/3510)  
Issue 36 contains an excellent article that goes into some detail about wood for aircraft use by Gary Sunderland. Peter Champness reviews the Tasman Variometer, and Peter Raphael covers the VGA Rally at Bordertown. A symposium on "Experimental" is to be held at Bacchus Marsh on 14<sup>th</sup> May. If interested, contact James Garay on 03 9367 3694.

**Soaring Australia** [www.gfa.org.au](http://www.gfa.org.au)  
April 2005 issue contains details of low cost total energy tube design & installation by Richard H Johnson. March issue included a rundown of the Bordertown Rally, and the story of the replica Wright flyer being built in Narromine, NSW. Astronaut Dr. Buzz Aldrin will dedicate the aircraft at the official launch. The aircraft will remain on display in Narromine.



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### **Australian Gliding Museum Inc**

Secretary Graeme Barton, 03 9802 1098

Editor Geoff Hearn, 03 9729 3889

Most activity at the workshop has concentrated on the T35 and the T31. The Newsletter features the unique Coogee, completed in 1940. Campbell Curtis details the thrills of flying this "strange little beastie!"

The Museum **urgently** needs support to cover workshop rent, and donations are tax deductible. Please send your donation to 2 Bicton Street, Mount Waverley, Vic. 3149.

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## A GLIDER, A FIELD GUN, A BANSHEE WAIL, & CHOCOLATE

***By Fred Foord***

Do you remember those fantastic stories recounted by Frank Muir and Denis Norden in 'My Word', made up impromptu from a few unconnected words written on paper from a sealed envelope?

But this one is true. I was there and a part of it.

**Time** – September 1944, probably Sunday 17<sup>th</sup>,

**Place** – Panshanger Airfield, Hertfordshire, UK.

**Activity** – ATC Gliding

We ATC cadets were flying Slingsby Kadets, I think all of us were on solo 'low hops' by then.

Overhead was a rather different activity, the sky was filled with Dakotas towing Waco Hadrians on their way to Arnheim to reinforce the troops trying to secure the bridge, remember the film 'A Bridge Too Far'?

Suddenly a very different sound pierced the air. We all looked up and saw that one of the Hadrian gliders had released from it's Dakota and was diving steeply into our circuit, emitting a banshee wail, a weird and spine-chilling sound drowning out the constant drone of the Daks. Now banshees in Gaelic Mythology were spirits whose wail heralded death. I tell you, we kids were terrified – we had no idea what was to come next, but clearly it was a serious emergency of some sort.

The Hadrian did a straight-in approach and landed right alongside our Kadets and our Cadets. The door flung open and three American G.I.s poured out, looking back to see what had caused the wail. There was a V-shaped tear in the fabric and the resulting pennant of fabric had been vibrating, emitting the ear-splitting noise which by then had miraculously ceased.

It transpired that one of the G.I.s had turned in his seat and his bayonet had caused the damage.

Next thing to appear was a field gun, which wouldn't reach the beleaguered troops at Arnheim that day. Then the emergency packs, which the G.I.s broke open and we all crowded around the glider to share the contents. Confectionery was scarce in UK during the war; I recall that at that stage our ration was 2 ounces per person per month (that's under 60 grams in your language). The G.I.s handed out a one pound bar of chocolate to each cadet, with plenty more where that came from!

## ***The Quasimodo Taper***

By Allan Ash

Some of the incidents in my flying life have been rather unusual. Have you noticed? Take this one, for instance.

It hadn't been a particularly good day for soaring at Camden. Members of the Hinkler Soaring Club had made a few brief soaring flights in their two Grunau Babies on that day in the 1950s, but the day drew to a close and we began to pack up.

The silver Grunau had been landed near the hangar and a carload of members had driven over to put it away. I was asked to fly the blue Grunau and land it near the hangar.

As I prepared to mount the sailplane I asked "Where's the parachute?". We had been wearing a parachute even though the day had been rather still and smooth. The chute was a back-type and, when it was worn, it fitted into a space at the back of the seat, forming a backrest for the pilot. Without the parachute, there was just an empty parachute box.

"Oh", I was told, "it must have been put into the car that went to the silver Grunau."

"Then where is the backrest?", I asked. When the parachute was not used, a wooden board was clipped into place to cover the space behind the pilot, providing a backrest.

"It's not here", I was told. "It must also be in the car at the hangar".

I pointed out that I wouldn't be comfortable flying without a backrest but was told "It will be only a short flight. No more than a few minutes. Surely you can sit up that long without a backrest".

I grudgingly agreed that I could manage a few minutes, and climbed into the cockpit. Without a backrest I felt uncomfortable as I couldn't relax, having to concentrate on keeping my back straight and rigid. But it will be only for a few minutes, I thought to myself in an effort to overcome my apprehension.

It didn't take long for problems to begin. The winch took up the slack with a jerk and the Grunau lurched forward. As a result, my body moved back slightly and I felt my back slip a short distance into the parachute box.

In the light conditions I gained only 800 feet on the launch, released and turned off to the right to make a circuit of the airfield.

I was surprised to see the variometer register "no sink". Never one to throw away the opportunity to soar, I continued to turn and saw the variometer indicate 1 fps up. A couple of turns and we had gained 100 feet in height. However my back continued its slow but steady progress into the parachute box. I tried to move forward but the seat sloped upwards at the front and my seat belts made it impossible to move in any direction.

I became aware also that as my spine slipped backwards, my shoulders, resting on the upper rim of the parachute box, did not move at all. This resulted in my body adopting a forward lean which lowered my head so that my eyes gradually came down closer to the edges of the cockpit. By the time we had reached 1200 feet I could barely see over the nose of the aircraft, though I had some side vision because the side sills of the cockpit were about 12 centimeters lower than the top of the instrument panel.

Despite the continuing weak lift, I turned out of the thermal and began to circuit the airfield. My back continued to slip slowly into the parachute box. By looking over the sides of the cockpit I completed the circuit and at about 200 ft I lined up an approach towards the hangar.

With bated breath I waited until I could hear the swish of the grass on the landing skid then made a quick roundout. The touchdown was smooth and we slid to a stop about 100 meters from the hangar.

I had to wait for a crew to arrive before I could extricate myself from my hunched up position, firmly locked into the parachute box.

My predicament caused much laughter among the club members, especially as I wasn't immediately able to stand up straight when I got out of the cockpit. My back was aching and I felt rather like Quasimodo, the hunchback of Notre Dame.

But I got my own back on the crew for their derision by claiming I was in no condition to help them move the Grunau into the hangar. Serves them right, the sods!

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**SEEN AT BACCHUS MARSH ON EASTER MONDAY:** Gary Sunderland renewing his affection for ex VMFG Boomerang GTR after a thirty year respite. After nearly two hours away he treated the few on the ground to an aerobatics display before landing. Gary has clearly not lost his touch or enjoyment in flying this bird in which he won the League 1 Sports Class at the National Championships in 1973.

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## Vintage Kiwi Rallies 2005

FROM IAN DUNKLEY

“Vintage Kiwi”, or to use it’s posh name, “The Vintage & Classic Gliding Club of New Zealand” was launched in January 2004 with the first vintage rallies to be held in New Zealand. It was appropriate to return to the same sites this year, Taupo in the North Island, Nelson, in the South this year for rallies that would celebrate a very successful 12 months, and besides the clubs were happy to invite us back. In case you are planning to be in New Zealand next year I will tell you now, before you read the rest, that we will be back again in 2006, so pay attention if you would like to take part.



IAN DUNKLEY PHOTOGRAPH

### SAGITTA GDO.

TWO SAGITTAS WERE IMPORTED INTO AUSTRALIA IN THE SIXTIES. ONE SUFFERED AN ACCIDENT AND ONE WAS LOST IN A BUSHFIRE.

A summary is always useful at this point in case you do not read much further, and we don’t want you to go away with the wrong impression do we? Despite bad weather at Taupo, and because of only half hearted sand flies at Nelson Lakes, both rallies were a success. Over the two events we flew around 150 hours, had a lot of launches,

accurate totals being lost with my notes, underlining my lack of interest on things statistical. Participants/visitors, including those captive “VK” members who were also members of the club, came to 39, and 19 qualified gliders were present. These ranging from NZ’s oldest airworthy glider, EoN Baby GAF, to a Nimbus 2, which qualifies as “classic”, although flown by a non member who will be spoken to. Quite a bit of “discussion” took place, some of it even productive, and the results are already being seen, or will be incorporated in next year’s events.

That sums up the 2005 rallies so “What else do you want to know to encourage you to call in next year?”. “More detail, O.K, here goes”.

First I had better tell you that our classification of “vintage” & classic differs from those generally used, because we have managed to lose so many old gliders. “Vintage” is anything wood, whilst “Classic” is anything designed before 1975, metal being a perversion being treated on it’s merits. Whilst we will not be changing these classifications, we will be getting some of the pre 1956 designed gliders back in the air. Two rallies, two quite different sites, so I had better tell you about them in case you have to persuade someone to come with you. According to the NZ Lonely Planet, which I am told is the world’s best read guide book, there is a lot to do if you are not in the flying mood. As I have only been there to fly I will use this guide as a reference on the basis that “X” thousand tourists cannot be wrong, even though I don’t go a bundle on Big Macs, available here in a DC3, gay and lesbian bars, none listed, although I did notice a massage parlour come strip club.

The fact that Taupo, although locally only lumpy, not necessarily excepting New Zealand’s largest lake, is located in a volcanic area, is most important as you could have a ringside seat should it be decided to enlarge Lake Taupo with an even bigger bang than last time. There is a local dormant volcano, providing ridge lift for most if not all wind directions, good thermal sources and bigger lumps to the south, one providing thermals. The lake of course is the major attraction, to knock a golf ball into it for example, although decimating trout, boating, swimming, boating or lying on the beach painted white seems to occupy most people.

Other activities range from the “So what?” to the “Who the hell wants to do that?”, so starting from those which appeal to me, we have paragliding, jumping in a river

and just being swept down stream, flights in a float plane, balloon trips, helicopters and wait for it , gliding. Moving on to the once in a lifetime experiences, which of course is in the same category as death, we have bungee jumping, skydiving, and something called "Rock 'n' Ropes which I completely fail to understand, but involves jumping, flying, swinging, trapezing and optionally throwing up. Finally for anyone suffering from obsessive compulsive disorder involving cleanliness will find a kingsize "Super Loo" complete with showers in the town, plus thermal pools if they get caught short.

To put it mildly the weather at Taupo cannot be described as good for flying, rain, low cloud, wind not where we wanted it all the time, and thermals; well we did get some. However all those taking part enjoyed themselves which is of course the main thing, although the weather meant that some came without aircraft or others for only part of the week. Pride of place must go to John Currie who not only had two gliders to fly but also arrived in his Jodel at the beginning of the week, departed and came back later in his car. This, if I had got around to it, would have earned him "Man of the Rally" award, so I owe him a bottle of wine next year.

The social side went on much as usual with a "BBQ", " a Chinese Take Away Eat in, plus group trips to the fish and chip shop, the weather preventing the more exotic events. As is usual with bad weather quite a bit of talking took place, some of it quite useful, for as a result we are now planning local rallies over three day weekends, and looking at vintage glider ownership within "Vintage Kiwi".

We again had international visitors during the week from the UK, including two who had just immigrated so they could take part, and elsewhere, including Roy Eichendorf from Canada who came over to fly his Ka6, so we are doing our bit for the tourist industry as well. Other overseas visitors included scale model enthusiasts who unfortunately arrived after the two VK modeller members left with the scale Baby Bowlus they flew. The latter giving us the chance of seeing a glider that never flew full size in New Zealand. Next year scale modellers will be taking part in the rally, the result of more useful bad weather talking.

At Nelson Lakes, where the description "lumpy" would be a gross understatement, the weather was great, the sandflies subdued, although the pharmacies had obviously done well with repellent and factor x sun cream. Whilst the local ridges,

within winch launching distance, did not work consistently, they did, with thermals as a bonus, enabled April Rumsey to make three 5 hour attempts, one only just falling short, in her Ka6cr. This fortitude, perhaps stubbornness in the face of adversity, describes it better, earning her "Woman of the Rally" as it was considered a better example than that shown by another pilot who achieved 5 hours in one go, and another who did his 100km. Both only provided beer, that lasted considerably less than 15 hours, so they did not have a chance really.

For the tourist, and the pilots for that matter, the greatest interest are the local mountains, the northern end of the Southern Alps in fact, those closest to the club rising out of the two scenic lakes. These also provide boating, fishing and hypothermia. There are plenty of walking opportunities, one taken by Fiona, visiting from the UK, Camphill to be precise, who climbed up the side of a mountain for two and a half hours, and then promptly jumped off with/in/under her paraglider.

On the good days it was very good, many pilots disappearing into the mountains for hours on end, Terry Delore arriving one evening and departing the following morning in his 10 year old ASH25 disappearing completely, leaving us commenting that in perhaps 2025 he could have stayed as it may then qualify as a "classic". My own highlight of the week, taking a 78 year old lady friend, who was visiting us from the UK, who had said she "would never fly in one of them", rock scraping along the St Arnaud range for an hour or so. She wants to do it again, and so do I.

There are now only two things left to do, both of which are essential. Express our thanks to both the Taupo and Nelson Clubs for hosting our rallies, and making us so welcome, and not inviting us back next year. Secondly tell you the dates for next Taupo 28<sup>th</sup> Jan to 4<sup>th</sup> Feb and Nelson Lakes 25<sup>th</sup> Feb to 5<sup>th</sup> March. See you there?

Ian Dunkley

25<sup>th</sup> March 05

<u>Nelson</u>		<u>Taupo</u>	
Cobra	GPT	Dart 1	GAF
Ka6e	GET	Foka 3	GHS
Ka6cr	GFF	Ka6e	GGH
Ka6cr	GEH	Ka6cr	GCQ
Ka4	GBW	K13	GSM
Cirrus	GJK	Sagitta	GDO
Libelle	GID	ASW27	DA8 - hardly classic, but he had brought it from England to fly at the rally!
Libelle	GIV		
Nimbus 2	GKV		