

Booker Gliding Club
Newsletter

September
2021

Don't miss
the daily
briefing
0830hrs

Farewell to Chiltern Park



Abingdon here we come!

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Latest news

On 23rd August we held a Members' Meeting (on Zoom) to update everyone on what will be happening in the next few months. Here is a summary of the main points. If you have any questions, please ask a Committee member.

Chiltern Park

The airfield is closing at the end of September because the lease is terminating, our last day will be Sunday 19th September 2021.

Abingdon

<https://goo.gl/maps/1FRvcrZZxeC2whTMA>

We will be moving to Abingdon Airfield, home to Dalton Barracks since it was handed from the RAF to the Army. The ATC used to fly Grobs there, and it is sometimes used for practice by the RAF. The airfield very large – 300 acres. The main runway is 2km long. We are looking at using the eastern part of the cross runway, which is 650m from the east end to the intersection. We can probably take off on the hard and land on grass. Airspace – overhead is FL85, and we may even get wave from the Cotswolds. Access – convenient for the A34. There is a fence all the way round for security.

We will not have exclusive use as Dalton rent it out to make money, it is used for track days, Formula E testing, fireworks, filming, but we are used to operating in a mixed environment. There is much to do to establish ourselves there and we are working on an implementation plan.

Wycombe Air Park

We can stay at Abingdon as long as we have to but we have always maintained that we are going back to Booker, to the north side and new facilities. This will be possible when the current legal dispute between Buckinghamshire Council and the leaseholder has been resolved.

Fleet

Tugs – we have been unfortunate recently, and repairs have been delayed because spares take a long time to arrive, but engineers John and Paul Sawney have been working very hard. IC, LH and GH are now back and PR is being worked on.

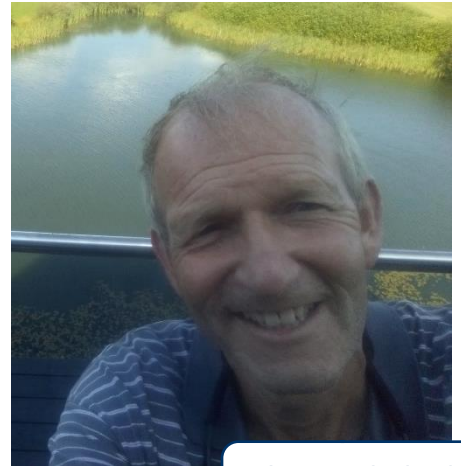
Gliders – As with tugs, spares have been delayed, but 316 and 319 will be back on the fleet very soon. We are grateful to the inspectors and club members for their efforts to get things done.

Staff

We are grateful to the staff for their continuing efforts – Richard, the engineers John and Paul Sawney, and Shelagh in the office.

Members' achievements

James Giles went a long way for a cup of tea, he achieved his **Silver Distance** to Turweston, which has a rather nice café.



James relaxing in the café

Dean Miller arrived for his first flight having watched all the briefing videos and since then has been coming to fly whenever he could. He has now achieved his **First Solo**.



Dean with instructor John

Leo Sentinella has passed his GFT to complete his **Bronze** badge. He has to wait until he is 16 before doing his cross-country endorsement and setting off over the hills and far away.



Leo looking bronzed

14-year-old **Dan Summerfield** found the time spent on his pc sim helped when it came to flying a real aircraft. He achieved his **First Solo** on his 15th flight.



Dan on approach





Ed Vincent joined us for a 5 Day course and has achieved his **First Solo** – something to remember us by when he moves to Derby to start his new job with Rolls Royce.

Meanwhile, our members have been competing in various competitions. **Tim Scott** (Z2) came 3rd in the 20m 2-seater Nationals at Lasham. **Jan McCoshim** (161) won a day in the Dunstable Regionals (Blue class) and came 4th overall. **Howard Joseph** (HJ) had his first go at a Nationals, in the 18m class, and did very well. **William Parker** (LC), **Ashley Birkbeck** (944) and **Steve Williams** (HA) had plenty of flying at the Dunstable Regionals, as did **Miles Bailey** (DTM) and **Paul Copland** (93) at the Cotswold Regionals, it's all good experience, as well as an opportunity for tea drinking and chat.



When Tim Scott was asked if he would desert the 15m class for the comfort of a 20m 2-seater (he was flying an ASG32), his answer was emphatic: "Definitely not. I miss my 15m glider too much. Still by far the most fun class to fly. As for engines... they're the work of the devil. If it had been a pure glider we would have glided into a field and come 2nd."

Whispering Wardrobe Vintage Glider Rally

The Annual meeting of Wardrobes, organised by Graham Saw, produced a fine flock of colourful aircraft mixed in with the everyday white fibreglass of the launchpoint. Here is a sample of what was on show.

Slingsby T-34 Sky

This Sky was built as a prototype in 1950, designed to beat the German Weihe which was winning all the competitions. For several years it was the top club glider at Dunstable and now belongs to a syndicate at Lasham.





EoN Olympia 463

Elliotts of Newbury, originally furniture makers, turned to aircraft manufacture during WW2 and continued in 1946 with the Olympia. Production of the 463 version began in 1963. This example is based at Ringmer.

Fournier RF3 motorglider

Designed by René Fournier and built by Alpvavia, production of the RF3 version began in 1963, 89 were made. This one belongs to a syndicate at Parham.

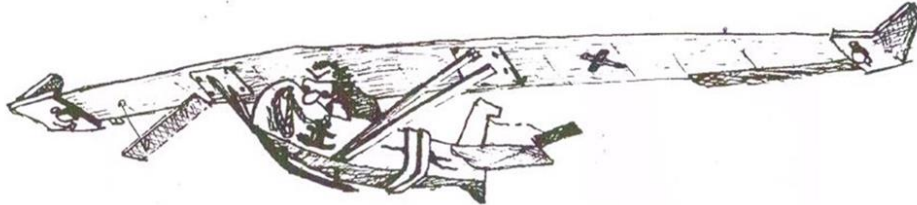


Schleicher ASK14

Built in 1968 as a low-wing version of the Ka 6E, the ASK14 has a four-cylinder two-stroke 25hp engine, which appeared to need a little attention.

Slingsby T-50 Skylark 4

Production started in 1961 and 65 were built, about 30 are still flying. BLC is based at Weston on the Green.



WHISPERING WARDROBE RALLY

Awards evening and party

On 21st August we had a real-life re-enactment of the 2020 Awards Evening (previously on zoom), with an amazing BBQ (materials supplied by Nyama) cooked up by Nils Wedi and his son Benjamin, assisted by John Otty. The main trophy, a beautiful work of art created by Graham Saw, was the Geoff Tabbner award for the most inspirational instructor, presented to CFI Richard Crockett. Anne Tabbner had hoped to be there to present the trophy - in fact she was a major force in the organisation of the event - but she had to stay away for covid isolation reasons. However, Ben Flewett very kindly took her place, and Rachel Flewett streamed the event so that Anne could 'be there'.

And it stopped raining at just the right time!





Chefs Benjamin, Nils and John

Nils cooking up a storm



James Roland walking to support MacMillan

James, his daughter and son-in-law, and the village Post Mistress, set out to do a 15-mile hike in the Peak District this July in aid of MacMillan, with donations via JustGiving. Here is his report:



The original date for our walk was postponed when the Peak District governing body banned large groups from visiting owing to Covid, and our next date went into the long grass when France was given Amber Plus status and we had to isolate on our return from holiday in Île de Ré. But we completed the walk on 6th September on the High Peak Trail in the Peak District - hurrah!

We started near Cromford which meant the first three miles were a 1 in 6 climb of over 1000ft. This rather set the tone as the next seven miles were uphill as well! We made it to Parsley Hay and raised £1,500 - pretty much £100 per mile - and I would like to say a HUGE thank you to all the BGC folk who supported us, their generosity is quite humbling. So ...
THANK YOU!



Dave Smith

We were saddened to hear of the death of Dave Smith on 7th August 2021. Dave was a long-standing member of the club and co-owned Pegase 997. In later years he became interested in historical research and wrote several pamphlets on a variety of topics. He was working a memoir of his gliding career at the time of his death. His funeral will be at 10am on 22nd September at Reading Crematorium.

A tribute to Shep

On 14th August the family of 'Shep' Sheppard arranged a gathering to remember him at the Kings Head, Little Marlow. A dozen members of the club attended and William Parker gave this short appreciation of Shep's gliding career.

Hello everyone. Thank you very much to Shep's family for inviting members of the gliding club to attend today and to say a few words about him. Shep took up gliding while he was serving in Aden in the nineteen sixties. It must have been a great break from the stress of counter terrorist operations not to mention the several assassination attempts he survived. He and his fellow members learned to fly Sedbergh T21 gliders at a desert air strip. On YouTube there is a fascinating short film shot with a super 8 cinecamera showing the club in action. Shep is in one scene with the exciting caption 'Shep Sheppard driving a Hillman Minx'. You can find it if you google 'Gliding in Aden'.



Retiring to England in 1968, Shep joined the Silver Wings Gliding Club at Booker, the forerunner of today's gliding club. When the airfield was released from the RAF and bought by Wycombe District Council, Shep became one of the founder members of Booker Gliding Club. And 43 years later he was still flying and going cross country in his LS6. He was awarded all three Diamond Badges, the highest level of achievement in gliding. Shep also held a power pilot licence and flew the club's tug aircraft for aerotow launches.

As anyone who read the obituary for Shep that appeared in the Daily Telegraph in December 2020 will know, Shep was a huge character, a force of nature. And so he remained throughout his gliding career. Coming from the next generation to Shep I was somewhat in awe of him when I joined the club. He was widely known as 'The Colonel' and like many a colonel in the officers' mess, Shep had his corner in our clubhouse. When Shep arrived a strange psychic force would remove whoever happened to be sitting in Shep's spot. Needless to say Shep could be outspoken on matters of club policy or any other subject if it came to that. He didn't suffer fools gladly. He could be an irascible character.

And yet, as I discovered when I became club chairman there was a very kind-hearted gentleman beneath the bluff exterior. He would come to the club almost every day and hold court on that same spot he had occupied for more than forty years. He loved the gliding club. And he had a wealth of knowledge and experience of the club and of gliding. I owe a lot to Shep's kindly advice during my chairmanship. He knew every twist and turn in the club's history. He unfailingly attended all the AGMs and when he was no longer able to get out in the evenings he made a special point of making his apology. Shep was truly the father of the gliding club.

Throughout Shep's life all things British ran through him like a stick of rock. One longstanding member of the club recalls a lively discussion back in the seventies - about Shep's choice of glider - a not widely admired glider type, a Slingsby Vega. Shep silenced the critics. 'It may be rubbish,' he said, 'but it's **British** rubbish!' For us, that was Shep all over.

Dates for your diary

2021

9th – 24th October: Aboyne expedition

2022

5th - 20th March: Spring expedition to Lleweni Parc (Denbigh)

14th - 29th May: Summer expedition – destination tba

23rd - 31st July: Booker Regionals

8th - 23rd October: Autumn expedition to Aboyne



Club Communications

We use WhatsApp groups, as below:

Booker Gliding Club – general club information and notifications including details of online daily briefings

Booker Instructors – information and swap requests for instructors

Booker Expeditions – set up in the run up to each expedition.

If you wish to be included in any of these groups, contact the CFI.

Booker XC – for tasks, cross country discussion and feedback – NEW GROUP

Join here: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/HukdaXAnb83JlVpd2FZ9nw>

Booker Banter - for general chitchat – contact Jeremy Gilbey

Condor Flyers – for those wanting to join in Condor group sessions – use this link:

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/GkWgpEfSI0D21wGvc3XCry>

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

For the latest news about what's happening check out

<http://bookergc.blogspot.com/> and <https://www.facebook.com/bookerglidingclub>

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

Contributions to the newsletter are welcome. If you would like to submit an article for a future edition please send it to Jane Moore at jxmoore@gmail.com

**Published by Booker Gliding Club
WYCOMBE AIR PARK, MARLOW, BUCKS SL7 3DP
Office Tel: 01494 442501**

Booker Gliding Club Ltd is a company registered in England with company number 1492733
Registered office address: Wycombe Air Park, Booker, Marlow, Bucks, SL7 3DP
VAT number: 350 4182 83
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