

# GLIDE ANGLE

MIDLAND GLIDING CLUB · NEWSLETTER

WINTER EDITION

DECEMBER 2021

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## NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

**W**elcome to this Winter Edition of the Midland Gliding Club newsletter which has been renamed Glide Angle.

This is the first issue of what we hope will become a revitalised and regular communicate. As before, the newsletter's mission is to be an interactive place to talk about the useful, the interesting, the inspiring and the fun things that happen on and around the Mynd. I will consequently be badgering you as the deadline approaches each quarter for your ideas, stories, and knowledge, both recent and mined from the vast legacy of experience our

membership has. Hopefully, the newsletter might eventually be something you look forward to landing on your digital doormat. It might also be something we are happy to share with prospective new members to show them what a lively, intelligent, fun-loving bunch we are! This issue has a few new features compared to past newsletters, let me know what you think of them - supportive or critical - and if there is anything you would like but don't see here please get in touch.

*Rob Kronenburg*

Editor

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# CHAIRMAN'S BIT

by JON HALL

The club has had a difficult couple of years, facing the challenges of Covid and lockdowns, and the inevitable reluctance of some members and the public to mix fully with others.

However, we seem to have come through it relatively unscathed. I want to express my personal thanks to everyone who has worked so hard to see us through this challenging time. The club is in fact flourishing and thanks to the very hard work of many members, the Officers, the Committee, the Instructors, Winch Drivers, Launch Directors, CFI, Safety Officer, and groups of working parties we are once more seeing a vital and energised club as we begin to grow the membership.

Growing the membership is the key factor. The more members we have the more we spread the workload and of course the more income we generate. We need income to

**“It is some time since the MGC published a newsletter and I am very pleased to welcome Rob Kronenburg as the new editor. I have every faith that he will maintain the quality and interest of previous editions.”**

generate surpluses which we reinvest in equipment, the airfield, buildings, and maintenance. If you don't believe me talk to the Treasurer!

It also means we have a bigger pool from which to draw to fill those important committee roles. Effective succession planning is one of the most important things any organisation can do to maintain growth and protect its future. Several current committee members will be standing down at the next AGM, probably at the beginning of April 2022. If you want to support the club by helping to

run it, please make that known to anyone on the current committee. New members, young members, female members, in fact anyone with commitment, energy, and a wish to help us improve is what the club is looking for. Your club needs you!

With at least one new K21b arriving in 2022 and continuing to improve our infrastructure, training, and communications I have every faith that the MGC will step up to its place as one of the premiere gliding clubs in the UK.

[chairman@midlandgliding.club](mailto:chairman@midlandgliding.club)

# CFI'S MUSINGS

by ROSEMARY JOHNSON

**“Pre-solo pilots: Keep looking out for the good days to get some circuit practice in and keep current so you don't go backwards over the winter.”**

## **Gardening for glider pilots**

Musing on my first few months in the unenviable post of CFI has felt a bit like November gardening at times, some ruthless cutting back, raking over, spreading compost (or should that be muck), and planting out. It all lays the preparation for everything blossoming next year. Hopefully I haven't been treading on too many toes, but the winter is a good time to sow some seeds for next year and I would like to encourage you to do the same. So....

## **Pre-solo pilots**

Keep looking out for the good days to get some circuit practice in and keep current so you don't go backwards over the winter. Actually, that applies to everyone, whatever stage you are at. On days when the weather isn't so good for flying, mither, cajole or downright bully the instructors into doing some theory teaching with you – I will be putting some 'off the peg' PowerPoint presentations on the briefing room computer so

no excuses. Better still, get the instructors to go through the various stall and spinning exercises on the simulator with you. Incidentally, Mike Witton is looking for some help to develop a sim trainer syllabus – talk to him directly.

## **Pre-bronze**

Get the theory done. Doing the exam is free and if you pass it is valid for a year to get the rest of the flying you need done. The Cambridge Gliding club site has Bronze examination type questions on it and I have put some old gliding text books in the briefing room for you to read. Rob Kronenburg is putting together an up-to-date set of questions as a revision aid that will be available on the club website early in the new year.

## **Pre-silver**

Talk to an instructor about how to organise your x-country endorsement and field landing exercises. Plan to get them done in the motor glider in early spring if you can. Get the maps outs and do some

planning/research about likely silver distance routes. Make a plan about trailers and retrieves. Make sure you know how the logger that you will use works and how to download the trace. Volunteer to help sort out the club trailer maintenance so that the trailer is ready when you want it.

## **Post silver**

What can I say? The sky's the limit. Talk to your mentor and make some plans and set yourself some obtainable targets. Get your field landing checks done in the motor glider. I am planning to do a half day cross country revision ground school in March. For those of you that did it this year, you will be welcome again if you want some revision, but anyone is welcome to come – date to be announced but probably mid-March.

On a more practical note – join up for the BGA owners' maintenance course – either online (in January) or in person at the Mynd. The best x-country weather last year was in April – make sure you are ready for it.

## **DI-diddy-DO!**

There was some chat on WhatsApp recently about who can do Daily Inspections (DI's). The answer is that you can be trained at any time to do it, but it sits most comfortably at post-



PHOTO: JON HALL

solo. Indeed, you must be signed off to DI before you can pass your Bronze and it is the Pilot in Command's responsibility to check that a DI has been done properly and you cannot do that if you can't do one yourself. Mike Greenwood has kindly volunteered to lead on this and will be organising some formal training and possibly a video in due course but you don't have to wait. If you are keen, get and instructor or experienced pilot to teach you.

### **Looking forward**

Competition Enterprise is in July at the Mynd next year, Enterprise is a good stepping-stone to more serious competition. The tasks are about making the most of the day rather than simply racing around the sky and so you can compete at any level. Entries open on the 1st of January and I

club. Eddie has a very full social programme organised, and there will be tugs available for aerotow training in the afternoons, once the competitors have all set off. We need some ground crew, and they will be first in line for any spare seats in 2-seater gliders doing the task, so please let me know asap if you will be around to help out.

### **And the rest**

... lots of other plans are in the works. We have provisionally organised an aerobatic course by Guy Westgate – dates to be confirmed nearer the time. We will also organise a couple of days out to other clubs for those who want to learn to aerotow. More details in due course. Here's to a happy new year.

*Rose Johnson*  
cfi@midlandgliding.club



# FINANCIAL MATTERS

by JAMES MOORE

If you were expecting a lot of numbers, then on this occasion, you are going to be disappointed. Instead, let's look at one of the fundamentals of the Midland Gliding Club's DNA that helps make it so special. If you try and find the

ordinary limited company. Far from it.

Our club was registered on the 25th of June 1935 as the Midland Gliding Club Limited under the Industrial and Provident Society Act, now the

contribute to making the club special. When it comes to voting at Annual General and Special Meetings, the difference is visible. All full members in our club have one vote. In a normal limited company, you have one vote for every ordinary share you hold.

**“Our club was registered on the 25th of June 1935 as the Midland Gliding Club Limited under the Industrial and Provident Society Act, now the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014.”**

club on the Companies House website, you won't find us there. Instead, you will find the club in the 'Mutuals Public Register' maintained by the Financial Conduct Authority. Why? The club has 'limited' after its name, but it is not an

Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. The club is not a profit maximising company, distributing its profits to shareholders, it is a type of mutual, called a 'Registered Society'. This status gives us advantages that

Financially, especially when it comes to taxation, there are differences. A normal company pays 19% corporation tax on any profits. We only pay corporation tax on a few things like bank interest, saving the club thousands. It is a basic principle of taxation that you cannot make a taxable profit by trading with yourself, and this means that in a club like ours that is owned by its members, and which exists to provide them with facilities, any profit made from the income received from the members is not liable to tax.

To put a value on this, I estimate that we need to invest in the order of £850,000 over the next decade to return our infrastructure (buildings, fleet, etc) back to where it should be.

Ignoring capitalisation and depreciation, the 'Mutual Bonus' is worth £161,500. Put another way, that is 1.35 K21's.

club's operation. Every penny we spend on external resources, takes investment away from our passion – gliding! There are several members who give of their time and who privately donate money to the club.

With the passage of time, it is also easy to forget the generosity of past members. The clubhouse



So as a mutual we have considerable financial benefits. I think it also means, as members, when we can, we should give freely of our time for the mutual good. Kennedy's speech comes to mind. 'Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country.' I am sure you can make the connection.

It is easy to dismiss our club as something like a social club. However, from an organisational perspective, the Midland Gliding Club is a small and medium enterprise in a complex operating and regulatory environment.

We need a vast range of skills and expertise in every aspect of the

parquet floor was a gift from Mrs Helen Hardwick, the widow of the Club's founder. The Siam Trophy was a gift from Prince Bira of Siam who was an F1 driver of his day and a member in the nineteen-fifties.

Most recently the Club received a legacy of £10,000 from Peter Orchard. There are many, many others who have helped in this way. Our club is a special place and has a special place in the heart of every member, past and present.

*James Moore*  
treasurer@midlandgliding.club



# AIRFIELD SAFETY

by MIKE GREENWOOD

This year has seen an increase in people appearing on the airfield from strange directions and often getting close to the cable. This is probably due to Covid restrictions resulting in more people taking their holidays in the UK, as the Long Mynd is within easy reach of several large urban areas.

We have the problem of operating on an airfield in a popular tourist area with several rights of way (marked red on the photograph) running across it. As you all know, we frequently have launch and retrieve cables running over these rights of way.

Frequently, people out walking are very bad at navigating. For instance, a couple earlier this year with a map and compass, who walked right across in front of the retrieve winch, were heading for the gully convinced that they were on the path down to Church Stretton. When challenged, they



refused to believe they were lost.

For safety reasons, and to reduce the occasions when we have to stop launching because people are wandering over the airfield, we have put up many signs at the entrances to the airfield to make it clear to people that it is an active airfield. Unlike the rest of the

Long Mynd, it is not an 'Open Access Area' and they must remain on the right of way.

There are also signs indicating where there is no right of way, and leaflets with maps showing the same information available at the main entrances to the airfield. You may have noticed there are several large signs directing people to use the





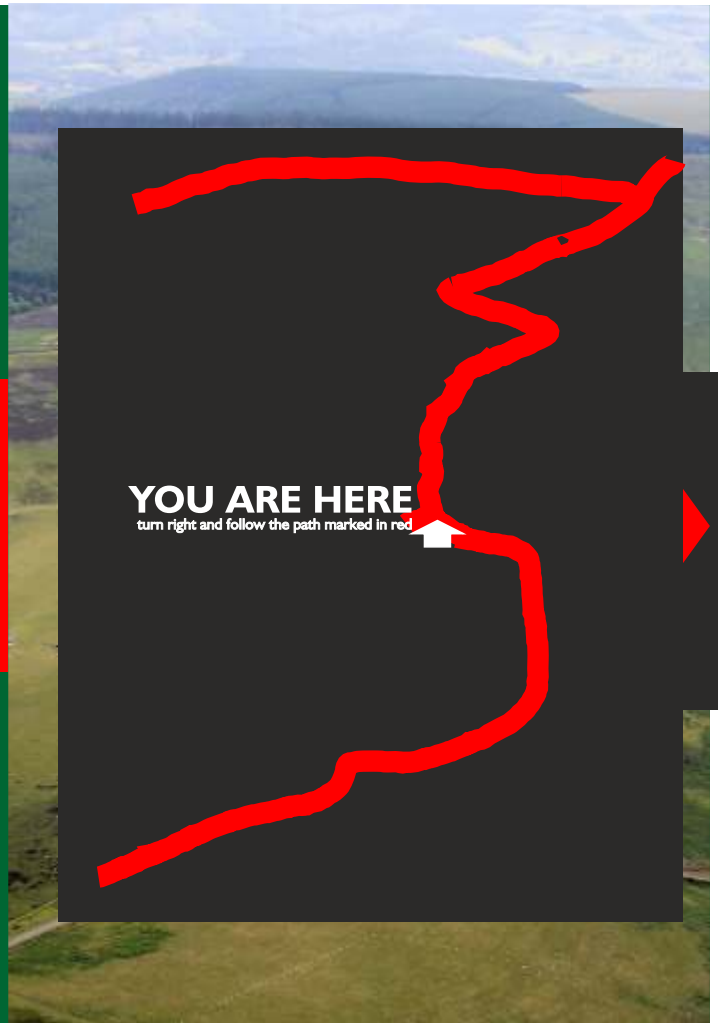
please use the

# PERMISSIVE ROUTES

The permissive routes offer a safe path around the airfield with better views over the west ridge. They allow visitors to stay clear of the airfield traffic and launching and landing aircraft, whilst taking advantage of the views towards Wales.

Visitors may call at the club for information.

Midland Gliding Club Limited



'Starboardway' (marked green on the photo), which is the path to the west of the club house running along the edge of the Mynd to the knoll. This is not a legal right of way, but a permissive path made by the gliding club to encourage people to stay off the airfield.

Hopefully all of this will reduce the number of people wandering over the airfield, but it won't stop it happening completely, as people tend to ignore signs or to remain convinced they know where they are going when they are actually lost.

All club members should please make sure they know where the rights of way are; keep an eye out for lost or confused people; and if they see anyone in the wrong place politely but firmly escort them back to the nearest right of way and explain to them the correct route they need to take for their own safety.

*Mike Greenwood*  
safety@midlandgliding.club

Midland Gliding Club Limited

## You are now entering an **ACTIVE AIRFIELD**

**You must only cross the airfield on permissive routes.**

**Under paragraph 240 of the Air Navigation Order 2016, a person must not recklessly or negligently act in a manner likely to endanger an aircraft or anybody in an aircraft. A breach of this regulation may amount to a criminal offence.**



# A CHRISTMAS STORY: THE CAUTIONARY TALE OF THE MOUSE AND THE £13,000 BILL

by IAIN EVANS

One winter's night, not so many moons ago, Mr. Mouse was looking for somewhere to shelter from the wind and the snow. He crawled into a long dark tunnel, which opened into a grand cavern with a spaceship sat inside! Actually, it was a glider, but our mouse had never seen one before and didn't know what it was. He was so excited!

And then... things got even better. He could smell something. What was it? Of course, it was chocolate. Christmas must have arrived, and he must have been a very, very good mouse.

It didn't take him long before he found his way into the spaceship cockpit and started tucking in. Before long, he

*“One winter's night, not so many moons ago, Mr. Mouse was looking for somewhere to shelter from the wind and the snow.”*

decided he missed Mrs. Mouse and went to fetch her. They shredded the seat cushions that Santa had left for them and made a nice little nest in the wheel box. The en-suite bathroom was situated behind the tail wheel. It was the perfect home.

**Three weeks later ...** you've guessed it. Their home was made complete by the arrival of their new family, six little baby mice. Baby mice eat a lot, but they aren't fussy eaters, they can, and did, eat the

straps, the seat cushions, the sheaths off the Bowden cables, the wiring off the instruments. Eventually they were too big for the family home and set up their own nests – in the wings, the airducts, and on the control runs.

But boys will be boys – catastrophe! They ate through the fuel lines. Petrol was pouring into the cockpit, over the parachute and soaking the bedding. Mr. Mouse rounded up the whole family and led them to safety out in the big

*continued from page 10*

wide world to spend the glorious spring and summer in sunny Shropshire. And now – they are looking for their next spaceship to spend the winter... will it be yours?

So, the morals of this story:

- Don't leave food or drinks in the cockpit overnight (especially the crumbs). At best it goes mouldy, at worst it encourages the mice in. Even bottles of drink should not be left in.
- Don't ever leave your parachute in the cockpit. They are expensive to replace.
- Check/air your glider periodically over the winter.
- Consider a dehumidifier to keep it dry.

I will be grateful for the insurance work to put it all right again, but to be honest cleaning up mouse detritus is not my favourite job. The damage was so bad we had to cut a hole in the fuselage to do the repairs down the rear end.

The owner's defence was that he had left the parachute in the glider because he thought his syndicate partner was going to fly the next day. And in case you are wondering, yes it was a well-sealed lift-top trailer.

You have been warned!

Iain Evans

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

**First Aid Course:** free places: There are 4 places still available on a one day first aid course to be held at the Mynd on Friday 21st January if anyone else wants a place. It might be of interest to those looking after grandchildren or elderly relatives!

**MGC Library:** We are planning a small library to be located in the briefing room. There is a small selection of old books already there and we have acquired some additional classic gliding textbooks to add to them, but we could really do with a couple of copies of Bronze and Beyond. If anyone has a copy they are prepared to donate or put on 'long term loan' to the club, (accepting that there is a risk that they may disappear) please let the club have them. Other up to date books would be welcome.

**MGC Project Office:** This new initiative has been implemented to improve the selection, development, and implementation of 'change ideas' for the benefit of the club. The idea is to improve our success in implementing change, so we don't waste our limited, valuable resources and are better able to meet members' needs. If you have an idea for the project office send an e-mail to [projects@midlandgliding.club](mailto:projects@midlandgliding.club) or speak to one of the members of the team (currently Russ Atwood, James Moore, Martin Howitt, Neal Clements and Laura Martin) providing a quick outline, or ask for a call to discuss.

## Upcoming Lectures and Courses:

**20th December:** Where next in your flying career?

**8th January:** Latest News and Developments in Gliding, Pete Stratten, BGA Chief Executive.

**15th January:** Club Maintainers Course, Gordon MacDonald, BGA Chief Technical Officer.

**Glider for sale/Syndicate place available:** In future newsletters we hope to include items such as this so let the Editor know in time for the next deadline which will be in March 2022.

# FLY PAST

A new column for this newsletter will ask members to tell a story about a significant flight from their career aloft. It could be a first or a last, a longest or a shortest, or one they will just never forget for the excitement or (anxiety!) it caused. Starting us off is John Matthews – who can forget their first solo?



12th September this year saw John (in the photograph with Guy Hartland) do his first solo after fifty and a half years. The previous time was as a 16-year-old Air Cadet in March 1971 when he did three solos in a T31 glider at RAF Tern Hill. He joined the Midland Gliding Club on the August Bank Holiday weekend last year after having done the one-day 'Intro' course, flying with Matthew Cook. He caught the bug and, after the enforced Covid lockdown over the Christmas and early new year, comes to the Mynd as often as his semi-retirement permits, to continue his training. Despite one or two little minor setbacks John still turns up most weekends and sometimes midweek too (work permitting) to hone his flying skills. He also recently started training with the winch team.

*When Guy said to me after my 5th flight of the day; "I think you're ready for a solo... do you?" My answer was "that's the same thing my instructor said to me fifty years ago at Tern Hill." I would be the only aircraft flying as it was the last launch of the day.*

*Afterwards, I couldn't recall having any nerves or trepidation about going solo and, of course, when you start your cockpit checks you're concentrating on the job in hand. Maybe when waiting for the cable to go tight there was a feeling of 'too late now', but I have to say, in my mind, the launch, circuit and landing went well. Maybe Guy and Nigel would tell you differently! Anyway, it felt good to me.*

*My second solo a week later was a bit more of a challenge due to there being at least two gliders circling in thermals over the forest, and a third in the circuit ahead of me. However, I dealt with it and landed ok. And, as we all say, any landing you walk away from is a good one.*

John Matthews

# ADVERSE YAW

Here is another new column. Members will surely have ideas about how things are run at the club; about the systems we have in place that enable a large group of disparate individuals to work together in relative harmony to get us in the air. If you have a gripe, a new idea, or simply want to sound off about something – this is your space. Anonymous entries are welcome. This time putting his head above the parapet is Paul Fowler with a reminder about the reasoning behind a long-standing club rule.

## Permission to Fly

The Club has a long-standing rule that every pilot is required to obtain the prior permission of the duty instructor to fly on the day. Every other BGA club has the same rule, and there are good reasons for it. Early solo pilots are always keen to seek out the duty instructor and discuss their flying, and some have to be positively cajoled into flying solo.

On the other hand, the CFI will ask permission mainly as a courtesy. There is a large group of pilots of varying abilities in between the early solo and the CFI. The rule applies to everybody, but it has to apply in different ways.

Asking for permission often seems to be a bit of a formality and even to be unnecessary; after all, glider pilots are a unique group of individuals, and gliding is a great way for them to express their freedom when released from gravity's bond to soar the air with the birds. Who needs rules when the rest of our lives are tangled up with them to give expensive lawyers material to argue the case this way and that? Who really needs to ask

for permission to fly, especially if you have a gold badge and a couple of diamonds? Is the duty instructor being pernickety when he or she reminds you that you forgot to ask, just as the cable is about to be attached?

The duty instructor along with the day's team has the important task of organising the gliding operation so that everyone:

- flies as much as possible,
- makes the best use of the weather,
- stands the best chance of achieving any goals,
- generally has a good time,
- and, but not least,
- is safe, whether in the air or on the ground.

This is a managerial role which has to be combined with flying training and the supervision of solo flying. The request for permission will assist the duty instructor in doing his or her best to fulfil that role. If you forget, the day's flying may be worse both for you and others.

The request is never a formality. The duty instructor will want to know what your

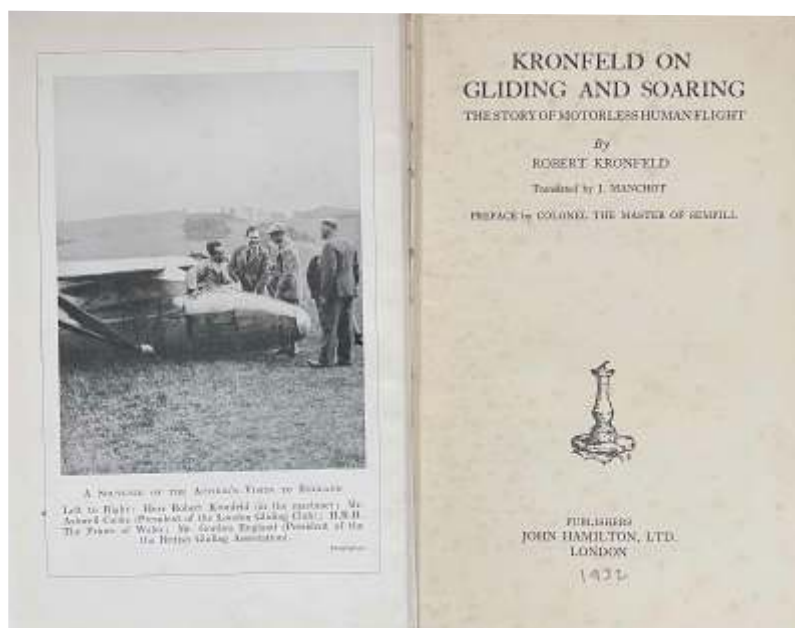
intentions are and will have to assess, in the space of a few seconds, whether or not you should fly. If there is an accident, the instructor will be contributing towards the subsequent discussion regarding what went wrong and may personally face criticism. You will need to tell the instructor whether you are in check and what card you hold, unless the instructor knows this. If you were not at the morning's briefing, you will want to know what circuit pattern is being flown and what else was discussed earlier, including any likely changes in the weather. If you are a visitor, you will need to be introduced to the site and briefed about Mynd flying. All of you will need to say what your intentions are, whether to fly locally or leave the area, perhaps on a badge flight.

Time is often short on a busy airfield, and so it will help if you tell the instructor what you are about. If you want, leave out the request for permission and just register your intentions. That will be fine.

*Paul Fowler*

# MY GLIDING INSPIRATION

Our last new regular column asks members to contribute a short piece on something that has inspired them in their gliding career, either to take up the sport, or perhaps to extend their skills or experience. It might be a person, an event, a picture, a film or as in my case, by way of getting the idea started, a book.



**“Reading this amazing book by another 'RK' struck home to me what a fascinating legacy gliding has.”**

I have always been fascinated by aviation. Like many others not fortunate enough to make their career in flying, I have spent large chunks of my time making aircraft models and pursuing non-professional flying... and of course reading many, many books on anything related to it.

Just before the first lock-down I came across a book which in retrospect has been a real inspiration in getting me to buckle down and scratch my gliding itch properly. It's a rare book (although you can read the entire thing for free by downloading it from the

Sailplane and Gliding archive section on their website), making it all the more exciting a few weeks ago when I spotted a copy on an online auction site. The seller accepted my offer, so I now have my own copy.

Published in 1932, and never re-printed, it's called Kronfeld on Soaring and Gliding – I'm sure some of you will know it, and even if you haven't read it will know of its author Robert Kronfeld. Kronfeld was a pioneer glider pilot who set many landmark records for duration, height, and distance in the early days of the sport,

flying at the legendary Wasserkuppe site in Germany, and elsewhere in the inter-war years.

He not only helped develop many of the advanced soaring techniques that are so familiar today, but he was also deeply involved in expanding meteorological knowledge, and the design development of the modern glider.

He was brave not only in his flying exploits, pushing the boundaries of human flight in an era where danger and death were the pilot's close companions, but in his own personal ethics, an Austrian Jew who defied the Nazis by escaping to England to fly with the RAF during World War II.

He could also write! This is a great book to read, with fantastic re-telling of his experiences, the record-setting flights, and travelling around Europe popularising the sport of gliding. Sadly, Kronfeld died shortly after the war testing a prototype tail-less glider at Lasham. Reading this amazing book by another 'RK' struck home to me what a fascinating legacy gliding has. It is an endeavour without which all forms of flying would never have existed, and it counts many very special men and women amongst those who are its enthusiasts.

Rob Kronenburg

