

GLIDE ANGLE



**MIDLAND
GLIDING CLUB**

FLYING THE LONG MYND SINCE 1934

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR
CHAIRMAN'S BIT
CFI'S CORNER
AIRFIELD SAFETY
FLY PAST
ADVERSE YAW
ANNOUNCEMENTS

MIDLAND GLIDING CLUB · NEWSLETTER
AUTUMN EDITION

OCTOBER 2023

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the Autumn edition of our club newsletter, which, as the eagle-eyed amongst you will notice, is only the second one this year.

Though its late in arriving, hopefully this issue will not be a disappointment with, as usual, a diverse range of topics that are both useful and inspirational.

Since the newsletter was re-booted in 2021, I have been working hard to publish *Glide Angle* on a quarterly basis, and without too much encouragement (or arm-twisting!) this has not been very problematic. I have been regularly impressed by both the quality and relevance of the articles that members have submitted.

However, for no reason I can deduce, the summer of 2023 has seen a dearth of new material coming my way – it cannot have been the excellent soaring conditions keeping you all in the air!

Glide Angle can only continue if your editor receives a regular flow of new 'copy' so now we are fast approaching the winter season please scratch your collective heads and send something in, even its just an idea at this stage. My ambition is to get enough good stuff on the hard drive over the next few months to fuel another four excellent issues in 2024.

Rob Kronenburg
Editor
communications@midlandgliding.club

Cover Image: KA went to Borders Gliding Club at Milfield recently where Richard Bennett and Jon Hall flew as high as they are legally allowed without a transponder. They had a good look at Holy Island and it took almost an hour and a half to descend slowly back to the airfield. Note that the indicated airspeed is 64 knots but the true airspeed, shown at the bottom of the electronic vario, shows 89 knots!

CHAIRMAN'S BIT

by JAMES MOORE

“Imagine you have just landed after an exhilarating flight. Previously, you spent an hour or two planning your task and rigging your glider and then afterwards you put the glider snugly back in its trailer until next time. For a moment, let's consider everything that needed to happen to make that flight possible.”



This summer, our enthusiasm was only partly rewarded by the weather gods. We had 5,406 flights, ranking this season in 15th place over the last twenty-six years. We flew 1,902 hours, sadly ranking in in this way even lower - just 25th place. Only the COVID year was worse.

Even so, there were many outstanding achievements, e.g.: first Solo: Carl Tims, Iain Riley, Joel Riley, John Young and Les Brown and a silver badge for Stuart Williams. Chris Greenhalgh became a basic instructor and Andy Rands and Russ Attwood became assistant instructors. The Mynd has also had an impact on the international stage with Andy Holmes (first reserve), Fran Roberts, John Roberts, and Ian MacArthur (fledged at the Mynd) all confirmed for the British Team. Awesome! Rose Johnson (our previous CFI and long-established member) has been appointed

chair of the BGA Instructing and Examining Committee, a testament to the respect the whole movement holds for her. These are all tremendous achievements. Well done everyone.

Keeping Gliding Affordable: Imagine you have just landed after an exhilarating flight. Previously, you spent an hour or two planning your task and rigging your glider and then afterwards you put the glider snugly back in its trailer until next time. For a moment, let's consider everything that needed to happen to make that flight possible.

Let's start with the airside operation. At the launch point we need a launch director, a retrieve winch driver, and experienced number one and number two flight instructors. We also need the main winch driver at the other end of the cable. That's five people! If we are to be able to offer a launch

capability every weekend day throughout the year, allowing for sickness and holidays, we probably need ten people capable of fulfilling each role. We therefore need a total of fifty people just for the airside operation.

What about the other things we need to be flight-ready? The aircraft, airfield vehicles and winches all constantly require work and a team of people to keep them operational and flight ready. Then there is the rest of the infrastructure including hangarage, clubhouse, fences, electricity, and water supply. These all require small teams of dedicated helpers.

The club also needs to be managed to ensure we run efficiently, maintain our income and resources; this does not happen by itself. Our constitution provides for twelve roles: four officers, six committee members, the Chief Flying Instructor, and the Safety Officer. If we

assume we need three people per role, one leaving the role acting as a wise man, one doing the role and another learning, we need thirty-six people.

It is very clear that if all the hundreds of tasks are completed before you can even take a launch for that wonderful flight, someone needs to do them. The question is, who?

Why don't we simply employ more people? The simple answer is the club finances cannot support it. We have limited capital to back up the operation and we cannot drain it to pay for today's pleasure - the club's books must balance if we are to continue operating. This hard fact is replicated across the whole of the UK gliding movement, hence the trend for all clubs to ensure that more and more of their operation is carried out by members. This is the only way the movement can keep gliding affordable.

While there are small bands of dedicated people in our club who have been keeping things going, we cannot afford to burn them out. However, with the insufficient proportion of members now involved in these roles I fear we are currently doing just this! We must now make a communal effort to spread the load. For example, we only have six active winch drivers. This is simply insufficient (as noted above, at least ten must be our minimum). And there are other tasks for which we currently have no one in place, for example, one of the most important of the club officer roles – treasurer (a role which, incidentally, can be done from the comfort of your armchair). It couldn't be clearer

that we need more people to help, after all, many hands make light work.

Many clubs have tackled this problem by making it a requirement that each member does something. Up to now, we have been different because we recognise that it might not be easy or practical because of where you are in your life journey. Just taking a flight to keep your gliding ticking along might be as much as you can fit into a busy life. However, please give it some careful thought. There are many roles that can be done as and when you have time; many jobs that can be done as part of a working group with the hard work of organisation done by someone else; some that can be done from home (as above) when you have a spare hour in front of your computer.


Getting involved is hugely rewarding, being part of a team, passing on skills and knowledge or learning new skills and gaining knowledge gives a lasting sense of satisfaction and achievement. Every job done helps ensure the continuation of our historic gliding site and it helps keep our flying affordable. What could be better? We are currently exploring our member's availability and skills to put our volunteering into a more sustainable place, so please think about what you can do, talk with Laura Martin or email her at involvement@midlandgliding.club,

or complete the volunteer form: forms.office.com/e/MJGkaPPavL

James Moore,
chairman@midlandgliding.club

CFI'S CORNER

by WILLIAM BREWIS



“ Maintaining and improving the safety of everything we do at the Mynd is an important and ongoing endeavour for all of us. ”

Summer has slipped by – or has it, with over 20°C registered on the Long Mynd in October? Regardless, this summer has been eventful with some highs and some lows....

As described by our chairman above, highs have included club members going solo for the first time, achieving badges, qualifying as instructors, and representing both the club and the UK in international competition. Congratulations to them all.

The lows include the loss of our blue K13 CKR in a bungee launch accident. Though even this had a silver lining in that both pilots walked away with only minor cuts and bruising. A detailed analysis of what took place and its causes – there are always many holes that need to align for an accident to occur – has been completed, but the review of what we do next and how we can improve our operations in the light of experience is now under way. I'm pleased to say that the response of those club members present on the day was exemplary, and our post-accident procedures stood up well to the test.

Maintaining and improving the safety of everything we do at the Mynd is an important and ongoing endeavour for all of us. Every one of us has an important part to play both in actively thinking about how

to manage those threats and errors (on the ground as well as in the air) and in taking on board any comments or suggestions from others in a positive way. Incident reporting is one way to feed in the thoughts or comments you may have (see our safety officer's article below). We look at each and every one of them. Thank you and keep 'em coming!

The following issues have all been included in incident reports in recent months:

- **Distractions:**

It is easy to make a mistake when distracted. Manage key processes (e.g., DI's and pre-flight/downwind checks) to avoid or minimise distractions and remove loose articles. Also respect the time and space of others while they are doing those critical tasks.

- **Wing tips:**

A wing-tip holder has a huge lever and a lot of power in their hands. Think about the other tip – is it clear? Are you totally happy you know exactly what to do – if not, STOP and ask. This applies when manoeuvring gliders at the launch point just as much as in the hangar.

- **Over rotation:**

It is critical to manage the first phase of the winch launch to avoid being too steep too close to the ground. If you are in any doubt,



discuss with an instructor and get a demonstration of what a good lanch looks like. A 'picture' is worth a thousand words.

- **All clear above, behind AND in front:**

We all know to check above and behind before launching a glider, however, look forward and check there too. There may be a walker or cyclist that has not been seen.

- **Positive Checks:**

For many years now the Mynd has reinforced the practice of doing (1) independent rig and positive control checks signed off in the DI book as part of the daily inspection when a glider is rigged; and (2) confirming positive checks at the launch point. These are not

optional. In response to accidents the BGA has published 'Safe Rigging' content as part of its Managing Flying Risk strategy and introduced changes to the standard DI book essentially reflecting our practice. See the BGA section on Managing Flying Risk (members.gliding.co.uk/bga-safety-management/managing-flying-risk-index/). It is instantly available on the BGA website and includes this and many other valuable chapters. I commend it to you all.

May you have many safe and enjoyable flights.

William Brewis,
cfi@midlandgliding.club



AIRFIELD SAFETY

by MARTIN SLOAN

“MGC's responsibilities extend well beyond the safety of flying operations, including, for example, the risks associated with our workshops and accommodation operations. These must all be managed to enable our club to survive.”

I am sure you will all agree the Mynd is a truly special place, with a magnificent setting, a long club history and the constantly fascinating challenges gliding there provides. Amongst my own favourite Mynd memories is, shortly after going solo, soaring with Mike Greenwood in the much derided 'Concrete Goose', Twin Astir, well above many higher performance aircraft. I have since learned that, as well as being an outstanding pilot and instructor, Mike has a deep knowledge of safety, both with respect to legislative requirements and skilled judgement of management of safety in the particular situation presented at the Midland Gliding Club. As Club Safety Officer, Mike has designed and implemented the processes without which we simply would not be able to operate.

MGC's responsibilities extend well beyond the safety of flying operations, including, for example, the risks associated with our workshops and accommodation operations. These must all be managed to enable our club to survive. Unfortunately, Mike is no longer available to act as our Club Safety Officer and I have agreed to take over this role. In comparison with

Mike, my own experience of safety management, particularly with regard to flying operations is only now beginning, so I will be very dependent on the knowledge and support of the full MGC membership. Our aim is to make the MGC a safe place for our members, employees, visitors, and anyone else who is affected by our operations. I intend to work within the framework of a safety committee in order to ensure the full scope of our responsibilities are managed and that we are a 'Safe Club' in every respect.

I am still familiarising myself with the responsibilities of the CSO role, but I am already clear that there are two topics which require immediate attention from our membership: incident reporting and public safety on our airfield.

The electronic recording of incidents is now in operation and, in my own experience, straightforward. Please ensure that any incident which has potential to cause harm or damage is recorded, not just those where the harm/damage actually occurs. We need to identify risks if we are to manage them safely. Anything and everything from an overfly to a

bruised shin can be reported using the QR code link that is located in every airfield vehicle and winch.

Examination of those incidents which have been logged shows we have a real and perhaps growing issue with public encroachment during launch operations. I raise this so that members realise the risks of the public appearing from unexpected directions and increasing their pre-launch look-out accordingly. A full scan of the field for the public as well as other aircraft is essential before launch. Launch Directors should ensure that lookouts are posted when the main winch/retrieve winch set up creates blind spots. An early task for me will be to carry out a review of our operational procedures to identify scope for reducing these risks. I will be approaching members for help, please do let me know if you can contribute to this.

Finally, I would like to thank Mike Greenwood for his huge contribution to the club in the many roles he has filled and hope that we see him flying with us again soon.

Martin Sloan
safety@midlandgliding.club



FLY PAST

“This regular column invites members to tell a story about a significant flight from their career aloft. It could be a first or last, a longest or shortest, or one they will just never forget for the excitement or (anxiety!) it caused. Here Les Brown describes the reasons why he took up gliding and the story of his first solo.”

My journey towards becoming a solo pilot started quite recently, however, my fascination with gliding began much earlier. I was born in Ludlow, Shropshire 68 years ago. As far back as I can remember, amongst my father's favourite weekend activities was to drive to the Long Mynd, take in the scenery and wildlife, but most importantly, see if there were any gliders flying. He had flown in gliders during his National Service in the RAF and was fascinated by them and so, if the airfield was active, he would just sit and watch.

By 2017, I had completed over 40 years' service as a police officer in various locations around the country. Retirement approached and as far as I was concerned there was only one place I was heading for, my beloved Shropshire. My wife and I purchased a smallholding in the parish of Sibden Carwood, to the west of Craven Arms, and I was home.

It was not long before I was drawn back to the Long Mynd, now on my doorstep. My wife noticed my fascination with the Midland Gliding Club and treated me to a pleasure flight for my birthday in October 2022. The rest is history. I was hooked. I joined the club and taking the advice of professional

instructor Dave Crowson I made as many visits as I possibly could over the winter of 2022/23 taking as many instructional flights as I could get. Each flight might not have been long in duration, but they all contained valuable information, which I slowly started to slot into its correct place. A week-long course in May was booked with the intention of consolidating all the instruction I had experienced to date.

The Thursday of the course was to be the day, though nothing had been said specifically that I was now ready. However, if the weather conditions were suitable, and my performance was up to standard I guess it was in my instructor's mind. I knew I must be getting close because of the type of exercises I was doing, such as awkward height simulated cable breaks. But something else was happening as well, something within myself. In the days leading up to the solo I knew I was getting close, but I still felt a little nervous. However, on the day of my solo, something had changed. I felt confident (though not over-confident!); I was actually looking forward to the challenge of going solo. So, when Dave hopped out of the back seat and said: “OK, time you did it on your own”, I felt some sense

of relief that he now had enough trust in me to let me fly one of our precious club aircraft on my own.

Thinking through my flight plan, I had made up my mind to concentrate on conducting a safe launch, correct circuit, good approach and as smooth a landing as I was capable of, nothing else. I am a bit of a chatterbox and had been talking through my thoughts, plans and actions during all my flights (as all the long-suffering instructors in the back will attest to) so after the launch I carried on talking myself through all my actions as usual. Nevertheless, after the launch and the turn onto the downwind leg, I had that brief period of straight flight when all is quiet, and the workload reduces. In that moment the fact that I was really on my own kicked in. Seconds later, it was back to thinking and planning (and talking in my case) for my diagonal leg, base leg, and landing.

After the flight I was met by a reception of great friends, including the club's professional winch driver Carl Tims, who had just launched me and then managed to get the landing on video too. I experienced a fantastic elation, and a sense of disbelief at what had just

happened. On my 75th flight I had gone solo! On the following day, after more training and check flights, I was actually more nervous than before my second flight, but once again, all went very well.

When I started on my gliding journey, I was very aware that I was starting quite late in life, and I therefore expected it to take longer than normal. The reason I emphasise this is that I have witnessed the sad and often quick demise of former colleagues who switch off after retirement and quite frankly do not last long. I was determined to challenge myself to learnt something totally new. This was my first real foray into aviation and as well as a real passion for the activity, it was done to stimulate my brain to acquire new processes and skills.

So that is where I am now. I am really looking forward to the future to see how far I can progress in gliding. Now, I suspect the real work begins. Undoubtedly, there are more challenges to come, but you know what? I can't wait.



ADVERSE YAW

“ In this column members describe 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. This time your editor describes his experience of the annual week in August when the club organises its own member's competition ”

Tyro: *Beginner, learner, neophyte, fledgling, rookie, tenderfoot, greenhorn*

Pundit: *Expert, doyen, master, guru, sage, savant, boffin*

When I sat in the MGC briefing room a few weeks ago to prepare for the first day of the club's annual Task Week I immediately knew which of the above categories I fitted into, but in case there was any doubt for those gathered there our CFI quickly made it clear. In gliding terms, a tyro is a pilot who has achieved their cross-country endorsement but has not completed either a 300 km flight or taken part in an established gliding competition. On the other hand, a pundit is someone who has. Easy!

This was my first real go at taking part in Task Week though last year I helped out on this and on Competition Enterprise too. I was enthusiastic (I had the days marked on the family calendar for a few months previously to make sure my

partner knew I would be gone for the whole week), but I also felt a little nervous about competing in a sport I am still a relative newcomer to. I needn't have been worried. From the very first briefing it became clear that the objective was for this to be an enjoyable, relaxed event. Simply put, Task Week is part of the club's strategy to support those in the tyro category to move to the pundit one.

The weather is always a crucial component in any gliding competition and so it was this year. As with pretty much the whole of the summer of 2023, the weather was not great. Out of the eight possible flying days, tasks were only set on four, however, as club flying was taking place simultaneously, I still managed to get my glider online on six of these so a 75% success rate for getting in the air was better than I have achieved the rest of the year.

Each day began with a briefing at 10.00am (with a message sent

via WhatsApp stating if it was advisable to rig your glider before the briefing). The weather being what it was, most people were not launching before lunchtime, so this rarely happened. Tasks were set appropriate to the conditions which meant that cross-country tasks were only set on three days (MYN-TNW-TEN-MYN 99km; MYN-MON-MYN 38km; MYN-PRE-SH3-MYN 70km) with a height gain target on the fourth day. That height gain factor was very useful to me in gaining some extra points.

The briefings were like those that happen every flying day at the Mynd but on steroids! There was the usual field layout and potential hazards, but the meteorological conditions were explored in much greater detail – explaining not only what was happening but why and how this impacted on the choice of task. Multiple weather resources were examined and compared. Every morning this tyro cross-country pilot received an excellent lesson

in what a pundit does to decide how, when and where they will fly that day. There was also commentary on other aspects of task selection such as hazardous terrain, avoiding controlled airspace, potential field-landing areas. If a task had been flown the previous day the successful pilots were required to explain how they had done it before receiving their prize of a bottle of wine. Once the briefing was over there was the opportunity to ask further questions or seek one-to-one advice from the experienced pilots who were there.

After all this it was time to fly and for me the butterflies kicked in. However, after a few days I got into the swing of it - the reason being it had become quite clear that Task Week is not a 'win-at-all-costs' competition and its definitely not about pushing yourself beyond your personal limits. For me that meant not landing out. I had already landed out (successfully) once this year and once (unsuccessfully but happily without any long-term effects) in 2022. I determined to attempt all the tasks but if I felt uncertain about the conditions (or my skill level) to turn back. And this is what I did, enjoying every flight and feeling a sense of achievement at having got as far as I did, even if on turning back I knew that my attempt might not be very competitive.

Task week is about enjoyable learning. I now know how variable barrels work. I now know how a tephi diagram can help you determine flying conditions. I now know how I can time the legs of my cross-country flight to take advantage of wind direction and optimum conditions. Because this year's task week was somewhat thwarted by the weather on non-flying days, we also had superb lectures and tutorials on a variety of subjects from setting up your navigation device, to

how to prepare for a safe field landing. And on one of these days we also got a lot of valuable work done on club facilities. Oh, and there was a great party on Saturday night too.

Since Task Week, although September conditions have not been great (again!), I have found that I am able to prepare better for what the day might offer in terms of cross-country flying and that I am able to push out more confidently beyond my previous comfort zone. So, if you can possibly make it, do take part next year, even if you are a tyro. Pundits please also come along as we do need to learn from your experience.

A massive thank you needs to go out to those who made it happen; William Brewis our CFI for setting the tasks and leading the friendly and fun morning briefings; Dominic Houghton for his erudite meteorological forecasting and briefings; Simon Adlard for his excellent and informative lectures; Hazel Turner for running control so efficiently; and of course, the numerous winchies for getting us all in the air.

Rob Kronenburg





“ This regular column asks members to contribute a short piece on something that has inspired them in their gliding career. This time Mike Stringfellow shares not only the first experience that inspired his interest in gliding but also how it led to a long and rewarding forty-year history flying gliders on three continents. ”

My first introduction to gliding occurred in 1954, when as a ten-year old lad growing up on the edge of the Peak District, I saw several gliders in the World Gliding Championships being held at nearby Great Hucklow, mostly as they passed our house being retrieved by trailer. However, on two occasions I witnessed gliders thermalling low overhead. One was a mid-winged sailplane that I now suspect was piloted by Paul MacCready, whom I was to meet in person some forty years later. His glider was circling very low in a stiff westerly wind and eventually disappeared eastwards – possibly on the

flight where he landed near the east coast. My second introduction to gliding was a week's course at Portmoak in the 1960s. With the vagaries of the Scottish weather, I never managed to solo, but did master ridge soaring the T-21 there! With several career changes and other hobbies (I was a keen sailor as well as part of the university equestrian eventing team), it was a while before my interest in aviation was rekindled.

After emigrating to South Africa in the mid 1970s, I flew hang gliders for a couple of years before becoming wise enough to

transition to sailplanes. Living near Johannesburg in the 1980s, I had the option of two nearby clubs – one south of the city and the other in the countryside out west. Known unofficially as the 'British' and 'German' clubs, I joined the latter: Mageliesburg Gliding Club. I trained on ASK-13 gliders with a mix of ex-patriot British and German instructors and soloed in 1981. I soon bought my own first glider – a low-time Jantar-1 that had been exported from Britain to what was then Rhodesia and had finally made its way to South Africa. This glider had good performance, but the single-



panel 19 metre wings were heavy and hard to rig. In the years at Mageliesburg I completed all my silver and gold badges plus diamond goal distance and competed in several cross-country competitions. I also narrowly missed attaining diamond height at a mountain wave camp. Highlights of flying there include thermalling with Cape Vultures from a colony nearby in the Mageliesburg mountains. They would sit right on your wingtip with their bald head and beady eyes clearly visible!

I met my Yorkshire-born wife Anne in Johannesburg during this period, and in 1985 we emigrated to the United States. Our plan was to work for a few years in well-paying jobs before returning to Britain. Circumstances conspired against this, and over the following thirty years we changed jobs and cities several times, living in Florida, Georgia, Utah, and Arizona. I resumed gliding in Georgia with the local club, my one notable flight involving me getting lost on a short cross-country flight in poor visibility that had me land at a private airstrip some miles away. A severe beer penalty was extracted from me at the clubhouse for

this flight! After relocating to Utah in the late 1980s, I bought an LS-4 and flew with the local soaring association



there for several years. In 1999, my wife got a job as a university professor near Phoenix, Arizona and I became the trailing spouse, made possible as I was then working remotely with a small consulting firm based in Silicon Valley. Here I bought my third sailplane, an ASW-20, and I joined the Arizona Soaring Association. This club had a very active cross-country group, and I was soon encouraged to follow them. The process of initiating new pilots was called 'drag and drop', since newcomers often made it out but not always back home! In my early years there I duly followed this pattern by landing out at several remote spots in the Arizona desert – abandoned air strips, municipal airports and even a residential airpark. There aren't many agricultural fields in that landscape!

I soon became more used to Arizona conditions. Several early summer months involved flying in the blue and group flying made it much easier to find thermals. When moisture moved in ahead of the seasonal summer monsoon storms, high-based cumulus arrived and made long cross-country flights a doddle. I took part in many club competitions and several regional contests and soon discovered that my slightly conservative flying style was ten to fifteen percent slower than the best guys. I usually found myself in the middle of the pack, not in the top group, but not at the bottom either! A couple of times I sneaked into the top three, usually when other competitors made a bad judgment call that involved a land out while my more relaxed flying got me home.

I am an Atmospheric Physicist by training and although my specialty is lightning, my knowledge of meteorology led me into developing soaring forecasts. I was an early adopter of Dr. Jack's Blipmaps and some 20 years ago developed a website to publish local



soaring forecasts for Arizona and the Southwest USA. This was quite successful and led to me being co-opted as weatherman on contest task committees, mostly club and regional, but also one national event. I must add that this was perhaps as much due to my English

accent and dry humour as to the accuracy of my forecasts! In 2005, I sold my trusty ASW-20 and upgraded my

30 miles from home, I suffered a blood clot in my left leg. I was fortunate it stayed put while I flew home



glider to a relatively new Discus 2b. This turned out to be my favourite glider with great performance and very sweet handling. In the ten years that I owned the ship in Arizona, my logbook records that I made 340 flights totalling nearly 1000 hours. I made three flights over 500km to Arizona's Grand Canyon in the Discus, two from our field just north of Phoenix and one from southern Utah during a regional contest. High-based cumulus (often over 15,000 feet) enables flying over the higher Arizona terrain (5,000 to 7,000 MSL), which would otherwise be tricky due to the largely unlandable landscape. In 2015, I acquired my fifth glider – a Ventus 2bx. Although this was an excellent high-performance 15-metre ship, I never liked it as much as the Discus 2.

Two years later, on my 62nd flight in the Ventus, and while near cloud base some

and sought medical assistance – if it had broken off and travelled to my lungs or brain, I would probably not be writing this! My doctor concluded the clot resulted from a combination of dehydration, blood hypoxia and an inherited blood clotting gene. I was grounded for over six months while my condition was evaluated. Although eventually cleared medically fit to fly, my doctor advised me to avoid long flights in the hot and dry Arizona climate.

My wife and I retired just after this event and in 2018 we decided to have a long trip to Britain to enjoy country hill walking. I was inclined to go to the Peak District where I spent my youth, but the only place we could find a long-term rental cottage turned out to be just outside All Stretton at the foot of Caer Caradoc. This was the summer with a gorgeous hot, sunny June and we covered a lot of miles on foot through

the south Shropshire countryside. We fell in love with the area, and I remarked one day that all we needed was a nearby gliding club! Of course, I knew the Midland Gliding Club existed, but was unaware of its exact location until one day when we hiked the Long Mynd. I soon became a temporary member of MGC. We returned to the area in the summer of 2019 and began looking for somewhere local to live, eventually buying our cottage in the centre of Church Stretton. In early 2020 we became locals and at the same time, I bought my sixth glider, a Schempp-Hirth Mini-Nimbus and relocated it to the Long Mynd. After twenty years of flying in one of the best soaring locations in the world, I am still adapting to the challenging British weather conditions. I am in awe of British pilots who set off cross-country with cloud

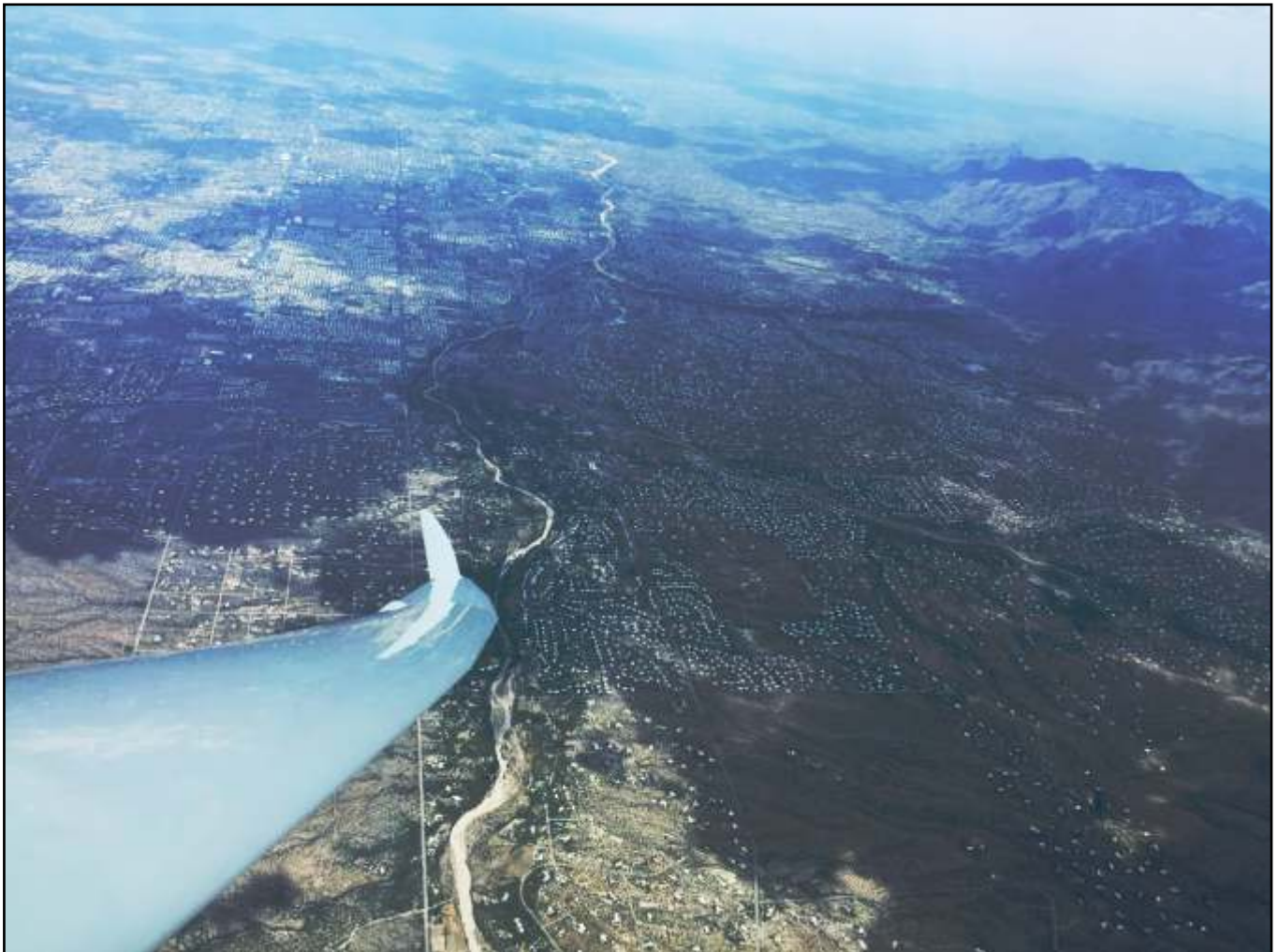


base little higher than the top of a winch launch, but nevertheless cover hundreds of kilometres.

After thirty years of aero-tows, I have embraced winch-launching and really enjoy flying in what must be one of the prettiest sites in the world. My first cross-country flight (I made it to Hereford racecourse and back!) saw my return to the Long Mynd

about 50 feet below the top, resulting in my first field landing in thirty years – the 'horses head' field!

Plans to downsize our residence in Arizona were wrecked by two years of COVID, so we're currently summer residents of Church Stretton and winter residents of Tucson, Arizona. We hope to eventually return to the UK as full-time residents but may keep a small bolt hole in Arizona to escape the darkest Shropshire winter nights! Future plans are to keep hiking the Shropshire countryside and flying at the Long Mynd as long as I am able.



Announcements

Save these dates:

Important dates to have in your calendar include:

- **Members Forum, Saturday 11th of November 5.30pm**
- **Christmas Dinner and Awards, Saturday 9th of December**

Upcoming Lectures

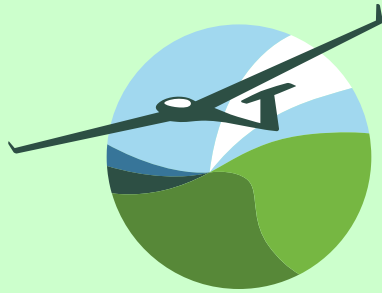
Neal Clements is preparing the winter series of lectures some of which have already been scheduled. If there is a topic you would like included, please contact Neal at: projects@midlandgliding.club.

23rd October: to be confirmed.

**24th January: Air Traffic Control, Ellen Powell
Birmingham ATC.**

24th February: The RAF Red Arrows, John Rands

24th March: Fields and Thermalling, CFI and guests



MIDLAND GLIDING CLUB

FLYING THE LONG MYND SINCE 1934

Midland Gliding Club Limited
The Airfield, Longmynd
Church Stretton
Shropshire
SY6 6TA

office@midlandgliding.club
01588 650206