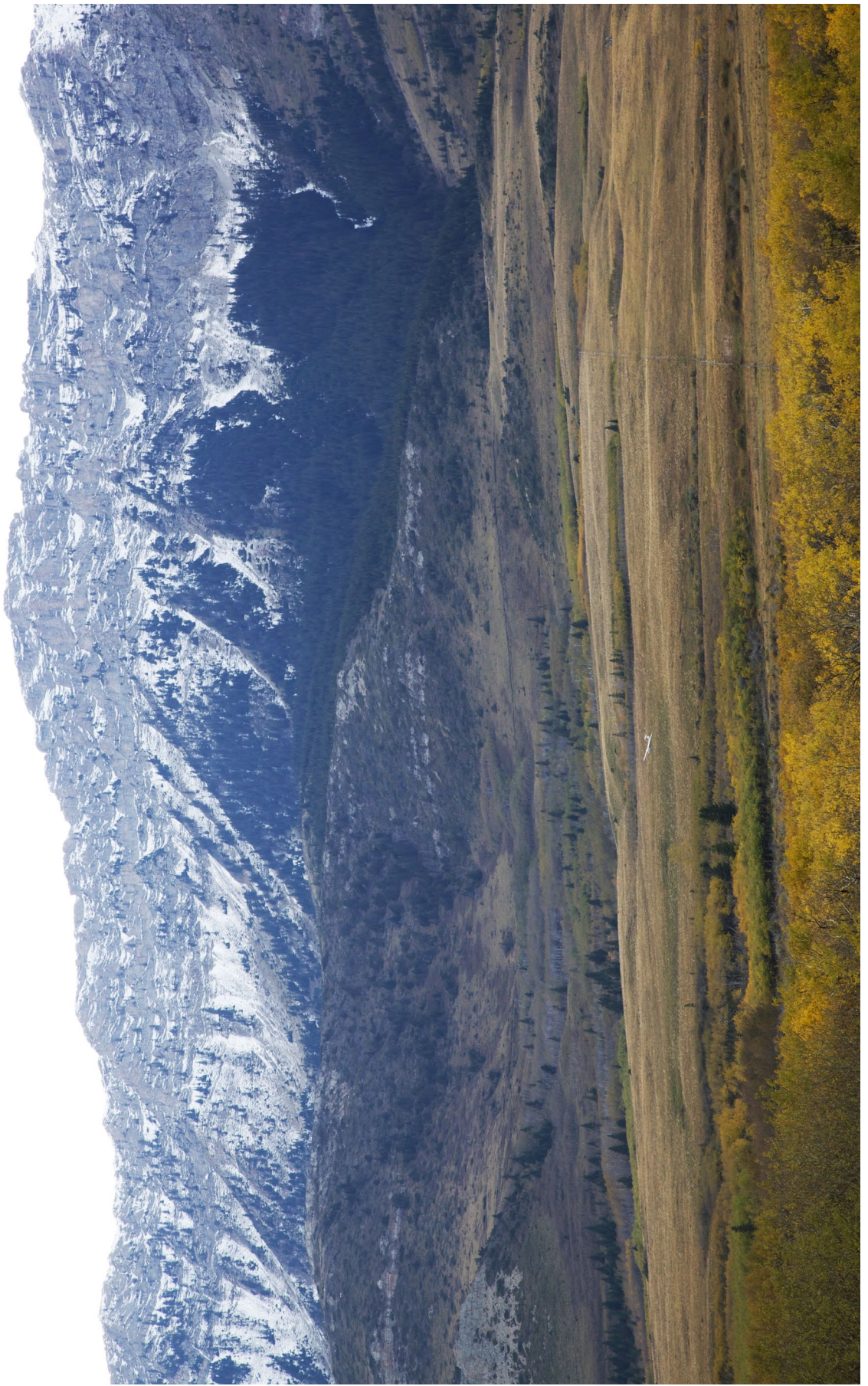
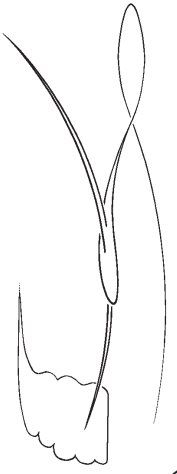


AScent

the journal of the Alberta Soaring Council



Notes from John

John Mulder, SAC Alberta Zone Director

IS ANYONE ELSE HOPING for fantastic soaring weather next year or an earlier start to the season? This spring did not accommodate us much and I think that always provides challenges to get our clubs up and running, checkouts completed, and training under way. A slow start to spring seems to impact the entire season and that was evident in the lack of any OLC points at CAGC.

There were many activities this year and as usual, only a few people can manage to make it to all of them. What makes our association strong though, is all of us participating when we can. I had the opportunity to represent our sport at the Airdrie Airshow and at *Chics Take Flight*. The airshow had a good turnout and with Cu Nim and CAGC there with displays and people on hand to answer questions, a positive contribution was made to the airshow and we generated some interest in our sport while dispelling the usual myths as well. The *Chics Take Flight* event was a huge success! Many “dudes” are also influenced during the event so I won’t say it is strictly for the ladies. My favourite part is the opportunity to get our clubs together and socialize while enjoying and sharing our sport with others.

I want to thank those who worked so hard to make *Chics Take Flight* so successful. Most importantly, I would like to thank them for their focus on safety. I estimate there were 200 people in attendance who have limited if any experience

around aircraft. With our gliding operation, the parachute jump zone operating, the Vintage Wings Stearman providing rides, and a few itinerant aircraft, there was a lot to manage and everyone’s participation in supporting the safety culture that we continue to nurture was demonstrated.

Now that our season is over, it is a good time to review any safety concerns we may have and send a report to Dan Daly, the SAC Safety Officer. This helps identify trends in safety lapses so the SAC Training & Safety committee can focus training on our weaknesses, and we can focus on finding ways to reduce the opportunity for incidents or accidents at our clubs. Please participate by providing your observations and supporting your club Safety Officer.

We will be holding our annual ASC Safety Seminar in early 2014. As you think back to the 2013 season, let me know if there is something you feel we should discuss or present at the seminar. If you would like to make a presentation, that would also be accepted with a shout of thanks!

This is my last report as the SAC Alberta Zone director and am handing over this responsibility to Al Hoar at Cu Nim. I want to take this opportunity to thank each of you for your assistance and support of SAC and my efforts representing you at the national level. Since kids hockey season has now begun, I will close by saying “see you at the rink!” □

Notes from Phil

Phil Stade, ASC Executive Director

THE SOARING SEASON BEGAN IN ALBERTA with the combined meeting of the Soaring Association of Canada and the Alberta Soaring Council on 16 March at the WestJet Campus building. North of Calgary the weather refused to go along with this startup date and soaring didn’t get underway until significantly later than normal. There was however, lots of work to be done in preparation for some special events that would be coming.

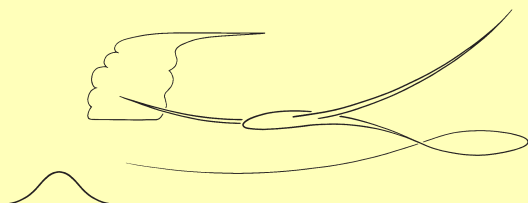
One of the largest events held this year was *Chics Take Flight* at Innisfail. Many volunteers put hours into advertising and publicizing this special event held to highlight women in aviation. The CAGC news on page 21 tells more. This year the event was headed by Val Deschamps of CAGC, backed up by Erin Doerffer and Judy Soroka of Cu Nim and Carol Mulder of CAGC. Great work folks! It has again brought results as evidenced by the number of women and girls that are following up at our clubs for flights and lessons.

One of the biggest disappointments of the year was the absence of the winch for continuing our Winch Launch Introduction Program in Alberta clubs. We had delivered the winch to the manufacturer for a new computer program and hardware on 27 December last year. The expectation was that the work would be done by April or May and we would be able to resume and expand our winch launch training at our clubs. The lack of a winch also meant that we were unable to make visits to communities around Alberta to demonstrate soaring. We are working to ensure the winch is back in operation for 2014. A new winch syllabus will be presented in the spring for the consideration of instructors and club members in general.

A relatively minor accident with PCK, our provincial towplane, resulted in unanticipated expenditures. The silver lining in that cloud is that the engine has now been overhauled and → 7

ASCent

the 2013 season



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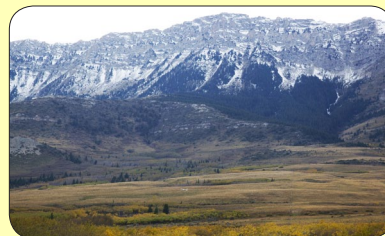
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Cover

Find the glider! Early in the Fall camp at Cowley, Jean Claude landed way off-road under the Livingstones. Centre Peak is out of the photo to the right.

Photo: Brian Murray



Brian Murray

OUR TWO COWLEY CAMPS THIS YEAR were clearly contrasting events. Summer Cowley featured very unstable conditions with bands of towering moisture laden storms rising to threaten operations and then moving on leaving poor soaring in their wake. Fall Cowley, on the other hand, brought wave flights most days and thermals and frontal lift on the others.

It wasn't that there weren't some wonderful flights at the Summer Camp. It was just that there were so few of them. July 30 and 31 were the only two days when pilots consistently stayed up for more than an hour. Ryzard Gatkiewicz posted a flight of over six hours on 30 July but perhaps the best of the camp was flown by Chris Gough on 31 July – have a look at the OLC <<http://www.onlinecontest.org/olc-2.0/gliding/flightinfo.html?dsId=3247114>>. It was Chris's first Cowley Camp but he definitely went exploring anyway during this 6:09 excursion. The secret of his success turned out to be flying to the west of the Continental Divide where he found stronger and higher lift. His flight path was to about 20 km west of Sparwood and then twice north along the Divide... and all that in the Edmonton's ASW-15. Great flying Chris.

On the same day Bruce Friesen, Struan Vaughan, Tony Burton, Roy Eichendorf, and Mark Westphal had reasonable flights but that was the best day of the camp. The next five days brought hope in the morning and moisture later in the day. Not a good formula for soaring success! Pilot attendance gradually reduced and the whole event rushed to a halt

on Monday as we raced the arrival of a huge black storm cloud from the northwest that was featured as the front cover of the fall issue of *free flight*, and then it was over. The stats: 29 registered pilots, 85 flights, 71.3 hours flying, and 184,000 feet of aerotows.

The Fall Wave Camp attracted 35 pilots and rewarded them with some of the best wave soaring in years. There have been camps with stronger wave but this year we had wave flights each of the first seven days. As we arrived on the first Saturday we were greeted by beautiful, classic wave clouds so five flights took place and several climbed to 12,000 to 14,000 feet. One of those flights included John Dunn on his first glider flight in many years. His dad used to fly with the now defunct club that was in Windsor, Ontario. Now that John and Wendy have a home in the hills to the northeast of the airfield it was time to fly again. He and Wendy both experienced wave lift and climbed up the face of the clouds during their introductory flights. I suspect that isn't too common at Canadian gliding clubs.

The second day of the camp saw all the aircraft in the air and thirteen of the fourteen flights climbed in wave. Conrad Lamoureux launched first and gradually climbed to over 25,000. John Gruber in his Standard Cirrus flew to Waterton in wave and had enough altitude to cruise home at high speed... only to hit sink when almost back and he diverted to land out at Pincher Creek. Jean Claude got stuck low in the lee of the Livingstones and explored the ridges to the

east of Centre Peak until he landed in a meadow at the base of the mountains as you see in the cover photograph. (Jean's experience and the subsequent "interesting" retrieve are relived on the following pages.)

As it turned out, those were the only landouts of the camp. That's a bit of a rarity – dropping in for a visit to the Hutterite colony is almost expected. Roger Dainton and I saw the last light of the day in wave and touched down at 7:35. A wonderful day of soaring.

Monday morning was more of the same with all the gliders off the ground at once and their pilots enjoying wave. Guy Blood in his Kestrel 19 climbed to over 22,000. Pablo Wainstein and Ted Sorensen almost got to the top of the block at 28,000 feet in the DG-1000. Gary Hill reported 28,000 and Allan Wood and Roger Dainton posted a flight of about 25,000. I had three flights with Pilar Cifuentes, Tony Podachin, and Eugene Zolenko which resulted in one climb to 22,000 and two to 25,000. After two days of wave the group had posted 44.3 hours in the air in 24 launches and at least five climbs recorded of over Diamond height and the ones by John and Gary are official Diamond legs. Not bad for the start of a wave camp.

Tuesday's pilot meeting heard that the day would be good for student flying since neither wave nor thermal lift was forecast. That may have been true somewhere but in our little corner of Alberta we enjoyed some of the most unusual soaring conditions. The weather that slowly moved in from the northeast provided frontal lift later in the afternoon. For nearly two hours the ASK-21 and I flew alongside clouds more than a 1000 above their bases. Allan Wood and Pablo Wainstein joined me flying the DG-1000 in that magical scene. Visuals to remember!

Wednesday saw the return of slightly stronger wave. Patrick Pelletier from Winnipeg spent 4:40 aloft in his DG-300 and cruised around in the wave while reaching almost 17,000. Ted Sorensen resumed our aerobatic training and, with smooth lift, we were able to fit in a lot more maneuvers, including my first 'place your trust in the straps' inverted flying. Mark Westphal, Allan Wood and Conrad Lamoureux and several others all got to over 12,500 feet.

The rest of the week didn't bring many flights over 10,000 but the 84 flights averaged more than an hour each. Not bad and surely the best October flying in Canada. The overall response of the pilots was that flying at this Cowley Camp was an interesting, challenging and satisfying activity. The stats: 35 registered pilots, 125 flights, 176.7 hours flying and 455,000 feet (that's 138.7 vertical kilometres) of aerotows... and the winner is... Fall Cowley!

Our annual Thanksgiving Dinner moved six miles north of the airfield at the Anchor B Ranch (<http://anchorbranch.com>). What a marvelous spread they laid out for us! Last minute attendees pushed the capacity of the cook and facility but we were treated wonderfully and, with Brian Murray saving the day (computer problems with the generator controls) by restoring the lighting, all ended well. We hope to return to enjoy their hospitality next year. Check out their rooms next time you visit the area. □



Wilf Plester and his son Colin, while flying the DG-1000 on the last flight of the day on the last day of the Fall camp, are treated to Golden Eagles migrating down the Livingstones. On three different occasions they encountered eagles, at one time they counted eight, four or five very close. Wilf said, "a couple came within about 20 feet of the glider, we flew with these magnificent birds for about an hour – truly an incredible experience".

decisions

Jean Claude

TIME SLOWED DOWN and yet things were happening at a rate which was testing my limited capacities. I had plenty of airspeed in the height vs speed equation but that fence was uncomfortably parked in my field of view. Trading speed for altitude is a stressful way to conduct an approach and something I would rather not experience on a regular basis. How did I get to this awkward ending of an equally awkward flight?



After a relatively (this being Fall Cowley) uneventful tow, I found myself not quite connecting with my quarry, the famed Livingstone wave. Since I still had adequate height I decided to cross the spine of the range in the hope of using slope lift on the west side of the rocks to try and extend the flight.

The southwesterly flow wasn't quite aligned with the orientation of the range and after a few passes up and down it without much gain, I decided to head for home. I was expecting the leeward loss of altitude but, after sustaining generous sink, tried to build a height cushion by working the foothill slopes over the North Burmis Road valley.

I was able to gain while heading north with the rising terrain only to lose it all on the return pass, never getting the height I judged I needed to cross the distance to more landable areas towards Cowley. I was trapped. Plenty of ridge lift to sustain me on the foothills but only to about 300 feet above them. I scouted no less than three perfectly suitable fields on the west side of the road for the inevitable outlanding.

I flew over those beautifully green fields repeatedly during the next hour or two, all the while hoping for some change or advantage that would give me the 500 feet more I needed to make a move. Presently, the limits of my band of lift were bound by the diminishing returns of the lower ground to the south and the formidable set of power lines crossing a gap in the ridge south of the Chapel Rock Road.

My best achieved height lay at the top of the last hill before this gap marking the north end of my run. The possibility of extending that run beyond the gap to the continuously rising ridge was hampered by the inconvenient aforementioned power lines. The quality of the available landing areas left a lot to be desired also. So here I was, continually bumping into this conundrum on every northward run. It was midday

a memorable retrieve

Conrad Lamoureux

AFTER A GREAT AND LONG DAY of catching the wave to 25,500 feet at Cowley, I was looking forward to a hot supper and warm home in Coleman.

Just before leaving, Brian Murray and Arel Welgan came over, saying Jean Claude had landed out in Cu Nim's Jantar; at this time the thought was that he was close by. We debated about who would go get him, thinking it an easy retrieve, and decided we would all go in my truck, a ½ ton with 4-wheel drive. It would be needed before this day was over.

With the trailer hooked up and half a thought given to the tail lights, we expected to be back before dark. Using Arel's GPS as a guide, the troop headed north, then west towards the Livingstone Range.

The closer to the mountains we got the more concerned we became as the landout areas and easy retrieve grew fewer. Once on Burmis road (the closest north/south road to the mountains) and heading south, the situation became ominous. Eyes peeled for a glider that should be close, each bend brought a new expletive. Then, coming around a corner I caught a spot of white against the foothills; travelling another half kilometre and around another hill, the others saw it also.

When directly abeam of Jean we stopped and stared at what looked like an impossible task. With spotty reception we reached him on the cell and were assured that access could be had using the trail under the power transmission line then

on a warm and sunny Fall camp flight that was going to be a landout by all appearances.

Is humankind's greatest evolutionary advantage being able to play the "what if?" game, to consider different possible outcomes to an imagined scenario? This is what we do with most non-trivial choices we are presented with daily. We also train for emergency situations until our decisions become automatic when time is short (think stalls and spins). This was an occasion where the training saved me.

What happened next wasn't that far off what my worst case scenario looked like. As I got nearer the ridge on the north side of the gap, the lift never materialized and in fact, the sink rate increased alarmingly. I dove to escape the sink while heading to my substandard field. I cinched my straps till they hurt, dropped the landing gear, and dared not test spoilers. With my eyes flicking between the airspeed indicator and the real world outside, the rest of the approach became a decision as to which side of the fence to land on. Plenty of speed so, over the fence, full spoilers, hold it off as long as possible, tweak the rudder to keep it straight – and it's over in three seconds after touchdown, the thick tussocks slowing me instantly.

In a while I let out an overdue breath and sat for a moment with the canopy open to the crisp fall air, collecting my wits. I recall stepping out of the cockpit to a strange stillness inappropriate to my location until the wind piped up again. Walking down the hillside toward the road trying to find access for the retrieve crew, I experienced a few wind direction reversals from up to down valley and back with still moments in between. I believe this may be what occurred on my fated attempt to find lift beyond the gap.

For me, the final thoughts of what I would have done differently has yet to yield to what compelled me to make the attempt in the first place. Please consider that we all have different comfort zones and that all of us expand them to a certain extent every single time we fly, but be careful. □

crossing a couple pastures, which, while being pessimistic, looked a whole lot better than the ravine and water that were between us at our location.

Driving another kilometre we came to the power lines and turned off the gravel road that would seem like a highway on return. With darkness approaching, we switched to four wheel drive and eased our way towards the mountains on a trail more suited to an ATV, not a truck and glider trailer that were threatening to high centre on some of the small but sharp inclines.

A couple of barbed wire gates later we came upon Jean who, a bit breathless from walking a path from the glider, stated that there was access through the pasture, even on what some may call a trail. Again being careful not to get stuck or high centred, we crawled along, turned north off the trail, and climbed towards the glider, at times following Jean who led the way on foot around or over obstacles.

Finally! At the Jantar and ready to derig, dusk was well upon us. We looked around in amazement at where we were, a meadow under the mountains – the cover photo gives you an idea how far into the boonies we were. Getting busy, we finished just before total darkness set in and made our way back to the road, again crawling along and sometimes following Jean's lead on foot. Opening the gates again seemed a small victory as each brought us closer to sanctuary.

Now on the gravel road with total darkness, not even a moon, we headed south to reach Highway 3 instead of retracing our original route down the twisting and dusty road. As we all relaxed and teased Jean a bit a deer crossed the road and I was sure he wiped the dust off the headlights. Thankful that the tail lights were working, we reached the highway and headed east towards Cowley.

Some 3-1/2 hours had passed and, everyone safe, the glider in the trailer, we arrived at the airfield. Begging off supper and a beer, I went home with a story to remember. □

Notes from Phil

from page 2

the next major engine work will not be needed for another 2000 hours of use. A big thanks go out to our Chief Towpilot, Dale Brown for shepherding the aircraft through the repair process.

Provincial funding in Alberta has continued to be a moving target and we anticipate more changes in the coming year. In order to meet the requirements for the new programs we are required to set five year goals and provide measurements of how they are reached. With that in mind I encourage each of you to bring your ideas of how the Alberta Soaring Council can be of benefit to you, your club and the people of this province.

The Cowley camps were well received and although the Summer Camp brought less than ideal weather with it, the Fall Wave Camp gave us some of the best flying in years. Thanks to all the volunteers who assisted with moving aircraft and equipment as well as doing the set up and clean up for the events.

A large display case has been offered to ASC at the Alberta Sports Hall of Fame and Museum in Red Deer. Val Deschamps, Conrad Lamoureux, Tony Burton, Rafael Dzwonek, Pablo Wainstein and Brian Murray have volunteered to work on the concepts and displays. Be sure to drop in after Christmas to view the results.

Have a great winter preparing for the better weather in 2014. □

flying GAWK

Shulamit Kuttner



ARRIVING AT ARTHUR AIRFIELD (York Soaring), I anticipated a good day. At 10 am, it was a scorcher already at 28°C and high humidity, and white cu were already popping into the sky like great big puffs of popcorn. I was vacationing in southern Ontario and wanted to try something new. Gliding is not new to me, but there can be great learning value at flying at a different club once in a while.

I was looking forward to meeting up with my friend and former instructor at Cu Nim, Paul Chalifour. He arrived, as usual, brimming with enthusiasm. Leading me to the cavernous hangar, he told me that there was an aircraft that I just *had* to see. I was expecting some sleek, modern, fibreglass bird. What I found was GAWK, and when I saw it, I could do nothing but.

GAWK is a Slingsby T-21B glider, an elderly British design that has been used as a trainer in the UK for many years. I'd never seen anything like it before. It has no canopy, and pilot and copilot seats are side-by-side, not in tandem as usual. Its great width made me think of a boat, and not only a boat, but one with a massive wing overtop. This heavy wing is supported by a central pylon and two highly unaerodynamic looking struts on either side. I had the impression of a Schweizer 2-33 that had swallowed too much for dinner. Paul

told me that this was a one-of-a-kind glider in Canada and an experience like no other to fly. I could scarcely believe that this strange creature could fly at all.

We went on with our day and took a very sleek ASK-21 for a ride. It was very enjoyable and those bubbly cumulus lived up to their promise. For two splendid hours, we played in the sun and shadows, hopping from one promising thermal to the next. I came down happy with my lot, and we returned to the clubhouse to cool off and have lunch. Paul proposed that after a rest, we might have a flight in GAWK, which was not at all an unwelcome suggestion.

Watching the gliders taking off and landing, I noted that GAWK was out on the line now, and getting ready for launch.

Paul took me to introduce the pilot and owner, David Bax, being a friend of his – and to let me get a closer look. I watched with skepticism at just how this plane would fly as the ground crew completed the hook-up and the towplane took up the slack. To my utter amazement, it was off the ground within 50 feet of the launch point, floating effortlessly behind the towplane.

When our turn came up, I'll admit I had trepidation. There is something about a canopy that gives a sense of protection. As I was putting on the harness, I became very aware that these four straps and buckle were all that would be keeping



me from falling out. I'd already surrendered my hat and had tied my glasses on with a bit of blue yarn that we'd found.

I scanned the panel in front of me. It had only three instruments, an altimeter, an airspeed indicator, and an unusual-looking variometer* that consisted of two vertical tubes, each with a tiny plastic ball – a red ball on the left and a green on the right. That's it. No yaw string. When I asked how we could tell if we were slipping or skidding, Paul laughed and said I'd understand once we were airborne. Then we joked that the blue string tying my glasses could be our yaw string and decided to call it a GAWK string.

With the preflight checks done, David came by and loaned me a green flying helmet. It looked like a bathing cap with side flaps. Putting it on, I felt like an alien insect in a science fiction movie.

Before I knew it, the towplane had rolled in front and we were ready for lift off. I held my breath. Within seconds we were off. Not just off, but buoyant, like a helium balloon! I felt the wind blowing at my face and the world slide away underneath, and all I could do was smile a huge stupid gawking smile. The tow had a heady crazy feeling to it. The side-by-side seating made it seem as if we were in a sleigh being pulled by a flying reindeer; although this reindeer had a prop and was making a lot of noise, the sound of the engine being so much more pronounced without a canopy barrier. I was grateful for the alien insect helmet. Without it, my glasses would have surely been ripped off.

Before long, we were at 2000 feet and it was time to release. And then we were floating silently through the sky. Our speed was a gentle thirty knots. The vario had no audio feature. It worked like this: when we were in lift, the little green ball would rise in its tube, when we were in sink, the red ball would rise (see note below). Simple. No beeping or chirping. No annoying whine when we were in sink. The only sound was the croon of the wind, the towplane waning into the distance, and shouts of joy popping spontaneously from my mouth.

Almost immediately we found lift and began circling and Paul handed the controls to me. The ailerons were heavy and I could feel the weight of the wing with each motion. I was

* Note from Tony: This is the Cosim vario, invented in the UK in 1936, the first practical and popular rate of climb indicator. The vario consists of two small gas flow meters cross-coupled such that each one indicates one direction of air flow (up or down). These flowmeters have a tapered bore glass tube with a lightweight ball or plastic plug that just fits into the bottom of the tube. When gas starts to flow, the pressure builds up and lifts the ball, the height proportional to the flow rate.

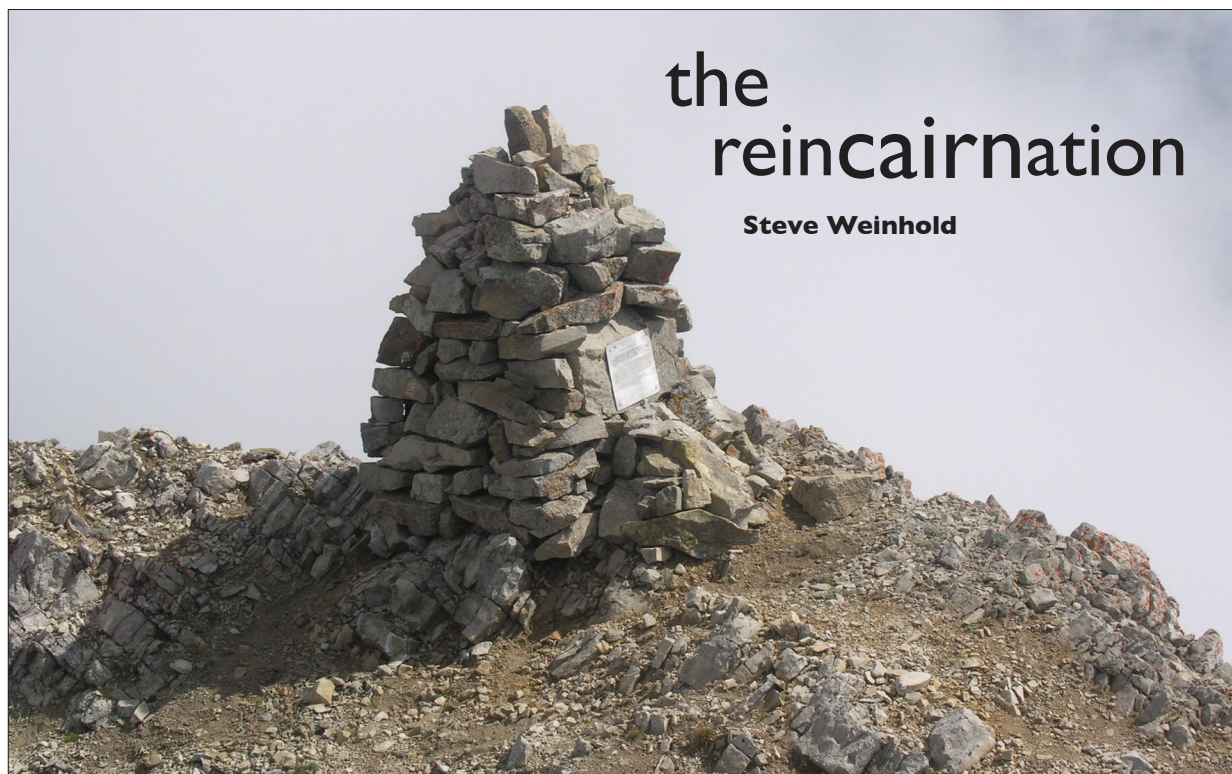


expecting a struggle to maintain the turn and airspeed, but it was remarkably smooth and easy. But it took strength, and before long, I needed both hands. We were turning so slowly that it seemed easy to centre the thermal, and the little green ball floating in its tube agreed. Paul pointed out the inside wing, and to my surprise, it was moving backwards! I began to understand too, why there was no need for a yaw string. When I slipped or skidded, I could feel the wind prodding me from one side or the other, reminding me to make a correction. In fact, at 2000 feet, the wind felt pleasantly cool and fresh. Rising higher though, there was a distinct cooling, and by 3000 feet, it became quite chilly. By 4500, we were distinctly cold.

We wove lazily between thermals, at times descending to get warm, and then rising again. We took turns at the controls and snapping photographs, the grin plastered on my face like the one I had the very first time I'd flown. The air had lost its feistiness from earlier in the day, and the lift was gentle. Circling in it was dancing a slow waltz. The turning world below was a late-summer patchwork of green, gold and bronze, glowing serenely in the evening sun. A few lakes glistened blue in the distance. To the west, sunlight streamed like a curtain through the remaining cu, outlining their edges in silver, and giving the sky an ethereal effect. I had heaven at my fingertips; I reached out my hand and touched the sky.

We stayed close to the airfield, noting the towplane and other gliders were taking off and landing. Feeling slightly numb with the cold, we finally decided to turn back to land, making lazy S-turns to descend. We followed an orange Schweizer 2-33 through the circuit, like a big fish following in the wake of a little fish. On our downwind leg, I handed the controls back to Paul. I felt trepidation again, wondering how this flying boat would flare. Something about its ungainly shape and heavy controls brought an image to mind of a solid crate coming down with a hard thump. But it settled down as gracefully as it had taken off.

The flight was over, but the GAWK-grin remains on my face, even as I write this story. I'll never forget this flight. Thanks so much Paul, David, and York Soaring. It was glorious! □



the reincarnation

Steve Weinhold

Steve Weinhold

EARLY IN 1992 I LEFT CALGARY, relocating in Colorado to pursue a new job opportunity. I didn't know that this would also mark an end to the very active soaring life I had enjoyed for the past twelve years at Cu Nim. It was here that I was introduced to this wondrous sport and be able to serve as both towpilot and gliding instructor. Bonds were not totally severed thanks to the internet and the annual copy of *ASCent* from Tony Burton. The occasional e-mail with fellow "bird brained" individuals kept me apprised of developments at the club like the new clubhouse, which Dave Fowlow showed me one wintry day while I was visiting my brother in Calgary.

And so it was that in 2011 Dick Mamini alerted me to the fact that the cairn on the 8364 foot peak of Centre Peak was showing signs of age and had fallen into a state of disrepair. This news, together with a general feeling of "home sickness" compelled me to take a vacation and return to the Cowley summer camp 2012, accompanied by my brother. I considered the practicality of perhaps making repairs to the cairn. (For the full history of the cairn, go to Ursula Wiese's excellent *Stalking the Mountain Wave*. It is online at www.soaring.ab.ca/Stalking%20the%20Mountain%20Wave.pdf).

On arriving at the camp, it was very evident that twenty years results in many changes, and yet there were also some similarities... a few familiar faces and of course, the steadfast scenery and ambiance which is Cowley's essence. How can

one not marvel at the power of a late afternoon thunderstorm followed by a magnificent rainbow over the Porkies unless, of course, one is scrambling to derig to escape the ravages of a disgruntled Mother Nature!

Twenty years indeed. Centre Peak access from the west, which had been used in previous years, proved to no longer be a viable option. A side effect of oil and gas development in the area resulted in roads with padlocked gates to protect the public from potentially lethal releases of hydrogen sulfide. One could bypass the gates on foot, but the end result was a substantial increase in hiking time to get to the base of the mountain. I had also read a 2010 *ASCent* article by Pablo Wainstein in which a group had scaled the mountain from the east. I pondered my options.

In the fall of 2012 Dick informed me that the Bradley family complied with Barry's wishes and had his ashes scattered over Centre Peak by a helicopter drop. I had not considered this option but it made a lot of sense, given I was no longer the lad I was 24 years ago. And so a plan developed. During an exchange with Dave he said that no matter what the plan, he wanted to participate. I contacted Dick who sent me information on the helicopter company and I made a commitment to return for Cowley Summer camp 2013. Besides, I wanted to introduce Pauline to Cowley as I am sure she was wondering just what it was about this place that held such a special allure for me.

Late July we left home on a Thursday with our dog Boomer to arrive at Pincher Creek a day later in the midst of a heat wave. After stocking up with provisions and plenty of ice, we got to the campground at 7:35 pm to discover we were the first and only ones there – but seeing the tied down trailer for E2 as well as Tony's tent I knew this must be the opening weekend. On Saturday afternoon PCK arrived indicating the Summer camp was now officially open for business.

Dave had committed to taking time out of his hectic work schedule to come to Cowley so I scheduled a heli drop for that day given agreeable weather. We were very fortunate in obtaining the same pilot that took the Bradley family to the top last year to scatter Barry's ashes. I would discover over the next few days why Stan was such an outstanding pilot. His previous career before joining Bighorn Helicopters was with the Canadian Coast Guard on the west coast where he had accumulated in excess of 20,000 hours in rotary wing craft. His finesse at the controls of the Jet Ranger was like watching a hummingbird in slow motion maneuvering from blossom to blossom. Very fluid with an uncanny precision.

Although there had been an early morning thunderstorm in Coleman, I informed Stan that Centre Peak was in the clear and later the hovering Jet Ranger deposited Dave and me on the ridgeline just south of Centre Peak at 10:30 am. Before dropping us off, Stan had suggested that should changing weather preclude recovering us from the mountain top, we should hike down to a gas plant on the west side where helicopter access would be possible.

Indeed, things looked different up here than when I last left. Apart from the partially collapsed cairn, there was a stone plaque which sadly was broken. This plaque had been placed about 12 years ago by members of the Hucik family in memory of their father who had pioneered at the east base of Centre Peak. We set about the task before us, further dismantling some of the stone cairn until it was down to a solid base. Now the reconstruction began, stone by stone, layer by layer. The aluminum plaque was originally riveted to a sizeable stone, which now lay at the base of the cairn. It required both of us to lift this back into place on the south face of the cairn. How I was able to do this on my own in 1989? – can it be that time catches all of us!

Within an hour of starting work, mist started to swirl about and we were being enveloped by cloud. I phoned Pauline back at camp who said that skies were clear at Cowley but that Centre Peak was no longer visible. By 1300 our reconstruction work was completed, a few photos taken and decisions needed to be made. The weather had not cleared off nor did it seem prudent to wait in anticipation that it might. The thought of descending the mountain in waning daylight wasn't at all appealing so I texted Stan to inform him that Dave and I were starting the hike down the west side of the mountain. I also called Pauline to let her know our course of

action. A text back from Stan informed us that he was currently on a project in Cranbrook but expected to be back in our area around 4 pm.

My plan hadn't taken into account the possibility of hiking out, so we weren't wearing decent boots. Dave will attest to the fact that running shoes are a very bad choice when negotiating extensive scree slopes, particularly when descending, as often times one becomes a hapless participant in a "scree avalanche". A sprained ankle would have added an entirely new twist to the adventure.

As we descended we found ourselves in a cell phone dead zone where communicating our progress was not possible. By then, Dick arrived at Cowley and Pauline told him what we were doing, so Dick planned to go and collect us from whatever oil field road we would be walking out on.

By the time Dave and I cleared the scree fields my legs were pleading for mercy. I found a couple of dead saplings and converted them into impromptu walking canes – what a relief! We abandoned the idea of going to the gas plant as it would require walking on a very rocky dry stream bed. I elected to head into the forest following a generally westerly direction I used on past trips.

We had now descended to an area where the cell phone worked intermittently and Pauline was able to inform us of Dick's efforts to attempt a retrieve. The snag with this plan was that she was to relay our GPS coordinates to Dick but we were not GPS equipped.

We continued bushwhacking westward through the forest and somewhat to my surprise connected with the seismic line that was the target of our effort. I now was positive of our location and knew that we had a 2–3 hour hike → **p16**



Dick, Pauline, and Steve after their helo tour the day after.

going to the desert

Tony Burton

WHEN I HEARD that a couple of 13.5 metre competitions were scheduled in the States this year, I thought that competing with little gliders would be a welcome change from watching “Sports Class” ASW-25s swoop past me in Ephrata, Washington. I had a choice between one in Kansas and one in New Mexico – you choose the scenery.

The desert it was. Moriarty was holding a combined I-26 single class Nationals and a 13.5m Super-Regional contest – the 13.5m allowing any glider with a 1.11 or lower handicap. I was hoping for other Russias to be on the scene but mine was the only one there. The others, not counting the I-26s, were two Sparrowhawks, a PVV-5, and an electric Silent. Some I-26s competed in both contests and the pilots had to obey two sets of contest rules.

Ursula and I had a leisurely 3-1/2 day, 2460 km drive south, stopping for some must-see spots like the Rio Grande rift valley and Taos. We arrived at Moriarty airport on Saturday 17 August and were surprised to find little activity. I’ve never seen so many glider trailers at a field and so few actual pilots on hand. So we dropped the trailer off on the ramp and got our housekeeping in order.

The next day we did some sightseeing in Albuquerque – the natural science museum, the olde town, but especially nearby Sandia Peak (10,300 feet) via a long, high aerial tramway, followed by hiking with a view. Moriarty is at 6200 feet and the most striking feature of the area is the BIG sky full of BIG cu over the high ground. There are many small volcanic





cones in the area, which is a geologically active rift, and Albuquerque is splitting apart, albeit leisurely.

20 August The first practice day barely got me over 10,000 in scrappy lift, but it was good for an orientation flight to see what things looked like from the air. The contest area is the broad N-S Estancia valley that is mostly barren high desert with spiny shrubbery and cactii except for scattered irrigation circles and the odd ranch (some with airstrips). To the west 30 km is the broken string of 8-10,000 foot Sandia and Manzano mountains. To the east 20 km are low bare hills (7-8000 feet) that rise to the start of the 12,000 foot Sangre de Cristo mountain range to the north. To the south these hills flatten out to a desert plain (again with only the odd ranch and scattered oil wellheads).

The runway at Moriarty is 7700 feet and E-W with a taxiway which is also used for landing in a pinch. The launch area is a wide ramp between the two about in the middle. This allows landings of towplanes and relighting gliders to roll right up to the grid. There is also a recently built long N-S runway attached to the east end of 08/26, but it is a looong walk if you landed there. The wind was always southerly 10+ knots, so a lot of crosswind landings were made.

21 August This last practice day still did not have good lift over the valley. A lot of the cu were disorganized and turbulent and getting a climb all the way around uncertain. I took a long time to get to start height. After that a good line of cu developed over the high ground to the west and bases went to 14,000 and a bit. The task was a 2 hour MAT. A MAT task has you going to mandatory turnpoints, followed by your own extra ones for more distance if desired, while flying at least a minimum time. The turnpoints have a one mile radius entry ring.

The cockpit is an oven when low. Drinking is not optional – it's the law! – if you feel thirsty, it's too late and you won't get caught up. Once under the clouds to the west, it was much better and cooler – although 14,000 is still at the low end of normal here.

A lot of jet traffic is right overhead the airport descending west into Albuquerque. I saw one a thousand above and ahead of me and skimming through the cloud just above cloudbase on one of my legs.

Photo left: Several days had northerly TPs near the south end of the Sangre de Cristo Mts on the horizon hidden in overdevelopment and showers. But remember the big circles that the TPs have which give you a lot of choice to select the best route into the area and how far you wanted to go. The photo was taken about 30 km NE of Moriarty looking NNE. The position here is at the eastern edge of the main valley on the edge of much rougher unlandable ground. Although showers have started, the lift under the cu deck was just great.

The combined fleet have the same tasking but are being scored separately. My main competition (I thought) were the two cute little eleven metre span Sparrowhawks (we have only a point difference on the handicap), the PW-5, and the Silent. Many of the I-26s have colourful paint jobs (ex. a feather motif on the wings). It sure makes them easier to see. They have a trophy, the *Spiffy Award*, for the best looking one at their Nationals. The I-26 Association is notable for the long list of often comical awards they present – a very strong community spirit exists in the group.

Rolf Siebert, a past Cu Nim member now in Mexico who knows Moriarty well, e-mailed me saying, "I've been looking at the flights out of Moriarty and see an awful lot of circling and not a lot of height! Hope the weather improves for you."

22 August – Day 1 A great flight has earned me minus 100 points, not 609 and a fourth place (yes, all my day points plus 100 lost) because I got just over the Albuquerque control zone near Sandia Peak on a north to south run down the mountains. I was above the ceiling of the zone so I didn't break FAA rules, but I broke the Regional contest rules that has the zone cylinder extending to outer space. In a I-26 I would have been okay as their contest rules allow it. My fault – I didn't pay attention – but it was so nice to be bombing along near 15,000 feet under the cloud street. Sigh – not a good start.

The task was a 3 hour, 3TP AAT (Assigned Area Task), with the turnpoints having a 25 or 23 mile radii. These big circles turned out to be really necessary because the turn points were out in the valley where the sky was completely blue and the lift poor to none. One can fly into any part of the circle to be credited with the TP. The trick is to fly as far into the circle as you can given the conditions before turning on the next leg to get as much distance and airtime as possible. Otherwise you could be stuck with having no choice but fly only a short distance into the last ring if lift is poor there and finish under the minimum time. Doing that reduces your posted speed because you are given the minimum time in the scoring calculation. Anyway, those big rings allowed us to do most of the task staying to the west over the high ground where the cumulus cooked.

The final leg back towards the field was still intended to just nip into the last TP ring about 10 km south of Moriarty. But I lost a lot of height in sink going east into the valley and was forced to head right for the airfield. Luckily I found a weak thermal at 1500 agl near the field and spent 15 minutes gaining 1500 feet to allow me to fly south into the ring and back out to land. That cost a lot of speed and potential points.

Again, it is so nice to be high here, as a lot of this high desert country is lonely and rough. However, there are lots of areas where the surface is fairly smooth with few plants, not lumpy and full of badger holes like Alberta range land. I-26s do land

on it safely, but the Russia would likely suffer with its higher landing speed and less robust structure. Thankfully, there are several airports and ranch strips as TPs and, when high above ground, a glide can get you a long way.

23 August – Day 2 Today, the task committee was going to send us east then north on another 3TP MAT but by the time we were lined up for launch, there was a lot of overdevelopment building to the south and upwind. The usual pre-start delays only got half the pilots in the air before the increasing ugliness aloft resulted in a “contest cancelled” call from the ground. So I got a tow, a climb in one thermal to 10,700 (6500 agl), and back to land. It did give Ursula and me a chance to do a bit more sightseeing on Sandia Peak after driving up to the top from the east ski-run side.

24 Aug – Day 2 again The morning forecast wasn't promising with overdevelopment and showers predicted by noon. Also the high was only 81F – almost parka-wearing time for the locals – worse, the cloudbase was to be barely 10,000. More of the same is forecast for tomorrow. There was little enthusiasm to grid but we all did, after which the morning sky didn't look ominous at all. A 2 hour 3TP AAT task was set on the grid with the first TP having a big 25 mile ring and the last two TPs fairly close to home for the I-26s. We launched and the start time was finally announced for 1330. I got going asap with climbs to 12,000 feet going northeast into the first ring.

Quickly though, the overdevelopment got going also. I soon had the first showers and shadow filling in ahead and had to turn back sooner than I had hoped. Every time I turned the shadow got closer, so I stopped turning. That was the situation for all of us, with either shadow or shower driving where you could fly as the day got darker and darker. There was enough sunny ground to get my flight in. I came home 9-1/2 minutes early – and I won the day with 892 points!

The window for actual flight during a day is somewhat short. The grid time is noon, the task is handed out at 1210, first launch (hopefully) at 1230 – last about 1315, and start about 1330. Some days the start has been after two. Typically, the day begins dying at 5-6 pm. This is partly due to being two months past the solstice and to our position in the time zone – Moriarty is six degrees further east than Calgary and still on MDT – that's 24 minutes of sun time. The other reason is that the desert radiates heat faster so cools quicker as the sun angle drops. The locals warned us of the potential for serious hypothermia at night if you are lightly dressed while waiting for your crew in the dark.

Ursula: Most crew (wives or good friends) try to enjoy the shade near the briefing shed; out come tablets, microcomputers and the like, and the general conversation is also about flying and some interesting retrieves. Most stories go at least 30 years back, the times before technology – and they all thought that they were better times



then, no motorhomes anywhere; it's like yesteryear when friends would gather together more in common interest. Also, the dreaded anticipated heat has not materialized – another 10% less humidity than back home makes a difference too.

My greatest mentor is Joan Moos who wrote her book of poetry, “To Soar – Life is an Attitude”. Joan is in her eighties crewing for husband Milt. So we reminisce about other achievements and find just about everything of equal interest. Her parents came from Germany too. It's like talking with an old friend where I can fill in some blanks.

Bob Whelan of “Exploring the Monster” fame (his book on the Sierra Wave) and I sat on a tailgate until the start gate opening, reminiscing on our most interesting flights and retrieves, watching the activity and wonder why some of the poor ground operations we are seeing like vehicles on active taxiways are “not seen”. Oh well, a crew's observation is probably not well received, but it could be better for all. Sometimes I think, NOT seeing is a calmer life.

25 Aug – Day 3 is done. The weather, lift and cloudbase were much like yesterday, the difference being the air is starting to dry out. That gave another 1000 feet of base to 13,000 and much less rain coming out of the big cu. The wetter airmass we had been in stayed just to the west and the difference was very evident with massive cu and then solid rain underneath by grid time. It was a slowish Day 3 for me but I did come in fourth with 791 points.

It was a much less stressful day. The task was a 2-1/2 hour, 3TP AAT, generally giving us a N-S flight track over the hills to the east. I had trouble connecting good thermals on the short first leg going east and the early part of the second northerly leg, then got going under fine thick streets. Turning around and flying south into a 15+ knot headwind I was still able to average 75 km/h ground speed. I went as far south into the last ring as I could until I was at 12,500 and about 45 km from the finish with 14 minutes to go. Stick forward – I flew back in the yellow airspeed arc (OLC gave me 194 kph!) and finished 50 seconds over the minimum.

The amazing flight was by the day winner, François Pin, who flew his Silent around the task at 127.6 km/h, barely turning



the whole way and was over 16 km/h faster than the second place pilot who did “only” 111.7 km/h. A 127 point spread in the scores of the top two finishers is very rare.

Halfway into the flight I decided to use some O₂ and discovered the bottle was empty – there is a big leak somewhere as it was at 1200 psi when I took off. I suspect the regulator – if it is, a pilot here has a backup EDS system to lend me.

(Awake at 4 am in bed that night I solved the problem – I hadn’t turned on the oxygen! The pressure drop that so focused my attention was just the residual air in the plumbing leaking out after checking the pressure in the morning. The thing is, I had intentionally left the O₂ off with the plan to turn it back on in flight if the actual heights called for it that day. That was a ‘change of routine’ that is always dangerous. Why do you suppose I might have forgotten to actually do what I had planned to do after flying for over an hour at 12,000 feet? As the famous Belgian detective Hercule Poirot says, “Ahh, but the little grey cells, they are sleeping.”)

Day 4 Today the weather was a bit less favourable than yesterday, same 82F and 13,000 cloudbase, but the air mass was more humid with poorer visibility. This is not what I came to New Mexico for! As a result, many clouds were ratty and promised much less than they advertised. The task was a shorter 2 hour 2TP north-south AAT with big 25 mile circles to allow pilots to avoid potential overdeveloped areas. Some streeting did get organized during the task which did help on the last two legs. However, I was turning in junk way too much trying to find the good bits, and it was reflected in an eighth place score of 575 points.

I dropped to last place overall – that’s a humbling experience after a day win – I don’t recall ever being in the cellar in the many contests I have flown.

I am finding that the relatively low agl flying and the poor landout terrain is hampering my style and tactical competitive flying. The retrieve stories here are quite interesting – lots of dirt roads going nowhere, branching off others, and it’s getting dark at 8 pm and black out there in the desert night. I don’t want to inflict “interesting” on my lovely crew and have a repeat of the all-night retrieve tale with tarantulas and poisonous “wiggly sticks” that Sonia Hildesheim wrote about in *Free Flight*. So I’ll do the best I can while staying conservative (I’m being beaten by some of the I-26 pilots, even in the raw, unhandicapped speed). Later, when I was describing to my next door neighbour how a gliding competition works, he said, “... and you do this for fun, right?”

Day 5 It was a nice day today – better visibility, drier air has eliminated the overdevelopment, and bases went up another 1000 ft to 14,000. A 3 hour, 3TP AAT task was set, again a short leg to the east then north and south, much like on Day 3. I’m still way too slow at 54.6 mi/h over 163 miles (the second place finisher, a PW-5, did 68 mi/h over 234

miles). I got 731 points for sixth, and lifted myself off the bottom to eighth place overall.

Day 6 Today it was uncertain if a task would be called. There was the usual great line of cumulus over the mountains to the west but a late start to convection overhead and a visible and approached deck of cirrus coming from the south. Finally the alternate B task was called on the grid, a 2 hour, 2TP AAT with the first TP southwest over to the good stuff and the second TP southeast back over the valley.

I got a really good start height of 13,000 and headed off as soon as the gate opened as the cirrus was now very thick and getting closer. Once under the cloud street over the mountains there was a wonderful twenty minutes of zooming south towards the TP ring right at cloudbase. When it ended, the only choice was to turn east into a dying sky. I had to move a bit north to stay close to the edge of the sunlit ground but there was not much worth trying a turn in, and when I did it was a waste of time and altitude.

It was only an hour into the flight by now and the only sunshine to be had after going 35 km into the middle of the valley was by flying almost directly back to the field. About 13 km later and only 10 km from Moriarty, I finally got some weak lift to 10,000 feet and stopped giving up on the day as some new little cu were making an appearance to the east but still north of the second turnpoint ring. The ring was 24 mile (38.6 km) in radius. Although my flight recorder showed the distance to the ring slowly decreasing, I kept losing height overall going east, and when I got to 46 km I had to turn home or risk a landout if I didn’t connect the next lift. So I missed completing the task by that eight kilometres – frustrating.

As soon as I landed at about 4 pm and got tied down, a lady drove up in a van and asked if I would help retrieve her I-26 pilot who landed in a difficult place in the hilly country near the first TP. Ten people in three cars eventually found him and we got back to the motel after 9 pm (dinner included for the whole troupe). Those I-26s can drop into almost any clearing! It was a very interesting retrieve, the pilot said it was his second-most interesting in his career – better Ursula and I did it for him rather than for me. My distance-only score was only 275 points of 788 and gave me eighth place.

Day 7 The forecast was like yesterday but with only a 10,000 cloudbase – the top of Sandia Peak was hidden – not so good. The I-26 contest’s last day was today so a task was set for them; it’s a bit of a bummer and damps the enthusiasm for a wind-up banquet when there is a no-contest on the last day. We had one more day to go in 13.5m and the weatherman thought the conditions would be better tomorrow, so the task committee gave us a rest day which was much appreciated but I wonder how those 80 year old pilots can fly 3-5 hours/day for nine days without a rest.

Ursula and I drove an hour north to Madrid, a small once coal mining town turned ghost town then rehabilitated as a craft centre. The drive was very scenic with impressive views of the desert valley we had been flying over.

Remember I mentioned the dangers of breaking one's routine when flying? Well, because I wasn't flying, I *did* break my routine and drank little that morning and early afternoon. While in Madrid, I suddenly felt very dizzy and realized I was probably very dehydrated. We walked into the nearest tavern; I said I was in trouble, and got attention immediately from a waitress. I sat down and drank over 36 ounces of water and iced tea, and felt much better in about fifteen minutes. They don't kid around down here when they say dehydration will quickly sneak upon you in hot, dry desert air.

Day 7 again and the last, Aug 30 The morning forecast was the best we've seen – hotter at 86F, with 14-15,000 cloudbases, clear air, strong lift, chance of overdevelopment over the hills as usual, but tending to blue over the valley. There were only eight remaining for the 13.5m contest. At the same time, there was also a special first-time minicontest just for all the 1-26 pilots who had been past 1-26 contest

champions. They were given a free tow as part of that festivity (the tows were \$55). The trophy was a gorgeous one-off sculpture of an eagle. Five pilots flew and all landed out, the winner just short of the airport but within a mile of the finish point so he got full points and the eagle.

Today's task was a 3 hour MAT with four mandatory TPs to reach, first north then south and return. It was a struggle for the 1-26 pilots because of some long blue holes that had to be crossed. I started at 1:45 and finished in 3:02 hours. I was fourth for the day with 892 points. Was it ever comforting to be at 14,200 feet (8000 agl) when faced with a 25 km hole to cross and arrive under the cu at a decent height. I finished sixth overall with 4103 points against the winner's 6109. I had 31 hours of flight time and 1660 total kilometres.

The people were wonderfully friendly, and I finally met face-to-face a few pilots that I had only e-mailed with before as editor. (In some contests, pilots tend to fly then disappear with their crew.) The 1-26 pilots are a very convivial bunch. Flying in Moriarty was quite an experience, but on the whole I'd rather be in Ephrata. It was 89F (32C) when we got home – the hottest day of the trip! □

the reincarnation

from page 11

at most to get to Highway 3. Shortly after 4 pm the sound of a distant helicopter caught our attention. It flew up another valley and eventually out of earshot. The appearance of the helicopter prompted me to text Stan, leaving a message that although we were down off the mountain we would still take him up on his offer for a retrieve should he be available. Thus began a humorous exchange of texts:

- 5:12 Stan Looking for you but cannot see you.
 5:19 Steve We are on a road in the valley west of the gas plant; have seen a Jet Ranger.
 5:23 Stan That is me looking for you.
 5:28 Steve Please call us on 123.40 and we will guide you to us. (I had my handheld in the event some gliders might overfly Centre Peak.)

So we finally got picked up. The next cell phone exchange was not quite as humorous. We had just landed at the helipad when I got a call. Assuming it would be Dick I answered "Hi Dick", but the response was, "No, this is Jim from Search & Rescue". Oh no!, emergency response had been called out and I would be digging deep into my wallet. I was relieved when Jim then turned the phone over to Dick and I got the rest of the story. Assuming that Dave and I might be hiking all the way to Highway 3, I had told Pauline that we would be arriving in Bellevue, but I really meant Blairmore. And so it happened that Dick stopped in Bellevue to seek advice regarding any oilfield road north of town. The annual street fair was in progress and SAR were manning the barbecue grill. Dick happened to catch the SAR chief who in turn offered to try my cell phone in case it was in range.

Back at Cowley I did my best to make amends with Pauline and downplay any potential hazard in the afternoon's activities. Dave had to make his way back to Calgary. After reliving the day's events, Dick also left for home in Coleman. That night I was awakened by a knock on the motorhome door, and it was Dick. Heavy rain in the Crowsnest Pass had resulted in a multi-car pileup and the highway would be closed all night and he was cut off from home. All in all, this had been a particularly stimulating day for all involved!

As the long weekend approached it occurred to me that it would be a nice gesture to take Pauline up to the cairn to help her understand its significance to me. Because of Dick's rescue efforts I would also extend an invitation to him. So on Sunday Stan took the three of us on a scenic tour starting with an aerial view of the Cowley airstrip, followed by an up-close and personal view of both Centre Peak and Crowsnest Mountain. We saw mountain sheep on Centre Peak and a mountain goat on Crowsnest Mountain. For Pauline it was a first ever helicopter ride which has left an indelible impression on her. Dick expressed amazement at how an aircraft could fly so slowly and not stall. He was constantly pushing forward on an imaginary control stick as we slowly ascended the west flank of Crowsnest Mountain! □

I'm dedicating this story to Dick, who suffered a serious fall not long after this August weekend while out for a walk in the woods. His dog Cooper played a significant role in helping Search & Rescue find Dick, who had activated his SPOT locator. He is currently undergoing physical therapy following several weeks in an ICU in Calgary. We trust we will see him at Cowley in 2014.

How I spent my summer vacation

by Ethan Brown

I AM GOING INTO GRADE 9 THIS FALL and I am pretty sure that my English teacher is going to make this the first assignment. If the topic is not about my summer vacation then it will be one of those; “Tell me about yourself so that I can understand you better” kind of assignments. Really!! Every kid in this class went camping, went to the lake, or took a long trip to visit some relative. Gag! If I was an English teacher I would NOT want to read sixty essays that were all the same. And that red pen! What is with the red pen? Does every English teacher in the entire universe use a red pen?

If I was an English Teacher (ET) I would want to read about some nerd who spent the summer working on alternative energy sources, then improving the efficiency of batteries by .03%. No, scratch that – too much data and not enough action. Maybe I would want to read about some ultra-humanitarian who used her allowance as seed money and started an internet Save-the-World fund. Yawn. Noble, but I think it has already been done. Then again, maybe the ET would be interested in an ordinary kid doing something he has always done which turned out to be something out of the ordinary for the others in my class.

For as long as I can remember, my dad and I have been going out to one of the local airports a couple of times during the week, all day Saturday and sometimes Sunday. My dad flies and most of his friends fly. I have spent hundreds of hours in an airplane and I have spent even more time helping out at the gliding field and around the other airports.

Maybe for some kids this would be an extraordinary experience, but for the kids in our gliding club, CAGC, camping at the airport is what we do. The adults sit around the fire and tell the same old stories, over and over and over. They love it when a guest shows up because they can tell the same stories AGAIN. We even have our birthday parties there.

When we were younger we would light a huge fire in the fire pit and then when it got really dark, we would grab our flashlights and Leo would take us “hunting”. We went hunting for coyotes, bears, and probably even alligators. It turns out that Leo was not much of a hunter because one time we actually found a pair of eyes staring at us in the darkness and he trampled one of the kids on his way back to the campers.

So when I told club members that I would like to solo on my 14th birthday, they didn’t question it, they just said they’d

make it happen. So I guess it was not really a big deal – it was part of what we were all doing every weekend anyway.

I kind of always knew that you could solo a glider at 14 but I never really thought that a power plane could be soloed at 14 too. Most people seemed to think that you had to be 16. Turns out they were wrong. I would be turning 14 on August 11, so during the winter my mom signed me up for power ground school. Two nights a week and all day Saturday for three weeks.

My dad drove me to the airport and sat through the classes with me but he didn’t say very much in class and he did not



do any of the work for me. It kind of bugged me but I understand now that I needed to learn the material and that when I am in the plane by myself I have to know what I am doing. While I was in ground school, I also passed my radio licence. I thought that it would be more difficult but it was actually pretty simple. I think being around airplanes and pilots so much helped me out.

To fly a power plane solo I needed to pass an exam called a PSTAR. For those who do not know, the PSTAR is fifty multiple choice questions and you have to get at least 90% to pass. I took my *From The Ground Up* book to school and read through it during free reading time. The exam was much tougher than I expected but I eventually passed it.

I am not really sure when I started to get serious about flight training in a glider but once I told dad that I wanted to solo at 14, he stopped flying with me. Dad is an instructor but he thought it would be better if the other instructors flew with me. They all have different styles and they each had different things they seemed to focus on, but eventually I figured out what each one would be looking for.

After we landed and the glider was being towed back they would talk, and talk, and talk, and sometimes even wave their hands in the air to emphasize a point. The first time the instructor sat in the golf cart and I walked the wing by myself was interesting. I thought that meant I had flown pretty well. My dad said I had screwed up so bad the instructor didn't know what to say. I hope my dad was joking.

The powered flying was a little more complicated. I wanted to solo in a taildragger. My dad owns a Piper Cub and he has a share in a Citabria with some other people in the gliding club. We even have a class 1 aerobatic instructor with thousands of hours of experience who is on the Citabria insurance. It turns out that insurance companies do not like to insure ab initio pilots in taildraggers. I was disappointed when dad said he would pay for my lessons in a Cessna 172. A 172? Everyone learns to fly in a 172. I wanted to be different. My new plan is to get my recreational licence at 16 and fly the Cub until I am 17. At that point I hope to have 100 hours of Pilot-in-Command (PiC) time and then I can start towing for the club.

Once July arrived, I started power flight training at the Red Deer airport. I flew every chance I could but it was a problem sometimes because of weather, mechanical breakdowns, and instructor availability. I could have flown more if I didn't care which instructor I flew with but my dad figured that would cost more money because the first flights with a different instructor would be "instructor orientation flights". It worked out pretty good because my ground school instructors were also the flight instructors. I got to know them and I liked all of them but I felt a bit better with Marshall so I just flew with him when he was available.

When my birthday finally arrived, Marshall came in on his day off and flew two circuits with me and then I taxied back to the hangar and he got out. I flew one circuit, landed and taxied back. The Air Cadets who were doing their flight training met me with a bucket of water.

My parents then drove me to the Innisfail airport and the gliding club CFI flew with me once and then sent me solo. This time there was no bucket of water or anything. I knew something was up, I just could not figure out what. Later in the day, the Bergfalke was available so the CFI said to take it up again. I found a little bit of lift and managed to stay up for about half an hour. One of the other gliders joined me in a thermal and then I left to go try somewhere else. I found out later that the pilot joined me in the thermal because he saw that I was climbing better and he assumed it was the CFI flying. He later joked that it should have been him leading the parade, not the other way around.

My mom brought out food and a birthday cake. While we were getting ready for supper I kept running into people who were carrying buckets of water. They all had some lame story about why they needed the water. I knew something was about to happen when the people sitting beside me began to move away. Drew came around one of the campers with a bucket and he was on the other side of the picnic table carrying the bucket down low so that I would not notice. It was totally obvious. What was not so obvious was Carol – she had a bucket of water and she was behind me ...

As I write this article in September, I have not flown the 172 again. Once gliding is finished for the season, I will have lots of time over the winter to fly it. I fly gliders every chance I get. Every weekend I have at least one check flight but then I can fly on my own after that. I have even taken my dad up for a couple of flights.

Since Canada is one of the few places in the world where you can solo at 14, I guess I can say that for a few days at least, I was the youngest pilot in the world. It is pretty sweet that I was able to solo both a glider and a power plane on the same day, for sure that's not commonly done. When I'm as old as my mom and dad and sitting around the campfire, I can talk about the time I was the youngest pilot in the world and maybe the kids then will be impressed – but I doubt it.

Everyone who reads my story needs to understand this: (1) I grew up in this environment. Some people ride horses, some race cars; we fly airplanes. I have been doing this all my life and was lucky enough to be born into an aviation family. (2) I'm surrounded every day by flying people and not one of them said that I could not do it – instead they encouraged me and they supported my goal. (3) The flight training process is so thorough that you just do what you are trained to do. (4) I am just an average guy who is surrounded by people who have allowed my dream to be real. □

Junior Camp

refocusing on the basics

Jason Acker & John Broomhall

THE EDMONTON SOARING CLUB held its third annual Junior Camp from Aug 23-30 at Chipman this year with a renewed focus on expanding the soaring and pilot decision making competencies in young pilots. We offered our first Junior Camp in 2011 with much success and have continued with our club's commitment to attract, develop and retain youth in our sport.

The camp this year was scaled back a bit as past experience showed that a shorter camp with fewer participants was probably a better approach. The dynamics of a larger group – cliques forming, helicopter parents, difficulties with proper supervision – led to various issues that we felt would be less of a problem with a smaller group and a more concise program. We set the course to be only seven days (down from ten last year) and a maximum of seven participants. We ran this year's camp with only five participants; two returning from last year and three recent graduates (licensed) from the Air Cadet Regional Glider School (RGS) in Gimli. The rules of conduct and discipline were in our registration package to ensure that our expectations were clear from the start.

This year the focus was on pilot decision-making, and we patterned a program along the lines of the closely-scripted course delivered at the RGS. Each training flight had a goal and the techniques to be used to achieve the goal; these were documented for our instructors for consistency of delivery. We planned on two training flights per participant per day, and took them through the same program, albeit much abbreviated, that we teach to all of the students at our club. The cadets quickly transitioned from the familiar 2-33A to the different club gliders during their initial flights, before we started to focus on pilot decision-making.

The Air Cadet RGS program leaves little to chance. With a large number of students to get through, many of the freedoms and opportunities for individualism and the associated decision-making are lost in their closely-scripted training flights. Even the twenty solo flights they need before licence are well defined as to where they must fly, at what altitude, and for how long. This is all closely monitored from the ground so they do not stray from the plan.

As we worked through our curriculum, and touching on most areas of training per SAC, we arranged to get them low in different quadrants around the airport so to teach them safe ways to plan a landing when a normal circuit was not the best



Junior participants, from left: Tegen Dunnill-Jones, Dylan McKenzie, Joshua Hubbs, Ean Ferre, Matthew Pletts, towpilot Bob Hagen. Instructors (kneeling from left): Guy Blood, Chris Gough, John Broomhall. Missing instructors are Jason Acker, Trevor Finney, Gary Hill, Wayne Watts.

alternative. Right hand circuits, straight in to base, or final approaches were practised using the SOAR mnemonic. We spent more time dealing with spin avoidance, demonstrating the ways that a spin can develop, and spin recovery using the Blanik L-23 that handles quite differently from the cadet 2-33s.

We would interrupt any training flight to teach our thermaling unit as the opportunities arose. With the local hay crops cut and baled, we were able to give all the participants an actual off-field landing. The instructors mapped out potential landing paths between the bales, and then took the juniors through the process of choosing a field, and setting up for a circuit and landing.

By day five of the camp, we had completed the initial training program, and then moved on to pre-solo checks on the L-23s. At this point, the camp went into a less structured mode as we tailored training towards individual interests and needs. All the participants soloed in the L-23, and some moved on to solo the Puchacz and the PW-5.

Feedback from the participants, particularly those who were returning from last year, was that the added structure of the camp was very much appreciated. The consistency of lesson delivery between instructors was beneficial for the students and helped develop their competencies in thermaling and pilot decision-making.

Over the course of the week, the cadets flew 93 flights and accumulated nearly 30 hours in the various club gliders. With only one weather day, we were able to achieve all of the goals we set out for the camp. We look forward to running the junior camp next year and would be interested in talking with the other Alberta clubs interested in offering their own program or partnering with us. Coaching and mentoring new members to our sport, particularly the youth, is essential in keeping our clubs vibrant and financially viable. □



Cu Nim

FIVE YEARS OF INVOLVEMENT in gliding and three years as the club's president has led me to an interesting conclusion about the dichotomy of how gliding clubs are managed. While flying, regardless if it is around the club, on a cross-country flight, or climbing for a Diamond, we are constantly evaluating our situation, thinking how to improve our flying and make the appropriate corrections, especially while landing. Not thinking is going backwards. So, why on Earth, if our sport and the required actions are this dynamic, is club management in general so reticent to change?

Often it seems as if all the dynamism of our flying stays up there and doesn't permeate down to our actions within gliding clubs. This is exactly the lethargy we wanted to move away from at Cu Nim. In one word... make the club *dynamic*. Society changes day by day and we are used to quick responses, products delivered right away, and complete satisfaction. Is this one of the reasons why gliding has decreasing numbers worldwide? I am not entirely sure, but the realization of the need to be dynamic is making Cu Nim grow.

In a matter of four years we have acquired two new double seaters, an ASK-21 and a DG-1000S. They are surely not cheap but they are a delight to fly. We are paying for them with a combination of bank and members loans. One source of income is introductory flights, but also the increase in happy members. Don't be afraid to renew the fleet – it brings more members and refloats club morale. That smile that pilots have after a nice flight in the DG takes days to erase from their faces. Trust me, I still have mine. All in all, the club is paying off debt fairly fast and we should be debt free again in four to five years if all goes well.

Currently we are in the process of selecting a newer single seater to promote more cross-country flying by our licensed pilots. Interesting enough, the renewal of the fleet has changed the orientation of the club. Years ago, when gliders like the 2-22 were the trainers, after licensing the only option was to get a private glider in order to continue improv-

ing your flying. Not anymore at Cu Nim. It is true that waiting time is always an issue, but boy, is it ever worth the wait to fly the DG or the K-21. Instructing in these is definitely more pleasant for our instructors who devote so much of their time to the club. Costs are shared within the membership and it gives access to very nice equipment. One drawback of renewing the fleet is that the new glass ships are heavier. We have three main options to consider: a longer runway, paving the runway, or getting a better towplane more suitable for the situation. Yup, we are looking at the least expensive option... number three.

Several activities and events made the season much fun. We participated in *Chics Take Flight*, which was a success thanks to CAGC. Tony Burton had his Russia on display at WestJet Days in Calgary. For the third consecutive year we hosted the RAA fly-in breakfast – each year we get more planes (25 was the count this August) and more pilots interested in getting to know the club, having intro flights, and enjoying a morning with fellow aviators. Beside this, Ted Sorensen gave a week of aerobatics training for Cu Nim instructors. Although it rained 40% of the week, the conclusion that participants had was along the line of 'I thought I had mastered flying... not anymore... there is so much more to learn and improve'. Last but not least, we also held a student week where four students flew every day of the week for three or four flights a day. It made a big difference in their development which resulted in first solos soon after. Thanks to CFI Allan Wood and to Phil Stade for their help and enthusiasm.

Snow was starting to fall while I wrote this column, but we have not stopped working at the club. We have just laid the gravel foundation for a new garage that we plan to build next year and use it for in-house glider repairs and storing equipment. Plans are underway to get new retrieve vehicles and have the annuals of the gliders done during November so we can be flying at the first tint of spring next season. It has been a very good year and I thank the club for giving me the chance to serve as the president. It has been a pleasure. Let's share the sky again next year!

Pablo Wainstein

Central Alberta

Club members met on evenings and weekends during the winter and early spring to continue repairs on the Lark and although great headway was made the repairs were not completed in full. Parts were hard to find and repairs to key components proved to be more difficult than what first appeared. We will continue this winter.

Check-out flights started in early May when weather and ground conditions were finally favourable. Grande Prairie club members travelled down for our first weekend of flying. The winch was used several times this summer and our hope is that we will use it more often in 2014. The longest flight of the year was made by Leo Deschamps on 31 August when he took the Dart up for 3:30 hours. Other multi-hour flights done this year were in the 2-22, Bergfalke, Zephyr, Cirrus, and the 1-26. Several members of the new Lethbridge club visited us on a couple of occasions to gain experience in a 2-22 and to learn about club operations. We came away with a new appreciation of our sport and how valuable and rewarding it is to encourage and support new clubs.

Promotional activities included the *Red Deer Community Services Guide* spring edition and displays at several events in Central Alberta. These were designed to promote CAGC, soaring in Alberta, and enhance public awareness. The *Chics Take Flight* event was hosted on 10 August. Photo shoots were done for the front page of the *Red Deer Living* summer edition and the story within (<http://digital.lovereddeerliving.ca/Summer2013>). The *Innisfail Province* did a story on 6 August (<http://www.innisfailprovince.ca/article/20130806/INN0801/308069976/0/inn>) and Shaw Cable shot a video for their cable news channel program "Go Central". CAGC was also present at the WestJet Days in Calgary, the Airdrie Air Show, and the Rocky Air Show. All great publicity!

Chics Take Flight was a huge success. There were several aircraft on static display including a WWII Stearman from Vintage Wings Canada, three flight simulators, several vendor displays, notable guests for Meet and Greet, sponsored food

services, and donated prizes. Four gliders were available: ESC brought the Puchacz down from Chipman, Cu Nim brought the DG-1000, and CAGC used its 2-22 and Bergfalke. We had two towplanes: the ASC Scout PCK and the privately-owned Citabria LSA.

Thanks to the organized efforts of the flightline team, 44 flights were made, each lasting 15-25 minutes. Each two-seat glider took eleven passengers. Community Sponsorship allowed us to provide flights to five youths at half fare. Thank you to everyone who participated, whether it be for volunteering your time or equipment or coming out to the Big Bend Airport near Innisfail to take a flight.

CAGC welcomed three new students this year: Geoff Beuerlein, Mark Dobroski, and Helge Nome, who all have some power experience. They replace others that have stepped back so our membership count stays the same. Ethan Brown, our youngest member, performed his first solo flight on his 14th birthday on 11 August. Two other members, Mel Walters and Valerie Deschamps, experienced their first landouts. Our last flying day was on 26 October – it was a stable, beautiful fall day and we had a great time just enjoying the view and practising the basics.

As usual, we are looking forward to seeing all our friends from the Canadian soaring community again and seeing what the new year will bring. August 2014 will see the Central Alberta Gliding Club celebrate a milestone, our 25th anniversary.

Val Deschamps

Edmonton

As usual we started the year with an ambitious calendar; and as usual it didn't turn out quite as planned. A big difference from last year was the uncooperative weather, but it was mild compared with the Calgary area. We did hold the three flying weeks, postponing the June meet for a week. In spite of that, the weather was too unstable to go ahead with



Val Gunnlaugson

John Mulder briefs at the "Tim-Bit" ops briefing for some CAGC and LSC members. Left to right are Geoff Beuerlein, Shane Cockriell, Ed Kalau (taking notes), Greg Fleming, John Mulder, Jim Gunnlaugson, and Jake Schaefer.

the Regional Contest. Chris Gough, who represented Canada in the Junior World contest in 2009, joined the club this year – he has chosen commercial flying as a career and was based at Slave Lake. His knowledge of contest organization and contest flying was a huge help in planning the contest even though it didn't happen due to bad weather.

Despite all this, Bruce Friesen put up so many good flights, most in his new-to-him Discus as he describes it. His 27 May flight of 6:20 hours and 546 kilometres was described in the fall issue of *free flight*. He's unstoppable.

Each year we put effort into community relationships. Chipman has been hugely supportive over the years. Each year the town runs a Vintage Car show; entrants come even from other provinces. We sometimes take part in the parade. This year was the Chipman Centenary. We offered reduced cost flights during the event, with an advertisement placed on their schedule handout. Many people came. This year Lammont held a celebration and asked whether we could fly over the town with a glider in tow. This we did, and secured photographs. It seems such a small thing and yet does so much to build relationship with the local communities.

On the negative side a communications tower was built just outside Chipman. By some mix-up we were not told about this until it was too late to make changes – not really anyone's fault but a typical snafu in communication. The hazard is not large because it is far enough away, but it is one added thing to bear in mind when approaching the circuit.

Members went to both Cowley camps. In summer Chris Gough had a great flight spending a fair time west of the Livingstone Range. And at the Fall Cowley, which seems to have been a most successful camp despite its later date, Gary Hill gained his Diamond height. We had one new experience with oxygen use (or unintentional none-use) which should lead to Safety Notices issued by ASC.

We had one accident with damage to our L33. Something I had not thought of, though I should have done. One member, exhilarated in lift, drifted a bit too far south and failed to make it home. He chose his field and flew a good circuit, but touched down in a hay field with a long crop. The crop clutched his wing tip and he groundlooped. All is now repaired, but it reminded us that on the prairies where everywhere is a landing field in spring and fall, many fields may turn hostile in the summertime. Under Bruce Friesen's guidance we shall develop simple charts with circles drawn around Chipman showing the altitude needed for return to the field with due allowance for unanticipated sink. That's especially for those students who need to stay within gliding range of the field.

John Broomhall led the Junior Camp this year with Jason Acker as his number two. Using lessons from last year they

had a smaller group, tightened up discipline (remembering that from a Cadet background pilots are more accepting of discipline than those raised and trained in the egalitarian atmosphere of a gliding club), and kept tighter control of the flightline. Thanks John and Jason. Their report on the camp is in this issue, and it reassures us all that we can continue with this most useful service.

Our long awaited Perkoz two-seater has not yet arrived. We think the lesson is not to buy a sailplane that is not on the register of one's own country, but it should be here before next season so we take heart.

A note about fleet servicing. We have been lucky to have access to space in the Alberta Aviation Museum to do this work under the careful eye of our AME. Now that the City Centre Airport will close within the next few weeks we may need to make other arrangements for next year. I guess the lesson is that one should never get too comfortable. Too many things can change.

In reference to change, with the closure of the airport the classified airspace around Edmonton will change. We expect to have more access to space to the west and northwest and over Elk Island Park. This should help. A few years ago a member was enjoying great thermals. We called him to tell him, "Watch your height". He heard, "What's your height" and told us his altitude and location. He was well into Class C airspace. Mistakes happen.

Sadly, we lost two members this year. Stu McLellan was a power pilot who took up gliding with us a few years ago and then became a towpilot. He was a gentle, optimistic man who was so reliable when he took on a task. And Rick Miller, who took up soaring after many years of hang gliding, had been an MLA and was Chief of Staff for the Liberal Party. He was a kind, clear thinking and helpful man. Both will be much missed. Both Stu and Rick were exactly what the club needed; they came from a new and somewhat younger generation. We have several others like them and expect leadership in the club to come from those people in the years ahead.

For another year, Wayne Watts supervised all training as CFI. We are short of instructors and must find more. Even so, four students were licensed this year. Steve Chirhin is a power pilot and gained his licence all in the one season. Thorsten Duebel, our club secretary, reached licence. His background is in motorcycle racing; we're impressed when he turns up on his scarlet racing bike. Lauren Ryan is our treasurer – she soloed then licensed all in the one year. A very determined Veronika Szadowiak trained, soloed, and passed the flight test all in the year, but must wait for her birthday to get her licence. Something of a record.

It wasn't a bad year after all.

Henry Wyatt

Alberta pilot achievements in 2013

Solo

Ethan Brown (CAGC)
Pilar Cifuentes (Cu Nim)
Erin Doerffer (Cu Nim)
Chester Fitchett (Cu Nim)
Veronika Szadowiak (ESC)

Badges & Badge legs

Daegan Banga (ESC) – C badge, Silver dur.
Gary Hill (ESC) – Diamond altitude
John Gruber (Cu Nim) – Diamond altitude
Matt Swain (Cu Nim) – Bronze badge

Licence

Gordon Chaytors (CAGC)
Steve Chirhin (ESC)
Steve Doporto (Cu Nim)
Thorsten Duebel (ESC)
Chester Fitchett (Cu Nim)
Lauren Ryan (ESC)
Veronica Szadowiak (ESC)
Eugene Zolenko (Cu Nim)

OLC – club results

Cu Nim	12,621 km	92 flights
	12 pilots	13,546 points
Edmonton	6708 km	34 flights
	6 pilots	8017 points

OLC – top 10 best 5 flights

(out of province flights included)

Bruce Friesen, ESC	2904 points
Dick Mamini, independent	2223 points
Tony Burton, Cu Nim	2064 points
Steve Hogg, Cu Nim	2044 points
Vaughan Allan, independent	1803 points
Chris Gough, ESC	1465 points
Gerald Ince, Cu Nim	1303 points
Struan Vaughan, Cu Nim	1277 points
Guy Blood, ESC	980 points
Conrad Lamoureux, Cu Nim	607 points

*Congratulations to all on these steps along the way.
What's your goal for 2014 – it's hard to improve without one.*



Brian Murray

Cupcakes and custom sparklers presented to Gary Hill by Val Deschamps at Fall Cowley on the occasion of his 1000th flight.

John Mulder has been the Alberta's representative on the SAC board for seven years. I recently offered to become the new Alberta Zone Director. I'll try to do as good a job as John. Communicating to you about SAC activities is important, and training and safety initiatives need constant emphasis. Please contact me at al_h@shaw.ca with any concerns you have.



Gwen Hoar

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