

GHC Newsletter Spring 2022

Spring is here! Finally a spell of decent weather starting on Mar 17 after the longest spell of southerlies I can ever remember. Another good sign, the clocks are going forward this coming Sunday! However, the weather over the winter has been decidedly poor with very little GHC flying going on, the 30th Jan being the exception. **So what has the GHC been doing over the winter?**

The Workshop

Thank goodness for the Trish Williams Memorial Workshop! With no LGS facilities because of the 29th Sept 2021 LGS clubhouse fire the workshop has been a haven for the vintage minded. Warm, loos, and even a small kitchen, there's been a lot of GHC members there and a lot of work done over the winter.

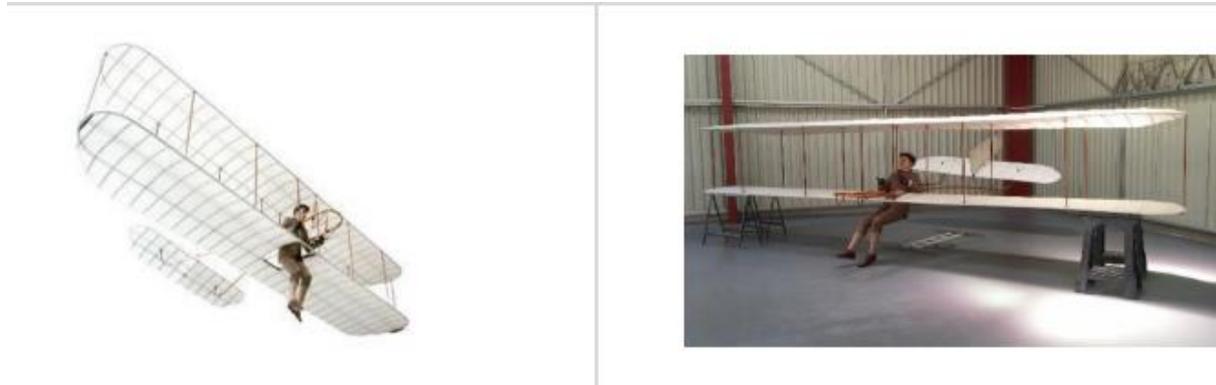
CofAs / ARCs

Many of these, and whilst this includes GHC gliders there's been a good number of privately owned (PO) ones as well.

Restorations

The two key ones of the 1910 Clarke glider and the 1944 Swiss Spalinger continue.

1910 Clarke Chanute bi-plane glider. This is on loan to us from the Royal Aero Club Trust and David Siddall has been spending many months doing a complete restoration.



David tells me he's hoping to complete the work by April when this oldest existing of all UK built gliders will go back on display in one of the two GHC hangars.

The Spalinger. Well it will be some red-letter day when this takes to the skies again! Whilst we can't be absolutely sure we're pretty confident it last flew in 1961, 61 years ago! Work has continued steadily over the winter with Gary Pullen and Ray Whittaker doing the lion's share. However, lots of others have chipped in.

Firstly the myriad of wood repairs were completed. On the 13th January we rigged her in the workshop to make sure everything went together OK, which thankfully it did. Next covering of the wings and fuselage with fabric. Then applying 9 coats of dope and preservatives which is progressing well as I write this. The final restoration task is spraying on our chosen colour scheme where for the majority of this task "2 Excel Engineering" have kindly agreed to let us use their facilities.



(Rigged in the workshop on the 13th January)



(Gary Pullen, in cockpit, and Ray Whittaker. Photo courtesy of Nick Hoare)

This hasn't been a "Oh, we'll just do a bathroom and kitchen" restoration, it's the whole house, top to bottom, inside and outside! Even the canopy is being completely rebuilt by Ray Whittaker.



Above, 13th March, the very start of the final task of painting/spraying. First coat of the Swiss logo going on the tail.

When will the Spalinger fly, there's a question I'm starting to be asked? Answer – we hope June or July. It's not just the restoration work that needs to be completed, however, it's also the extensive paperwork that has to be presented to the BGA technical committee. To-date there's never been a Spalinger S21 on the BGA registry as approved to fly in the UK. This, if it is approved, will be the first.

External Events

A small team was at the BGA annual conference at the Belfry hotel, Nottingham, on Saturday 12th February. We were worried on the advance information that the attendance was going to be small, but on the day all was fine, a lot of gliding people attended. It was good for us as our enthusiastic membership secretary, Graham Garnett, started by getting ten new members signing up for the GHC.

There was an amusing bit. Chris Gill, the CFI of Lleweni Parc in NW Wales had brought the Phoebus 17 with him (see below). We managed to find a suitable parking space for the trailer at the front of the hotel. The irrepressible Gary Pullen decided the GHC really ought to have a glider on display even though nothing had been agreed with the BGA organisers. So around mid-day on the Saturday we trundled the Phoebus fuselage around the outside of the Belfry and in through the hotel back entrance into the main display hall which only had one glider in it – the Arcus of Andy Aveling and Garry Coppin. The BGA ladies from Leicester were taken aback but all credit to them they took it in

good spirit. And it must be said having both the Phoebus and Arcus fuselages in there did improve things.



(At the Belfry, Graham Garnett nearest)

Upcoming event to flag. This is the Blackbushe 80th anniversary celebration on Saturday the 11th June. The GHC is looking to fly in up to 3 of our gliders. We'll need a team of volunteers to cover the ground handling and looking after the gliders whilst on display. A good while ahead so we won't look to get things arranged until we're into May.

New Gliders

Two of them for sure, the third has become somewhat of a frustration.

- A.) [The Phoebus 17c](#). This has been donated by Eden Soaring Ltd and arrived at Lasham on the 13th Feb via a rather circuitous route – Lleweni Park, the Belfry Nottingham, with Graham Garnett towing it back from the Belfry. Those with good memories who've been a long time at Lasham will remember the Surrey and Hants GC acquiring its first glass gliders with a couple of Bolkow Phoebus 17c's back in 1970. The first was badged "266" and the second "265". Well this is "265"! It last flew in 2011
- B.) [Slingsby T34 Sky](#). Known as "Gertie" this has been donated by Liana Middleton. I accompanied Gary Pullen when we picked it up from the London GC, Dunstable, on Wednesday 2nd March. The trailer is in tip top condition which is unusual for an old glider.



{“Gertie” at Lasham, probably a vintage rally}

The aim is to get her flying for the May “Flying Week” – see below.

- C.) [The Schweizer TG3a](#). Built in 1942 as a WW2 USAAF training glider. I reported in the Winter Newsletter (Nov 2021) that we were waiting to go up to the Imperial War Museum, Duxford, to pick the glider up as we're now the legal owners. Four months later and it's still the same situation. The sticking point is the removal of a couple of “radioactive” instruments that Duxford insist only they can deal with. We've offered to do it for them and have a fully qualified and certified person ready to go up to Duxford. Frustrating as almost all aircraft of the WW2 era have radioactive instruments (usually the ASI and Altimeter) and provided you don't open the instrument up the risk is utterly minimal. Fingers crossed we'll get everything agreed with the IWM soon and the glider will come to its new home at Lasham.

Flying

Holding a Flying Week

The last two years have seen flying at Lasham heavily and negatively impacted due to Covid, and that certainly has applied to the GHC. All fingers crossed that as we progress through 2022 Covid becomes just a bad memory. One key aim for the GHC CoM is to get our gliders flying a lot more. We have initiatives planned to help turn this aspiration into reality. The kick-off is a “Flying Week” – **NOT** a “Task Week”. I won't go into all of the details here as they've already just been sent by a separate

mail to the same mailing list. Suffice it to say the dates are Saturday 21st May – Friday 27th. We hope to fly on Sat/Sun 28/29th as well **BUT** that's the first weekend of the Lasham Regionals and launching for non-comps gliders could well be restricted, especially winching. We'll see how this goes, and of course as always hope that "Lady Weather" smiles on us during that week.

[Getting gliders out of the GHC hangars](#)

Whether it's a GHC glider or PO you can't fly it unless you can get it to the launch point! I wonder how many people reading this have said to themselves on occasions "Shall I go to Lasham today and fly? Met isn't brilliant but it's OK. Nah, won't be enough around to get the gliders out of the GHC hangars". So we're looking at creating a "GHC Flying" WhatsApp group to help members communicate with others who are looking to fly on a particular day. As said this isn't just focussed on those wanting to fly a GHC glider, but private owners with their glider in one of our hangars as well. Likely we'll be getting this going during April.

[Krajanek flies again](#)



Sunday 30th January, a nice day, and 7 members took the opportunity of flying the 1946 Czech Krajanek – "Krajanek" is the name for an entertainer/musician who pre WW2 travelled from village to village singing songs and telling stories for their keep. This was the first time the glider had flown since August 2015.

[More gliders to fly and a greater choice](#)

- The current situation is that three GHC owned gliders can be flown on any one day and that is one 2-seater and two single seaters **NOT** 3 single seaters.. If three have already flown on a

particular day then they can't be varied for the rest of the day. However, on the next flying day a different set of three can be chosen.

- From the start of April the three will be upped to four but that will still only include one 2-seater.
- During the "Flying Week" the max will be increased to six including two 2-seaters. Possibly up to nine depending on the response we get from the invite e-mail.
- You can only fly a glider if it's airworthy and that means it has to have a valid CofA - and an ARC if it's "G-" registered.
- Current GHC gliders that are airworthy are (If there's a date in brackets it's when in 2022 the CofA expires, otherwise it's 2023): Krajanek, Pirat (7 Sept), Foka, Bocian, Zugvogel 3b, Oly 460 (23/3) , Skylark 2 (3 June), YS 53 "Beast" (25 June). The intention is to add "Gertie" the Sky in April, and probably the Phoebus later in the year. So if no unexpected problems there could be nine, outside chance ten, GHC gliders available for the Flying Week..

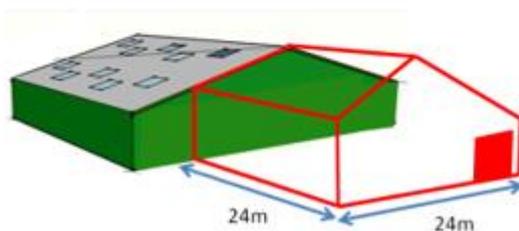
Cost of flying GHC owned gliders

- £24 for the first hour (£2 per 5 mins or part thereof)
- £12 for hours 2, 3, and 4 (£1 per 5 mins or part thereof)
- After 4 hours free, so the normal maximum per flight is £60.

Future developments

Spray booth. In the Winter 2021 Newsletter we said we were seriously investigating having a spray booth outside the workshop. It looked promising initially but then it became apparent that the cost was going to be a great deal more than the first estimates had suggested. So that's been pushed back for now and replaced as our top priority by a 24m x 24m extension to the second hangar.

2nd hangar extension. Whilst actual construction has not given formal approval yet by the GHC CoM the necessary site clearance and groundwork was started on Sunday 6th March.





(Tues 8th Mar, Gary Pullen at work with the digger)

Website. A complete redesign is being investigated. The technology of what we currently use dates back to 2013 and is very inflexible. Effectively only our webmaster can make changes. The focus will be catering for the casual viewer with a separate Members section, and as said much easier for us to update the site.

That's it folks. Hope you've enjoyed reading all of our latest news.

23 March 2022

Glyn Bradney, GHC Secretary