

Feb98

Air

Heads



MINUTES OF THE JANUARY MEETING 1998

Minutes of the January meeting

Apologies were received from Harriet, Simon, Brian and Jamie, so where the xxxx were the rest of you. Apologies were also received from the secretary for swearing in the minutes. The minutes of the December meeting were read and approved.

Matters arising:

Plaques

These are now in place at Charmouth and Branscombe.

Strimmer

This continues to be put to good use. A completely new take off has been cleared at Charmouth, just below the National Trust sign. It has been test flown and is the best take off we have ever had at Charmouth. Thanks are due to Phil, Jeff, Chris, John, Simon, Harriet, Andy, Nick and anyone else who gave up their time to clear it. It still needs raking for Paragliders, so "take a rake" on your next trip down there.

Xmas Presents

These have now been distributed

Safety

A bad month for accidents. Phil had a bad takeoff at Charmouth, he took off in a hurry in deteriorating weather without balancing his glider into wind first. Resulting in a spin into the bowl below takeoff, but without damaging himself or the glider. Bob Hayman was not so lucky the next day, he shouted "release" a few feet back from the edge, whilst one wing was being strongly held down and the other was held up. This resulted in a ground loop with Bob ending up on top of his glider next to the fence at

the back of takeoff. He had considerable damage to his glider but got away with just bruising to his body.

Young Fielder tried to level up the scores between Hanggliders and Paragliders by using Simon's new demonstrator to plough the field behind the landing field at Charmouth. He was caught out by a squall and despite using big ears didn't manage to land quickly enough. Lessons from that were: Don't take off without a speedbar. Don't take off in rapidly deteriorating conditions. Keep a good lookout for the onset of squalls. The new colourways from Firebird are Red, White and Brown.

Treasurers Report

At present we have £1581 in the bank shortly to be reduced by Xmas presents and the Bossington Licence.

Blorenge

As there was no opposition to the proposal to contribute £500.00 to the S.E. Wales fund to purchase the Blorenge, the motion was carried. This is on the condition that we have unrestricted access to the site and that if it is not purchased the money is returned.

25th Anniversary

The 25th Anniversary of the "Condors" is coming up in September. Phil suggested that we have some sort of celebration and invite all past members of the club. It was agreed that we set up a sub committee to plan and co-ordinate the event. Anyone with suggestions or who is prepared to help should give their names to Phil or myself.

Sites Guide

The sub committee has been set up to update the sites guide. At the moment it consists of the usual stalwarts Phil, Jeff, Andy, John F, Mark A and Gerry. It will meet for the first time at Phil's place Rock Hill Farm on Weds 28th Jan. Anyone else interested in helping please contact Phil.

Airwave Challenge

Mark Aplin is co-ordinating this, details elsewhere in the Newsletter.

BHPA AGM

Congratulations to Harriet for getting onto the Executive and in the words of our Chairman. "Anyone who wants a direct bitch with the BHPA can get onto her." Seconds out.

Meeting closed at 9.30pm

The Janaways brought and showed the new video by Jocky Sanderson " Security in Flight". It was excellent and it was suggested that the club get a copy for circulation.

*Note for Editor

Minutes are so named for their tradition of being presented to the editor "minutes" before the next newsletter is published. If they were supposed to be produced any earlier they would have been called "Hours" or in extreme circumstances "Days". Will the Editor please not try to tamper with established rituals and concentrate on learning to fly.

John Milner

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CHAT & CHALLENGE



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February already, I don't care what anyone says, time does 'fly' as you get older !!

Everyone seemed to enjoy the last meeting, reasonable turnout, sorry, I promised not to mention it, I can't believe John is so keen on our anniversary celebrations, I think he has visions of an alternative All Out!!

After speaking to Joe Schofield, I've abandoned the advert format and just sent a 'club news' item about it.

I'm writing this after my holiday, so don't know what the flying has been like while I've been away, hope they had good weather in Lanzarote.

For want of anything better to write, the skiing was great, snow was fantastic, weather good most of the time, apart from a blizzard! well almost! one of the days, a foot of snow in a few hours. Definitely not flying conditions, 75kph winds, zero viz and wind chill in double figures, you couldn't tell the snow from the cloud. It was bad enough in two dimensions, it brings it home to you, flying in cloud is pushing it!!(before the Ed says anything, as if anybody would!) but doing the same if there were snow capped mountains around would just be stacking the odds a bit too high!

As we're into planning things well in advance at the moment!! I'm going to organise a group skiing trip early next year, from total beginners upwards. We met Dennis Trott on one of the French flying trips a while ago, so I thought I might get in touch with him and sort out some sort of a deal. We could then arrange for flying and skiing! Anyone interested let me know, the more the better.

Went to North Hill on the first weekend after returning from skiing, breezy and off to the east, what a surprise, still, keen and raring to go, rigged up and found a dent in the inside of the inner

inner leading edge *****! After derigging and assisting some of the others to launch!!, no I wasn't gnashing my teeth! I set off home to recover some brownie points. I heard later that a very new topless suffered top landing in the increasing wind, no consolation!

One week and £163.00 poorer, all ready for the 'Frostbite' comp, forecast doesn't look that good, too far off to the east. Is it worth driving the hundred or so miles to Goran Haven?, With the briefing set for 11 o'clock make the tactical decision to go to Pandy instead!! So much for the competitive spirit, ah well can't have everything!!

I always seem to be writing the Chairman's Chat either when nothings happened, or just before we go flying, like now, off to what could be a good day at Pandy tomorrow, but have to take it with me to give to John. Now if he did the newsletter the night before the meeting!! (sorry John only joking, honest!)

One other piece of club business, we managed to organise a committee meeting to plan a new site guide, it's a shame that none of the Hangliding members made it! what does this mean?? Perhaps its only a reflection of Charmouth the other day, three Hangliders and thirteen Paragliders! Also chatting to Simon the other day, steady paraglider sales but the hangliding market is dead! What a really cheerful note to end on!

Safe flying

Phil

DEVON & SOMERSET CONDORS COMPETITION PARAGLIDING 1998

We are organising a paragliding team principally to enter the 1998 Airwave Challenge.

The Airwave Challenge

This is a team based inter club competition with a series of local heats leading up to the final.

The emphasis is on enjoyment and providing competitions suitable for club level pilots.

In the initial stages we will be competing against teams from other local clubs.

Competition tasks are likely to vary from spot landing to ridge racing and cross country.

Minimum qualification requirement is CPC - so all members are very welcome to join our team.

For 1998 we are allowed to include a Nationals pilot in our team - so our resident Sky Gods can also get involved.

Teams are made up of 4 to 6 pilots, with the best 4 individual results counting for the team score. If we get lots of interest there is no reason we should not enter more than 1 team.

Several members are already interested in getting involved, if you are too let me know -when we have more details of dates of events etc I will circulate these to everyone who has expressed an interest.

The British Paragliding Cup

A couple of club members, myself and Brett Janaway are intending to enter some of these events this season - if anyone else is considering this please get in touch. Entry form was in December Skywings - I have copies if anyone wants one.

Mark Aplin

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GRAHAM'S XWORD 12



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January

Another poor month but some of that was my own fault. Last Tuesday at Pandy was excellent James and I went right along the ridge but couldn't make the jump to Hay Bluff in weak conditions. Tim Allen also did most of the ridge. A day spent watching everyone flying at Charmouth. Andy P., Eddie, John Stuck and Tom Mayne (Wessex) had hours. Peter Ranger, John M. and Kai Coleman all had good flights and Jeff and Mark H. actually flew hang gliders! I watched all this (must be the change of life). A good day on Sandy Bay, which is disintegrating fast, and last Sunday on the winch completed the month.

The Sites Guide

The first meeting of the Sites Guide Action Group took place at Phil's house. We have all been allocated sites to review. Mark Aplin is doing the north coast, Jeff and Phil the south coast and Andy North Somerset. I have been left with Crook Peak and Triscombe (Phil wouldn't volunteer). Derek Sadler has been volunteered to do Coney's Castle and Simon Bell Farway. Will all club pilots who feel that they have any input contact us and add to the sum of our knowledge.

John F

FROSTBITE 1998



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Forecast ESE 15mph, dry. Good enough for the Frostbite to be called for Jan 31st and Feb1st.

Briefing was set for 11am Saturday at Vault Bay, but Jeff and Mark Hoer were the only Condors there in time. Mark Aplin and Kath had gone down as well, but sensibly took the precaution of providing themselves with an alternative activity - they took their bikes as well. (Of course, what they SHOULD do is learn to fly hang gliders, and then they can fly in stronger winds.) Not that it made any difference at this point, as it was blowing a hoolie and briefing was delayed to see if the wind would die down a bit.

Simon M and I arrived at about 12.15, followed in due course by Craig, Martyn Howe, Martin Kellaway (still no glider) and Roger Slaney. Phil Fouracre - where were you? We thought you were into competition mode.

Eventually there was a briefing, although the wind was still strong - consistently 20-25mph on takeoff, a bit off and gusty. Three pilots had already taken off a bit earlier and proved it was flyable. The task was called as open XC as it was deemed too dodgy to go for a ridge run and spot landing in such a gale and Roger Slaney led the following stampede of Kernow and South Devon pilots to get airborne, Martyn Howe joining them. I proceeded to rig my glider while the rest of the Condors sheltered from the wind by a stone wall, and was the last to take off, once I finally gained control of the glider long enough for Simon, Craig and Mark to let go of it. It was my plan to just fly around for a while and land back on top. It didn't look as if anyone was getting high enough to be able to trigger the activating distance of 5k, so going XC was not part of my plan.

The first part of my flight was very satisfying. I made my way along to where everyone else was, caught the elevator straight to the top, and sat at the top of the stack. I made it to around 12 or 13 hundred feet ato, just about at cloudbase. This was the point at which I should have gone over the back. But I didn't. I looked at it. I considered it. I wimped out. In self defence, I hadn't even looked at a map, I was unfamiliar with the terrain and local geography, and I had no idea if there was any airspace en route to be avoided. Feeble excuse, but the only one I have.

So I continued playing yoyos in the sea thermals with Karl Sweeney (S. Devon) and Martyn Howe, as we were the three highest most of the time. Quite a lot of gliders landed, and I thought one or two might have gone over the back, but with a lot less height that I had. Kernow pilots of course.

Finally, there was a cloud that sucked us back up to base. As thick black murk surrounded me I lost sight of Karl and Martyn, who did the sensible thing and fled downwind, both making a distance of about 5 miles and landing in the same field. I was up to 1400ft ato, and getting scared as I could no longer see anything except the ground immediately below me, and that was getting hazy. Bar to the knees and I managed to escape, although my descent was not as fast as I would have liked. Once I could see again, I noticed that it was even blacker out to sea and approaching fast, so I decided to land as soon as possible. My first attempt I was too far forward and overshot, but the second time around I did a good landing and breathed a sigh of relief.

I am almost always scared to some degree before I fly, but I am seldom scared once I am in the air. This flight was an exception. Graham Phipps had managed a distance of around 9.2 miles, and Steve Pen-something (Kernow) did his first ever XC of about 2½ miles.

EVERYONE told me I should have gone with it. If only it had been them in my place. Lovely feeling, being sucked up into cloud. Etc, etc. Well, I don't agree. I think it's a lovely feeling being sucked up TO cloud, but not INTO it. However, another time, I will at least have a look at a map before I take off.

The next day was called off by Steven Hawken, Kernow comp organiser, as the wind was too light and too far off. Then the wind came on and he and several other paraglider pilots went flying. How he had the nerve to show his face at the Phipps's that evening and tell us I do not know!

In previous years, the Frostbite competition report has always been followed by an account of wild parties, heavy drinking, general mayhem, and frequent bloodbaths. I am sorry to disappoint you with the news that the Kernow HAVE LOST IT. They may still have won the competition, but they are getting old, like the rest of us. The once fearsome Pete Coad was not even on the hill on Saturday. I can hardly bear to tell you the dreadful truth. He was playing golf. Pete Coad?! Golf?! Worse yet, he was one of the floppies flying on Sunday!

There was the usual pub get together on the Saturday night. One of the Kernow lot even had a 40th birthday to add to the party atmosphere. But there was no debauchery, no games, and no blood.

Who knows? Next year, the Condors might even stand a chance of taking the Frostbite trophy!

Harriet.

LANZAROTE '98



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Well, you guys missed out on ALL the Fun in the Sun!

Mind you, you would have missed out on a lot of it even if you had come along!

Personal life aside, Simon and I had an expensive and thoroughly enjoyable, if exhausting at times, first week with all the kids. They were most impressed by the volcanoes, caves, art and architecture (see last February's or March's Airheads, or Free Flyer), and this visit we spent quite a lot of time on the beach getting thrashed by the surf, hunting for pretty shells, ogling the talent (Simon's speciality), building outrageous sandcastles (photos at March club night... if you remind me!) and sunbathing as well. Yes... SUNBATHING... in January... in the Northern Hemisphere. Well, I know it doesn't show much, but we were there and it felt good at the time!

Then we packed the little darlings back to Blighty to the EX's, unpacked the SX's, and went flying.

After four days' flying in a row (2 light scratchy days and 2 good, up-to-cloudbase-for-as-long-as-you want days) we took a day off to go shopping in the morning and to soak up a bit more art and architecture in the afternoon. Local artist/artisan/architect, Cesar Manrique, created some truly spectacular and sublime buildings and sculptures, which blend into and use the indigenous volcanic landscape of lava and rock in ingenious and extraordinary ways.

Oh sorry, you want to know more about the flying? Well, the first 2 days we went to Mala, the most popular E/NE site on the island. The main problem with this site is that you have to cross a dam from the carpark area to get to takeoff. Not a problem for most people, but I get vertigo, and felt really sick walking over. So the order here was that I helped Simon carry his glider over, then he went back for mine while I started to rig his,

so I didn't have to cross more than necessary. Both days were light wind and light thermals, and I only got above the top of the main ridge once in two days. Simon did slightly worse than me the first day, and slightly better the second, so we evened out at around one hour's total flying time each at Mala.

The third and fourth days we went to Mirador (also known as Orzola) at the very northern tip of the island. We had flown along the other side of this spine at the furthestmost end of the Famara run last year, but this time the wind was from east of north instead of west of it. Takeoff was shallow, but easy, and once off the ground the stony slope gave way to great big rocky cliffs falling into aquamarine surf about 1,500 feet below. The flying here was undemanding, but very enjoyable, with good ridge lift and lots of lovely smooth sea thermals, as well as some coming off the fields and village below and to the right of takeoff. No top landing here (one German pilot tried it to the cost of both uprights - why is it always the Germans who try these daft things?) and the bottom landing was the local football pitch - dusty, but very serviceable, although the approach was surprisingly bumpy in the late afternoon air.

The second day at Mirador we spent the morning on the beach at the bottom of the cliffs, and went flying in the afternoon. Perfect.

The last day we went to Famara. Simon didn't bother taking his glider off the car as the wind varied between 20° and 50° off the ridge, and we could tell from the seagulls that there was limited lift and no thermal activity to speak of. Undeterred, I rigged, and was 4th to launch after two Germans and Steve Derwin, a paraplegic pilot we met last year in Lanzarote.

Oh, no, I was 5th. Our very own Paul Hook from Sidmouth had been having fun (?) earlier on his G-sport, pinned to the ridge by the increasing breeze.

Anyway, there we were, two foreigners, a paraplegic and a girl, all having managed diagonal launches across the ramp, having quite a nice, uncrowded flight, while all the "real" (?) men were still faffing about on the ground. I set off upwind to see how far I could get before sinking out in the lee (rotor?) of the bigger cliffs further north - remember, the wind was so well off that it was blowing parallel to the ridge in the bottom landing field. I managed just about as far as anyone else, and turned back when discretion became the better part of valor.

When I 180'd to return downwind I was faced with what looked like the Battle of Britain bearing down on me. Squadrons of hang gliders all coming my way, with barely 200 feet vertical separation! After negotiating that lot and getting back up from 100' below takeoff to about 300' ato, the flying became a lot less fun. It was too crowded and I had a close shave between two other gliders, so I went and landed. Simon was already waiting with the car in the landing field so there was no waiting around once I'd packed up.

A total of 6¼ hours' airtime, which is 6¼ hours more than I would have had if I'd stayed at home.

So, another brilliant holiday in Lanzarote, and now I'll have to start saving up for the same time next year.

Hasta la vista!

Harriet.

BITS & PIECES



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My mobile number has now changed to **07970 629551**. Next month I shall be printing a list of mobiles owned by those who wish to fly midweek. Will all of you who have e-mail address' either e-mail me with it or send it some other way.

Crook Peak

The main landing field is now in grass. We can again land there.

The farmer does not mind you landing among his sheep if they are in the field. Just be careful.

AGM Wednesday 4th March 8pm

Anyone keen to do a job, take over the club or write a newsletter needs to rally support, come along and get rid of the tired old farts running the club now.

I am wondering if we need a newsletter. Does anyone read it? Not one comment on the last one headed **JAN 97!!**

Congratulations to Guy Anderson who has qualified for a place in the Nationals.

Flying Diary

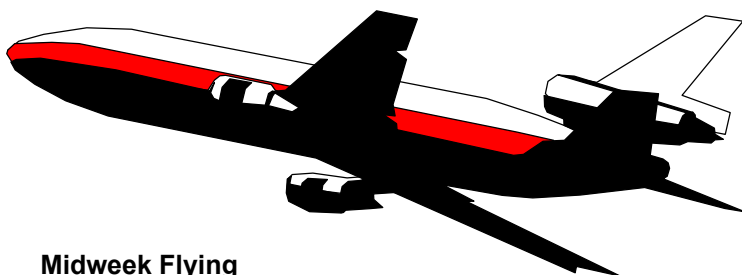
I intend to start a flying diary next month. This means I want to fill this newsletter with the fling **YOU** are all doing not my fumbling efforts. Get out and give me some input. Fax, phone, disc, email or pass the details on the hill. If you are bored reading all this rubbish, **do something about it!**

FOR SALE - DK Beat Paramotor large, brand new canopy, engine 10 hrs. As new £3800 (5,500 new)
Contact Jim 01404 891880. View at Dunkeswell.

Talking about Paramotors - The Janaways have one & Brian Smith has just bought a monster one to take the family up, or at least Graham Rainey! Get the shotguns ready!

CONTACT NUMBERS

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Midweek Flying
Phone 0800 515544

Articles sent on computer disk are helpful and time saving. Word for Windows, Ami Pro, or text format if possible. If not jot it down and sent it in, on an e-mail if possible. **THE DEADLINE** for copy is the **LAST FRIDAY** in the month. **LATE ARTICLES** may be moved to the following month. I'm off on my holidays to Australasia for the next two issues, so goodness knows what Airheads will turn out like with the editor alone at the controls.
Rob F - Sub Ed.



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DEVON AIR AMBULANCE



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Dear Angie,

Firstly, to thank most sincerely all members of "The Condors" for the very worthwhile "First Flight Experience" promotion that was held between August & October 1997.

As a result of the interest caused, there are member's of the general public who hope that another such Promotion will be mounted during 1998?

To date, including merchandise, "The Condors" have raised £479.97 for The Devon Air Ambulance Trust for which it's members can be justly proud.

As explained it will give us great pleasure to arrange a cheque presentation to take place at the Air Ambulance Base at Exeter Airport on Saturday 28th February 1998 at 1100 hours. Subject to any operational commitments.

The rendezvous point for guests will be outside the main airport terminal building. However, there is a limitation of two car loads of guests or the alternative of "The Condors" hiring a 17 seater Mini-Bus for this occasion?

Apart from the presentation cheque, the visitor's will have the unique opportunity of meeting the pilot and Duty crew of Para-Medicas and touring the base and inspecting the Air Ambulance itself at close quarter's.

Meanwhile, Barbara & myself will look forward to paying visits to "The Condor's" at Smeatharpe during 1998.

Very sincerely,

Tony Houghton
FR Co-ordinator
Devon Air Ambulance Trust

Devon Air Ambulance

The ultimate Crossing

Roger (Crazy Man) Slaney is to go for his crossing of the Bristol Channel as soon as conditions are right. Jeff is going to aerotow him from Smeatharpe to 10,000 over North Hill in a 10mph southerly wind and the mad one is going to Wales on his K2! The DAA is to benefit from any sum raised and Roger has been practising balancing in his A frame, unclipped ready to swim.

Air Experience Day

As you can see from the letter from Tony Houghton, the Air Experience days were a great success. Angie is planning another one this year in the summer and is hoping that as many as possible dual/winch qualified pilots will attend. Any qualified pilots from our associate clubs will be very welcome. We are checking the possibility of dual pg pilots taking part.

25th Anniversary Celebrations

As you will have read in the minutes we are planning a fun event at Smeatharpe in September. Flying from the winch and aerotowing is planned. John M. has plans for marquees, music and mayhem over at least one day and evening.

This could be a mini ALLOUT if everything comes together. John is going to need a lot of help, so please feel free to volunteer. Make this event special by adding YOUR enthusiasm.

How about completing your winch endorsement so you can take your full part. Jeff provides excellent training. Take the opportunity.

JF

Dear John

Just received my copy of Airheads forwarded from my old address. Please note my new address: 28 Mexfield Road, London SW15 2SZ. Mob. phone 0370301044.

Bit tricky attending weekday meetings from here but if you were less selfish and held your meetings in London I would be able to attend.

You were asking about flying diaries - mine would read as it did when I was a schoolboy - "Dear diary, nothing happened today". I did have an interesting flight into one of Eddie's trees at Quor Hill. I landed about 80' up. I had been advised to carry a roll of dental floss for such an occasion but flossing ones teeth whilst balancing on a branch doesn't do much to pass the time and is positively dangerous. Good thing I had my mobile! Eddie eventually found a rope and with one bound I was free. After bunging the tree surgeon £50 so was my A4. That's a give away isn't it, an A4? I love the colours though and although the purple of the canopy doesn't quite match the purple of my flying suit we looked pretty cool up there. By the way- the silhouettes of the leaves that remain in the cells look quite interesting from below.

Regards

Peter Ranger