

Oct98

Air

Heads



MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER MEETING 1998

25th Anniversary Bash



The minutes of the August meeting were read and approved.

Treasurer's Report

5 new members: Merlin Crossingham (pg 50 hrs from Bristol), Tony Webb (hg - Lejair hg and tow Centre from Norfolk), Greg Havens (pg from U.S.A. needs to convert to BHPA ratings), Matthew Dougmore (pg 15 hrs from Brixham) and Les Lloyd fro Crewkerne, bring the total to 68. There are still a few pilots who haven't renewed their membership. Names to be published. Around £1000 in the bank.

Safety Report

Robin Campbell had an interesting landing in Annecy. In light and variable wind conditions he went down to bottom land and didn't notice that the wind had changed direction, he ran out of room and hit a barbed wire fence. This resulted in him breaking an arm. To add insult to injury Gerry McCann borrowed his car and parked it in the right position for a Norfolk pilot to crash into. Gerry obviously isn't content with trashing his own gear, but he did have the courtesy to go and tell him in hospital.

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At Woolacombe XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX ton landed into Trevor's trailer and knocked

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CHAIRMAN'S CHAT



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Ah well, another month gone, soon be Christmas, great!! More importantly, soon be skiing.

Back to reality, the weather is still all over the place, what's new this year? Not much flying going on. Speaking to John F at the towing meeting, he said I should have left the holiday write up for this month, to pad it out! No need, there will be other contributions from happy campers, telling you all what a wonderful holiday we had.

Just got back from France in time for the 'bash', of course the two weekends we were away would have been perfect. Not so the date arranged, absolutely bloody awful forecast, with a serious low setting up to hit us on the very day. Had spent ages sorting out final details, even down to the silly quote for generator insurance. Problem was that it was looking as though the club was going to be seriously out of pocket, especially having to add substantial unexpected costs.

Chatting to John M who was getting extremely nervous, should we cancel! etc. Not looking good at all, bad weather and increasing costs. Had a bit of inspiration, rang Simon, then Harriet to find out about Luppitt village hall. After a number of calls managed to sort it out and provisionally rebooked everything there, subject to the club agreeing that evening. For once I got it right and everyone thought it was a great idea.

It was a shame in a number of ways, because it meant we could not run on late due to hall restrictions, and everything had to be packed in and rushed but it couldn't be helped. On the day it poured with rain, we managed a couple of tows in rough conditions when the rain eased but neither pilot wanted to repeat the experience! The highlight of the day was definitely the Air ambulance visit. I don't know about anyone else, I was seriously impressed by the engines, twin gas turbines. These are amazingly small and can be lifted out through the access panels single handedly! Anyone make a gas turbine Mosquito or paramotor, I reckon it would be about the size of a half pint mug!

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Despite everything I think everyone managed to enjoy themselves in the evening, great to see so many old faces, (weren't they just) as usual I didn't have anywhere near enough time to speak to half of them, apologies. Many thanks to all those who helped organise the event and those who helped on the day. I'm still not sure whether all those photographs were such a good idea, makes you feel really old! what wig? seriously though, they were thoroughly enjoyed by all, memories!

Like everything else, if we were doing it again, I can think of a number of ways we could improve on it. If I'm still around in 25years! God forbid.

Still very little flying, although this last couple of days provided some entertainment. I decided at the last moment to ring John and Jeff on friday afternoon, to see if it was worth going to North hill. Cardiff Bay buoy was giving nne 6.5ms with a 2degree air/sea temp difference. No takers, ah! what the hell, go for it. Turned out to be a very pleasant evening, arrived at 4.50, in the air at 5.00. aren't these paragliders great? Quite smooth and off to the east, as forecast, straight to 500' tying my speed system on as I went. Flew for an hour and a quarter, playing about low over the harbour as all the lights were coming on, best was 380' below t/o, 360'ing over the harbour buoy watching the fisherman. Went back to top land next to the van, seemed a shame to leave so grabbed a drink, strolled down the path and flew again. More lively later, which was strange, up to 800' loads of clouds and general murk, could see rain from some, started to 'precipitate' on me, so had to spiral down to stay dry. More fun over the harbour and out towards Butlins, now getting seriously dark so headed back to land. Watching all the car and street lights in the town, landed but could hardly see to derig. Not a soul in sight for the whole evening.

To cap it all, I hear that Jeff and Simon B went to Farway where the wind was 18mph apparently Simon reduced Jeff to tears of mirth by getting dragged across the field, getting wet, covered in cows shit, and then getting tangled up in a live electric fence. This must have been some sight, hopefully more graphic details to follow.

across the field, getting wet, covered in cow shit, and then getting tangled up in a live electric fence. This must have been some sight, hopefully more graphic details to follow.

Just to show that nothing is guaranteed, some of us then cocked up the weekend completely, going to North Hill a second time was tempting fate. No good at all, down flights for all concerned, of course Jeff said they had a great day towing, I hate him! Sunday I had to earn some Brownie points, I then get a call from our esteemed editor, to tell me they were flying at! You guessed it. I hate him as well. At least it finished the month off well.

One piece of club news which should get mentioned at the meeting, (I won't be there), is the first aid course. A number of pilots need to renew their first aid certs for coaching status to remain valid. Last time we had a series of evening sessions, we can repeat this again, or, they will run a one day course whenever suits us and subject to numbers. At first I assumed this would not suit, but it would actually make more sense to get it all done in a day rather than travelling for a number of evenings. What do those interested want? we need a minimum of ten, let me know asap.

Phil



John Milner

Balloonist, Joiner and Party Organiser, John is an ex-paraglider pilot, who also happens to be our secretary. He has the unenviable reputation of being the slowest typist in Britain, typing out a few paltry lines generated at the beginning of the month. If he typed as fast as he produces excuses for not flying, the editor would be a very happy man.

25th Anniversary Bash



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BLOW-OUT BLOWN-OUT 25TH ANNIVERSARY BASH REPORT

Setting a date six months in advance for a weather dependent event is, I suppose, tempting fate. Tantalisingly, while most of the club was away in France, the weather for both the previous weekends had been perfect, but for September 5th and 6th an especially deep low pressure and series of wet and windy fronts chased each other through the South West, fresh off the Atlantic.

We had virtually all our daytime plans thwarted. The hot air balloons, the parachute drop, the vintage hang glider display, hang glider aerotowing and paraglider winching all had to be cancelled. Perpetual optimists that we are, Damien Walker (S. Devon) and I were both keen enough to rig our hang gliders... just in case..., and we managed one rough winch tow each, neither feeling the inclination to repeat the experience. I did what was probably my worst ever winch launch, a gust getting under my right wing just as I called "All Out", so a couple of people had to duck as I veered to the left. I managed to hang on and straighten up for a bumpy and wobbly tow, paying out most of the way. I had to release halfway along the runway at just under 1500 ft as I went into cloud (base was at 1000ft). Damien faired a bit better in a blue gap, getting to 2000 ft before releasing. Dave Lunn also had a short flight with his mosquito and came to the same conclusion that one flight was enough. The winds were gusty and strengthening, making take-off, flying and landing all a little bit too much of a lottery, so that was the flying all done for the day. However, it had been enough to give the local ITV and press cameras footage for media coverage.

So... what were we going to do to amuse ourselves. It wasn't actually raining (much - just the odd brief shower) and quite a lot of people had turned up at Smeatharpe Airfield. As a diversion from the general socialising going on, Darryl Janaway brought out his paramotor powerpack and there was some amusement as a few pilots took turns with it, turning the throttle up full and leaning back into the thrust of the propellor.

At about 4pm one of the Devon Air Ambulance helicopters arrived. The Condors have raised around £3,000 for them over the past two years, but this was the first time that most of us had ever seen an Air Ambulance close up. Hopefully the only time, too! A small, but amazingly nifty and well-equipped helicopter operated by a dedicated crew of pilot and two paramedics, it is an essential addition to the emergency services in the region. It has two tiny engines that you could lift out by hand, one each side, and the stretcher space inside was not for the claustrophobic! They spent about an hour at the airfield chatting and answering questions whilst we peered and pried in and around the helicopter, before they wound her up and departed. An impressive full 360 degree turn on the spot, just a few feet off the deck, a low level pass and off they sped, startling a local buzzard who must be more used to our relatively quiet and slow flying microlight, hang gliders and paragliders than small, noisy, fast, red helicopters.

Phil had phoned me the Wednesday before all in a twitch and a twitter. Panicking? Him? Stressed out? Our calm and carefree chairman? Never! Well, just a bit. In view of the impending gales forecast for the weekend he wanted the number of whoever looked after the best local village hall. He'd cancelled the marquee for the evening for fears of it blowing away and now needed somewhere else to hold the evening's party. Luckily the Luppitt Hall was available, just a couple of miles down the road.

Pilots past and present caught up with old times and new: some hadn't been seen for 15 or 20 years! Who remembers John Long, Peter Bayliss, Brian Miller, Tony Hockney, or Roger Surman (the Perv)? Now in his 60's, John's best known claim to fame is that he did the stunt flying for a James Bond film (see November Clubnight Notice). Tony Hockney was the founding Chairman of the Condors Club in 1973, although he gave up flying not long after, because it was "too dangerous"!



The Devon Air Ambulance

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There were hundreds of old (many embarrassing) photos stuck up all over the walls (luckily I've not been around long enough to have been included, but I was snapping away for the next "rogues gallery"), flying videos showing on a big screen, dancing to a live band (Sneaky Pete & The Vipers) and to a disco, buffet dinner and a bar. The Prize Draw, organised by Angie in aid of the Devon Air Ambulance, was held. The biggest prize of two return tickets to any European destination with Virgin Express went to an unknown lucky somebody in Minehead. Eddie Colfox had donated a prize of a tandem paraglider flight, which was won by... Eddie himself! The chances of that happening must have been several million to one. His prize ticket was re-drawn and he won a helicopter ride with Noel Edmonds instead. Wow! Isn't he the lucky one?! I think he's going to try and persuade Noel Edmonds to have a tandem PG flight with him - good publicity for the school and all that. All the other prizes were various light aircraft, balloon, glider, hang and paraglider taster flights and tuition.

Turnout was a bit lower than hoped for due to the disappointing weather and subsequent lack of flying, but the party was a great success, and we still managed to celebrate our 25th anniversary in style. A big Well Done and Thank You to the chief organisers, John Milner and Phil Fouracre, and to everyone else who helped in any way. When's the next one?

Regards, Harriet

Congratulations to Simon and Gay, who have just had a little girl called Emily.



BITS & PIECES



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ADVANCE NOTICE FOR NOVEMBER
CLUBNIGHT, 4/11/98

DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME, FOLKS!

Many moons ago, before one or two of you were even born, there was a dare devil hang glider pilot in the Condors called John Long. Together with his side-kick, Pete Bayliss, this intrepid loony agreed to perform an idiotically dangerous stunt in the South American Jungle, just so Roger Moore could add to his repertoire of derring-do....

John did the pilot stunt work for a hang glider to launch off a speedboat as it tipped over a very high waterfall, fly around a bit and land in the jungle.... and CUT to James Bond 007 (Roger Moore) walking out unscathed....

People did that sort of thing back in the seventies.

(Incidentally, Brain Miller's brother - or was it his brother-in-law? Anyway, another tenuous Condors connection - edited the film's soundtrack.)

After this adventure, John and Pete went around doing a slide show and talk about it, which many of the older Condors may remember seeing. John and Pete haven't even looked at the slides themselves for over 15 years, and they have agreed to dust them off and resurrect their talk for our November clubnight. Just to add to the fun, they are going to do it completely unrehearsed.

They are really enthusiastic about giving this talk and are looking forward to it. Make sure you're there to support them for a really entertaining evening on **November 4th, Blackbird Inn, 8.00pm** as usual.

Avon Sites guide on the Net at -
<http://www.tomsawyer.demon.co.uk/avonsite/fro nt.htm>

Paragliding course with Skydragons - Ruthin, North Wales. **For sale**. Steve 01395 279368. (He can't or won't go and wants to sell his course cheap.)

Airwave are again offering their glider trial and condemnation service from Sep 20th to Feb 26th. So if you have fallen out of love with it, send it in for execution.
(Details in Skywings)

More Bash photos



Jeff Hoer and Tony Hockney - founding Chairman of the Condors. He and Jeff were the founding members, but Tony gave up not long after because hang gliding was too dangerous!



The Three Pervs caught in the act during the evening. HP had just walked past looking for her skirt.

Winter Flying

It has been a poor year, the season is over and we can all start dreaming about next year. WRONG. The winter is an excellent time to get some hours in the air. Coastal flying, certainly on the North coast, is better as sea thermals can give climbs to cloudbase. The challenge of the Gap across Porlock from North Hill still awaits the first pg crossing. Brett Janaway is keen to be the first to do this. Crossing the gap, however, opens the run down the North Devon coast to Ilfracombe. This has been done by a number of hg pilots and even the return to Porlock, but not the gap.

The winter is also the time when the experienced pilots in the Club are more willing to help others. Ask for advice, phone if you want to go out. YOU need to take the action. It is no good sitting at home moaning about the weather. Encased in a few layers you can even feel quite warm, well, maybe not the hands.

Winching is a good way of getting some regular flying. Have you got a winch endorsement. Come along to Smeatharpe on the light days and take a look. If you are an hg pilot, just think how many sites you fly where you can take off and land within a few yards of the rigging area.

Of course, there's always next year. It's got to be better.....Yeah!!!!

Treasurer's Report

There are now - 75 paid up members of the Club. Banh balance @ 28-9-98 is £2447 with abot £900 still to pay out for the Bash.

There were no new members this month.

I still have some outstanding transactions for the 25th Anniversary Bash, but as things stand we will have made a profit of around £500 with our scaled down weekend.

Andy Tew

Robin Brown is planning a **Parachute throwing and repack** at the Bristol Climbing Wall sometime in the New Year. What an opportunity to get high and get some air. More details to follow.

Avon hope to run a **Club Coaches Course** sometime during the next few months. Anyone wanting to attend, please let me know.(ed)

If you need a club coach to advise you on any aspect of your flying, phone The Man. Jeff Hoer on 1404 850489.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



From John Owen-Jones (South Devon)

Struddicks Farm (for South winds in SW Cornwall)

In the next few days we should have the use of Struddick again. The National Trust are licencing the club and accompanied visitors to use the site broadly as before but please note the new conditions.

Be prepared to show your membership card and BHPA card to any National Trust Warden. Not more than 15 assembled gliders to be on site at any one time. No spectators cars allowed in the field. No more than 5 flyers cars in the field. Vehicles to be parked near the roadside hedge. Access to be kept clear. Gate to be kept closed. No powered flying. Landing not to take place on other National Trust fields except in emergency. Competition flying only with prior agreement of the Trust. Non members to be accompanied by at least 2 South Devon Club members. Activities must not adversely affect the use and enjoyment of the land by other members of the public. Try to control any spectators attracted by the flying so they cause minimum disturbance in the vicinity.

Use best endeavours to prevent use in breach of the conditions, e.g. kick off uninsured flyers. As always, treat the site and any stock with consideration, which includes picking up litter, even if it isn't yours. At the time of writing there is no information about the new tenant.

Before flying contact John Owen-Jones for the latest information. (01392 841394)

From Mark Aplin

It has been suggested that the outflow of water thro' the breach in the Porlock sea wall as the tide goes down might form an interesting white water rapid for canoeing/kayaking!

Has anyone noticed what the outflow looks like from the air whilst soaring Bossington - or even when "Crossing the gap" to Porlock?

Apparently concern has been raised about walkers/dogs (and maybe even HG pilots) getting caught in the flow & washed out to sea!

From Dara Hogan on europg

Just back from a week's SIV with Jocky in Olu Deniz. Six Irish PGs got six day's flying out of seven in glorious weather. My minuscule 17 hours of ridge-soaring were incremented by 4+ hours of SIV plus my first-ever real thermalling experience and a mini-XC to Butterfly Valley. Full stalls and asymmetric tucks were not remotely as terrifying as I feared but no one told me that spiral dives were like a wild, accelerating, disorientating, nauseating fairground ride!! Our last flight was a 6pm nil

incremented by 4+ hours of SIV plus my first-ever real thermalling experience and a mini-XC to Butterfly Valley. Full stalls and asymmetric tucks were not remotely as terrifying as I feared but no one told me that spiral dives were like a wild, accelerating, disorientating, nauseating fairground ride!! Our last flight was a 6pm nil wind take-off from the Lookout Station on the top of Baba Dag (6,300 feet) starting with a cruise down the spineback ridge and followed by an hour's thermalling over the cliffs at Robinson's with 28 PGs in the sky as the sun set over the Mediterranean. Jocky was coaching us on the radio and as the light faded we landed at dusk on the beach. An aerial orgasm!

We returned to Ireland smiling all the way home having learned so much from Jocky and his team in a few short days. In my view, every PG should complete SIV (preferably with Jocky) as early as possible in his / her flying career. We now have far more confidence in our wings and in our personal limits. My own Apco Sentra 31 proved to be rock solid - undoubtedly helped by my 110kg AUW which is right at the upper limit. While thermalling for the first time with this large gaggle and barely maintaining, I was anxiously looking down for my son Eoin (15 hours) whom I had last sighted well below me. I should have been looking up - he was near the top of the stack with Jocky and good guys!

We loved every minute and we would thoroughly recommend Escape and Jocky to PGs like us wanting to learn how to fly properly and to develop the right attitude to flying.

From Brett Janaway

Funny enough, Darryl and I, along with a couple of others, are planning on going around May next year.

Anyone want to join us ????

From Rich Harding

I had a call from Geoff Rogers last night to say that some moron flew Ubley with a paramotor on Monday. Do we have any idea who this might have been?

Having made the paramotor situation very clear earlier in the year, following the incident with the Crook Peak landing field, and bearing in mind the sensitivity of Ubley, could I ask what you all consider suitable punishment, assuming we find the culprit? Personally, I feel nothing less than an Avon Sites ban on the person concerned will suffice, combined with informing the BHPA and requesting action

landing field, and bearing in mind the sensitivity of Ubley, could I ask what you all consider suitable punishment, assuming we find the culprit? Personally, I feel nothing less than an Avon Sites ban on the person concerned will suffice, combined with informing the BHPA and requesting action by themselves too. Opinions?

From An Observer

I was out walking on Farway last week when my attention was drawn to two people who had arrived to fly parachutes. They walked about inspecting the area, carefully stepping over an electric fence, which had been erected to keep a herd in the bottom of the field. One of them took out a blue and white chute and got ready to fly. The other chap seemed to be watching with interest. The first one threw his chute into the air and was thrown backwards with some force, hurtling across the ground in a spray of cow pat, he demolished the electric fence. At this point the farmer released a separate herd of cattle into the upper field. The fence was obviously intended to keep them apart. Obviously in some distress from the pain he was sustaining, he struggled to join the wires. The jolts he received were painful to behold. His companion was of no assistance, probably because he seemed to be having a distressing fit. At last, with the fence rejoined, he gathered his filthy chute and again leapt into the air. Why do they do it? What possible pleasure can there be in suffering such discomfort?

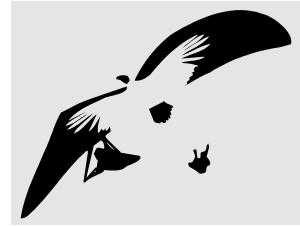
FIRST AID COURSE

We are going to organise a first aid course for all the coaches who need to renew their ratings, for new or prospective coaches, for operators and for anyone who wants to be in the position to take action after an accident rather than just be a spectator!

We need ten people to do the course. Will all who are interested phone Phil and give him your name asap.



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3rd Blorengé JO JF soar in light thermals on a beautiful afternoon.



MINUTES CONTINUED



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At Woolacombe Courtney James top landed into Trevor's trailer and knocked himself out on a rock, presumably piercing his helmet, which was the type with holes, well it has now anyway. He doesn't actually remember much about it. Dave Lunn also reported the fatality at Devil's Dyke, which will no doubt be covered in detail in Skywings.

Sites

East Hill. We have now received the licence Devon County Council. But they are now trying to charge us £400 in back fees for the last 4 years. We will respond suitably.

North Hill. Once again in need of a good strimming. Martyn Howe reports that the adders are following his example and multiplying.

Brent Knoll. Permission to use the N.E. take off has been refused, however Brian Smith (or somebody at any rate) is investigating.

Selsley Common has no bottom landing at present.

Future Talks

Pete Bayliss and John Long have agreed to give their talk on filming the hang gliding sequence in the James Bond film at the November meeting.

25th Anniversary Bash

Phil Fouracre the proposed that as the forecast for the weekend was so bad and there would be little chance of flying. The venue for the party should be changed to Luppitt village Hall, which he had provisionally booked. This was unanimously agreed. We have sold something in the order of 130 tickets.

There being no further business the meeting closed at the end of the meeting.

(Who writes this stuff?) - Answer **John Milner**

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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.

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