

KEEP SOARING

SPRING 2013

JOHN HOYE'S JAUNT (756KM OF IT)

ROSS EDWARDS' EPIPHANY

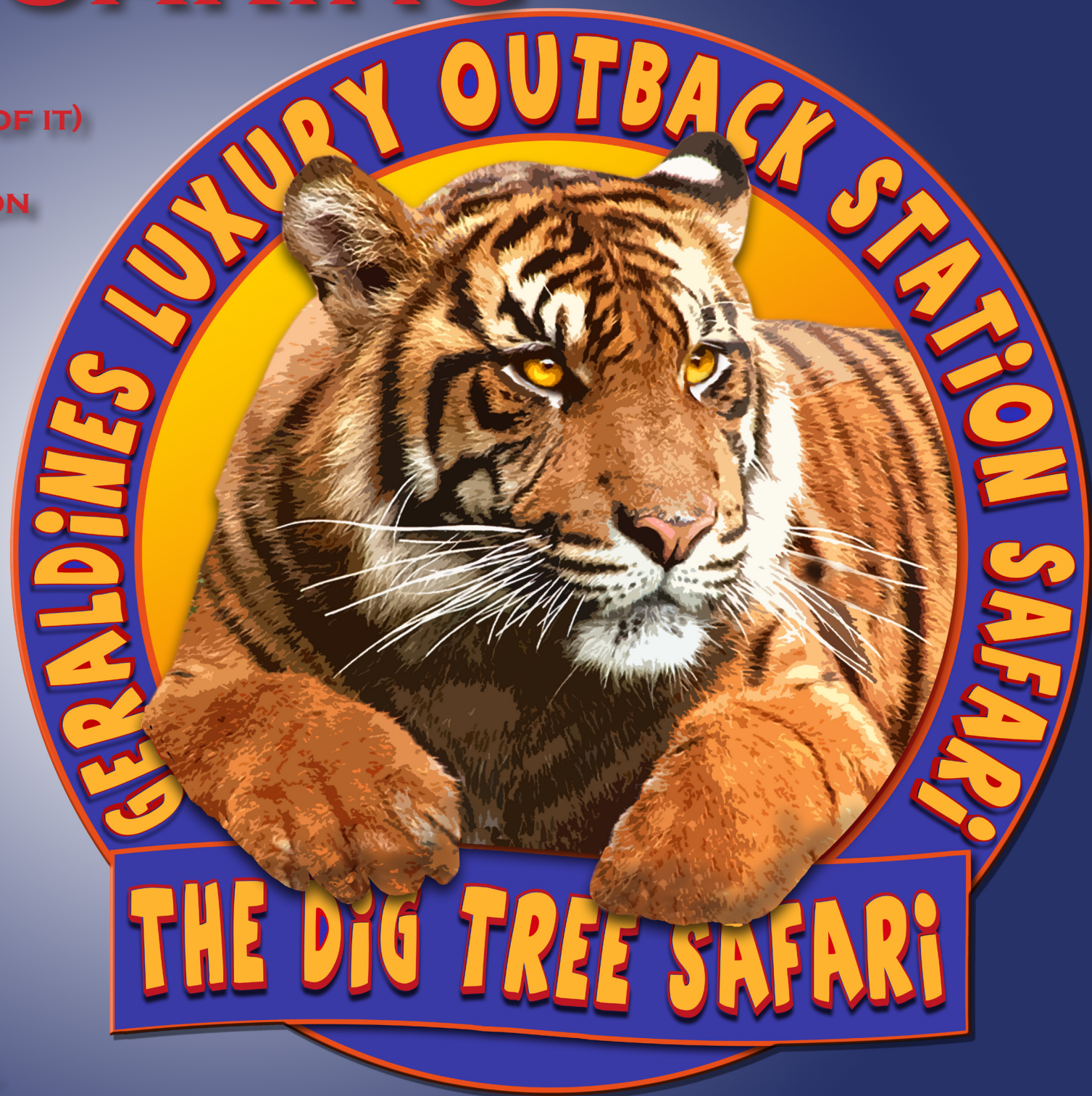
DAVE SHORTER'S EXPLANATION

THE GREAT SAFARI SWINDLE

THE FAMOUS MANAGER'S
REPORT (IN FRENCH).

THE GRIPPING PRESIDENT'S
REPORT (ALSO IN FRENCH).

NEWS FROM THE AIRSTRIP
AND ROUND THE COUNTRY.





After a very warm early spring followed by a pause in November, the gliding season appears to have got off its backside and in the last few weeks some excellent flights have been flown. Six flights of over 700 km, five of over 600km and another dozen or so of 400 - 500 kms.

Perhaps the best thing about these flights are that a lot of them were made in gliders of modest performance... Flights with Standard Cirrus, standard Libelle, Mosquito, Nimbus 2 and standard Jantar gliders feature well up on this list. Well done all!

A Keepit "Hall of Fame" has been posted on the soaringstuff website: <http://www.soaringstuff.net/lkolc/lkolc.html> It's worth noting that many of the top flights on this list were done in gliders which are more than 30 years old. It's also worth remembering that this list and others on Soaring Stuff only covers flights from LKSC. Some pilots, notably Jenny

Ganderton, fly a lot more flights and hours than are represented on the list.

It's interesting that the weather this year is quite different to the conditions we've had over the last three years but it's perhaps more like the weather conditions when I first joined LKSC. I can clearly remember sitting at briefings and listening to visitors declaring 700-850 km tasks almost every day.

Unusually, this editorial is being written before the rest of the newsletter is put together so I can only dream that there will be contributions on some of the other club events which have been happening over the last few months.

Notably there was the NSW State Championships, the Keepit Fast week, the GLOSS safari and a four day X-C weekend, all well attended and no doubt enjoyed by all.

THE FRENCH CONNECTION

Elody, our new French tuggie appears to have settled in well. She's enjoying what the club and Australia has to offer. She does not (yet) love Vegemite, but no doubt will come around in time, if she's exposed enough to this pillar of Australian cultural life.

But beware! Elody has been giving several members lessons on gastronomie, culture and "Le Terroir." These subjects appear to be all of a piece. She found the sight of someone drinking red woobla with ice so offensive that a picture SMS was immediately sent off to France and when asked to sample the bombo herself, got very French about our Australian fighting wines.

On the un-safari to Dubbo for Lou Ransby's birthday, a blindfold wine drinking test was done by a group of us flying gastronomists to try and disprove the claim that many/most people cannot tell the

difference between red and white when blindfolded (by Harry Pott's tie.) We failed. Even though it was early in the evening. Almost everyone could not tell red from white.

Later, a group of women repeated the test and did not have to do more than sniff the woobla to be able to distinguish red from white. I guess a lesson here is to sniff before you plug, especially if you are a bloke.

I seem to remember Harry Potts' mentioning that he always does blindfold wine tasting on the boat he runs and everyone always selects a Spanish wine but being French, they won't buy it.

So back to Elody and her mention of "Le Terroir" in connection with local bombo taken with ice. As keen students of French history will remember, Le Terroir refers to a period just after the start of the French Revolution when many French gastronomes, refusing to eat cake as directed, lost their heads on M. Guillotin's new invention which was intended to part head from body as painlessly and humanely as possible.

There's possibly an error in translation here... Cake may refer to brioche rather than pain ordinaire which they could be forgiven for refusing to eat, especially with ham and cheese... which alone would be cause for the invention of the guillotine.

Anyway, beware. If you are someone who enjoys a bit of ice in your woobla, as I do, then watch out for Citizeness Tug Pilots getting up to a bit of woodwork behind their caravan after work. (BTW, I learned the habit of putting ice in woobla from a French dude... albeit from Bordeaux, not the deep south.

DOING IF FOR YOURSELF.

It seems like a good time to mention this, especially to those of us who are not old and bold pilots. That is, we are doing if for ourselves. We fly for fun. Watch out that you don't become a slave to the OLC!

"You do realise this becomes an illness and starts interfering with work and family when we check the OLC before the ABC news each day. Even a 500 starts to look insipid when one plans a task now." Exactly!

I knew a guy who could do a Rubiks cube in under 30 seconds. I expressed some amazement and he replied, 'It ruined my life.' And it did. The level of obsession required to do this really did unhinge him.

There was a quote in a hang gliding video called Big Blue Sky which particularly moved me. A pilot who was there at the beginning said "It was like being surrounded by giants, and in a way, the rest of my life has been an anticlimax.' It's like Orson Welles, doing the best of your work at 24 and then having a career which slides downhill from there.

It's a great idea to post flights on the OLC, partly because it shows anyone who wants to look, how well the club is doing compared with others in Australia. But the OLC does not have to be the central point of your flying... unless you want it to be that is.

One day a few years ago when I was learning to fly sailplanes, Al Buttenshaw called out "My glider" and took the controls off me while on tow. I was wondering what I could have done wrong when he told me to look outside... the air was as sparkling and clear as cut glass and you could see for ever. I was impressed that someone like Al, after all the hours he has flown, still had time to slow down and smell the flowers.

"A superb soaring day with gin clear air. The cumulus went as far as the eye could see but blued out if you went West... we ploughed on through the magnificent sky". So wrote John Hoye who certainly sounded as if he enjoyed that day.

Flying outside your comfort zone can extend your abilities but if it stops being fun, slow down... and enjoy it!

LES DOMESTIQUES

It's rare to have an issue where Anne Bull does not rate a mention. This time it is for masterminding the redecorating of many of the rooms at the club. That includes new curtains, new bedspreads, new carpet, cupboards and lights, new mattress and pillowcase protectors and a mirror.

The change is really remarkable. You can now draw the curtains and not get woken up as the first rays of sun poke over the horizon. The beds are clean and somewhere you could bring anyone, even the pickiest of wives! Please, lets keep it that way.

Bring your own bedding, keep it clean and always use the mattress and pillowcase protectors. If you forget your bedding, there's an emergency set around, details written in each cabin.

Lets hope the brilliant conditions carry on for many more months. In a way we have deserved it after a few second rate seasons.

And remember (from me at least) fly safe, have FUN... and a hugely enjoyable festival of eating and hangovers!

The Editor.

IAN'S IPAD
MY IPAD

JOHN - CAN YOU CHANGE THAT
TO BEER D'CIOLIL?
TODAY AFTER NOON

110% □

Sale copains"

Joyeux Noel and tout ca stuff"

It's been a vachement difficile few weeks because I have been not only president of the club but have been managing it too until the ~~pomme boat person~~ new manageress manager lady turns up from the land of the leap year shower from Mannis Island from the UK.

Not only have I been wearing those two hats but I have been teaching the Froggie new French Tuggie how to fly, Aussie style. She's caught on real fast and I think as a gesture of respect, has been teaching me French Kultur and how to speak it etc.

The trouble and strife tells me I have a strong sense of language... well strong and language were used in the same sentence anyway... anyway, I have been learning heaps. For example....

Merci beau cul is what you say to someone when they hand you a nice cold tinnie of VB. (could be merci beau queue but either will do.) I'm allowed the occasional tinnee these days since getting my wings back. 8 months between throttle and bottle! No more!!! The only drawback is she makes me drink a glass of green slime for every tinne.

I asked the chappie who helps with the newsletter and does the colouring in for a change to my page. I was going to get some sort of presidential coat of arms on the ipad so it would look more important but the bastard says he's busy. Busy! At Xmas time?? See next newsletter eh?

367
94
40

Now, back to the French speak.

I was trying to teach her some good Aussie songs because it's Christmas and she'll have to sing carols etc so she teaches me some French songs like La Marseillaise and another one which is called "Ca Ira". Now that translates as "she'll be right" which sounds like my sort of chanson but the words go something like;

Ah' she'll be right, she'll be right, the aristocrats, we'll hang them from the lamp posts!
If we don't hang them, We'll break them,
and If we don't break them, We'll burn the burn the bastards.

And this is French kultur? Anyway, she's been learning my favourite chrissy carol which is by Bazza McKenzie as every Aussie knows.....

I've had liquid laughs in bars and I've hurled from moving cars and I've chuckled where and when it suited me

But if I could choose the spot, to regurgitate me lot, then I'd chunder in the old Pacific Sea"

Drink it up, drink it up, crack another dozen tubes and prawns with me.

If you want to throw your voice, mate you won't have any choice

But to chunder in the old Pacific Sea.

Have a good one copains! See you in January!

“THE BEST DAY IN 45 YEARS OF GLIDING”

.... Dennis Stacey

“G'day. I didn't know you were coming.” Ian Downes, Wednesday evening 11th December, to Dave and Carol Shorter as they arrived at the club.

“Carol had a moment of weakness, and said she'd be happy to return home via Keepit if I liked. I took a squizz at the 4 day forecast synoptic chart. That looks good enough for me”

Joy had a chuckle pointing out that at dinner that evening Australians in the clubhouse were outnumbered – Koichi from Japan; Harry Potts, Louise, Jenny and Joy from UK; Casey Lewis and Eric from Hong Kong; Federico from Switzerland; Gary from NZ; Miro from Czech Republic; Gerhard from Germany – an international gathering for the days ahead.

The Summer Qld trough was forecast to extend into NSW from Thursday for the next few days. It appeared to be right over Keepit and staying there. Here's what the synoptic chart looked like at 11am Friday 13th.

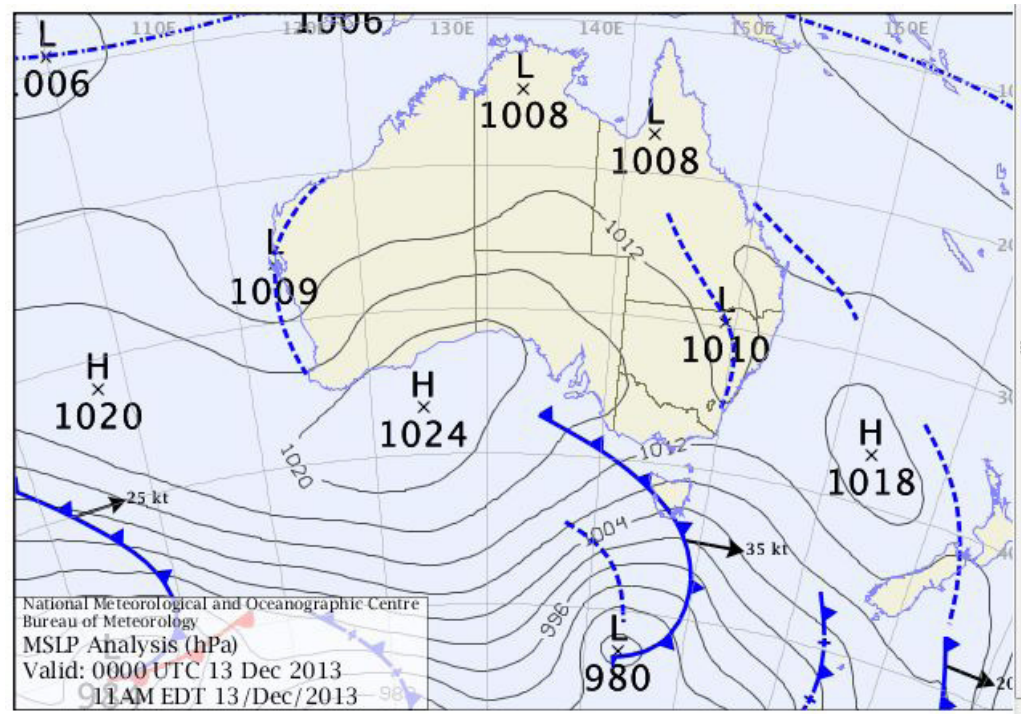
With no rain forecast we had the perfect conditions for some magic soaring – dry trough line sitting over Lake Keepit.

Here's what pilots had to say about the next few days:

THURSDAY 12TH

“I think I'll press on.” Jenny Ganderton at Walgett, attempting a 750km FAI triangle to Walgett/Narromine in her Mozzie.

Keep Soaring



FRIDAY 13TH

While conditions at Keepit, and across the Pilliga were strong, with 12,000ft cloudbase and 8-10knot thermals, it was blue out West. A nasty band of cloud was streaming in from the NW and there was a lot of wave influence making conditions quite difficult west of the Pilliga. Dave Shorter turned back at Walgett but Jenny continued on and arrived home around 8pm after cutting the corner at Gilgandra – over 9 hours in the air, and 660km.

“I'm interested in speed” said Miro Mikus. “I'm going to stay with the clouds” - he achieved 646km at 110kph in his old Nimbus2. Conditions east of the Pilliga were magic and Gary Ransby, Koichiro Onada and Dave Shorter all registered 500+km flights.

“My first 500km flight ever!!” Koichi's face was all sunbeams. He'd achieved his aim at Keepit flying the club 18m Discus2 IUO.

“I got a bit low, so I turned back ... but then got another climb, so I went on anyway.” Vic Hatfield in his Cirrus was up at Inverell, attempting to fly further East to Glen Innes. Got halfway there.

“Whacko, Yoo-hoo, Beauty!!” Bob Dircks. “Wait till I tell Paul Mander!!” A remarkable achievement in a Std Libelle – an FAI 500km triangle at 100kph – Manilla, Gurley, Coolah. Great flight Bob! Every reason to be over the moon.

“Didn't want to mess up my speed, so I finished at Breeza” Dave Shorter, who flew Berwicks, Coolatai, and back to around Breeza – 620km at 142kph.

That didn't bother Jenny and Miro who both did 700+km flights. “I flew right through the centre of the Pilliga scrub, I was so high!” Miro Mikus

And more 500km flights by Greg Smith in the LS6, Justin Smith and Graham Holland in the club Duo, and Koichi again.

SATURDAY 14TH

Peter Shiels - "A Personal Best for me – my flight with John Hoye in the Grob, 756 km and my longest flight 7hrs 23min."

"What made the day special for me? The clear air giving unrivalled views of large expanses of NSW and Qld, the regular super thermals, and Peter's tolerance when I suggested going just that bit further." John Hoye.

"Don't think I've seen a longer flight in a Twin Grob anywhere. What a day!" Jim Staniforth.

Radio call from Bob Dircks in the Std Libelle to Christian Linnett in the Cirrus late in the afternoon

"Was that 13 or 30km to go to Mullaley?"

"Wish it was 13" said Christian. But he got there, as he usually does.

In a remarkable two flights these two guys flew up to Goondiwindi in Qld and back home via Mullaley - over 600km. PBs for both pilots.

"I just floated around a bit." Gerhard Stuck – he just floated around for over 500km.

"What a great final glide! - 161km of streeting all the way home from Moree without turning!"

Dave Shorter. Jenny in the ASH26 and Dave in the JS1 completed a 750km FAI triangle – Liverpool ranges, Collie NW of Gilgandra, and Moree.



Again conditions west of the Pilliga were blue and a bit slower, but when they returned NE to Moree it was still booming. "I always reckon it's much more interesting flying around Keepit – more varied country and less blue than you get further west. Today was typical. Booming locally"

"A big day for the Libelle and Cirrus" Bruce Taylor.
"I wish I was there."

"A truly remarkable clutch of outstanding flights" Harry Medicott.

SUNDAY 15TH

"After 25 hours in three days I'm having a day off." Jenny Ganderton. "I'm trying to go home but the weather's too good."

"Watching jealously from the north" Jim Staniforth.

"I hate it when social commitments get in the way" Jacques Graells.

"I am envious of youse all." John Clark.

"Best I've experienced in 45 years of gliding" Dennis Stacey. Dennis and Nick Singer flew 750km Garah, Walgett, and Quirindi. That doesn't tell the full story as they both had to cut short their flights to travel home Sunday evening. "I also had to work the next day and had a wife and 400km journey waiting for me: so I landed." Nick Singer.

It was still working. "On the way home I saw cloud streets all the way from LK to Cessnock" Mike Jarolim.

STILL GOING – TUESDAY 17TH

Pretty bloody good. Walgett Kaputar Keepit yesterday" Ian Barraclough.

.... AND THE FINAL WORD.

"You do realise this becomes an illness and starts interfering with work and family when we check the OLC before the ABC news each day. Even a 500 starts to look insipid when one plans a task now." Dr Justin Smith.

MY JAUNT

756 KILOMETRES IN A GROB 103C SLG

Peter Sheils and I flew Grob 103c LL 756 km on Saturday 14th December. A superb soaring day with gin clear air giving unrivalled views of large expanses of NSW and Queensland.

We declared a task but this was changed just before self launching and climbing away. On the way to the first TP we realised that the sky was mainly blue beyond Coonabarabran and so took a climb to 12,300' before rounding Siding Spring observatory and heading North through the Pilliga.

Peter and I shared the flying, half hour on and half hour off for most of the flight. (It's interesting how the half hour on the controls whizzed by and then the watch changed speed into tortoise mode for the other half hour.)

The cumulus went as far as the eye could see but blued out if you went West and this pushed us further to the East as we ploughed on through the magnificent sky. Others flying reported stronger lift than we experienced but we centred the best we could find and tried to bounce a few thermals to improve our glide between the climbs.

Our second TP was chosen with the aid of the 302 GPS info as I tried to ascertain our ground speed and total distance flown. A street towards the Queensland border took us in to our turn and brought us out again with the mountains to the North of Kaputar now in view.

On the run for home the thermals reduced in strength but it was possible to climb by going off track



and curving round some elongated clouds thereby reducing the need to stop so often. As we approached Keepit for final glide I rejected a 3kt climb and as a result we then ended up going through heavy sink and desperately tried cloud after cloud for a climb, going well off track in the process. As a last ditch effort we cruised further off track to the East to fly over some wooded slopes and found another 3kts to put us back on a safe final glide for home.

I was amazed when I downloaded the Nano recorder and found that we had flown further than I thought. If I had known the true distance perhaps we would have turned for home sooner. Grob's just don't normally go that far!

The first leg had the best climbs with up to 10kts indicated on the vario but I tend to just use the average. When we were on the second leg someone

was reporting 12-13 kts from bottom to top of a climb. We had about 8kts at the time with the average peaking at 12.2 kts for a short while.

The thing about the Grob is that there is not much point in flying above 80kts normally it's more important to find less sink or streets going your way.

There is no doubt that this was a magnificent soaring day and that we were both privileged to have the Grob available to enjoy the day together. We cruised along surveying the countryside with Peter informing me of the names of villages and hamlets as we passed over his old valuers stomping ground.

My congratulations to all who flew and completed tasks (did anyone land out?) and hope that those who didn't fly get the chance to enjoy more of these days in the future.

John Hoye

THE G DALE WEEK



I first met G Dale nearly 20 years ago. Greg Smith as president had appointed G as the new full time manager of the Club.

G had replied to our advertisement in the Australian Gliding magazine, being at the time the manager of Lasham Gliding Club. I volunteered to meet G on his arrival at Sydney Airport, waiting patiently with a placard in hand for him to come through the passenger terminal.

So G spent a couple of days at our home recovering from jet lag. He did usual sightseeing around Sydney before I drove him up to Lake Keepit. I don't think he would have been very impressed with what he had come half way around the world to see.....

The Club had experienced the Big Fire a couple of years earlier. The club house had been transported

from Water Resources and sited where it now stands. G's bedroom was where the extended kitchen is now. There were no cabins. There was no flight centre.... only an old Leighton site shed.

G met with Garry Speight and proceeded to involve himself with the operations of the Club under fairly Spartan conditions. It wasn't long before he returned to our home to pick up his girlfriend Annie Layley who flew into Sydney to join him at Lake Keepit for the summer.

The years dimmed my memory of G. But by coincidence I saw him on television when I visited UK two years ago. Peter Sheils and I were on an aviation tour of the UK. We were relaxing in a hotel near Duxford where we came to watch an air show. We turned on the television and there was a news segment

of a gliding accident nearby. G appeared on the screen explaining to a reporter how he had baled out of his glider after a mid air collision.....

But it wasn't until last year that I actually met up with G again in person and not until this year that I spent time with him on the week's course.....it was an enjoyable reunion.

So G has not changed too much....less hair, but appearing in good physical condition. This is probably the result of time spent with Annie Layley who is still his girlfriend (she didn't come with him, remaining in New Zealand to fly a tow plane at Omarama).

G has pursued a lifelong passion for gliding. Other glider pilots will understand this so I don't need to explain the addiction.....

So the G Dale Week involved about 20 participants, although others seemed to join in sessions at various times. There were about 6 pilots from Bathurst (who stayed on to fly in the NSW Comps in the following week) and several from other clubs. One pilot with a common interest came from Airlie Beach in the Whitsundays, which I visit each year to sail on a Maxi (Condor) in the Airlie Beach and Hamilton island Race Weeks.

The first couple of days of the week were raining and G spent a lot of time talking about different aspects of gliding. He spoke about flying in comps, cross country, wave flying, mountain flying etc. We have all heard a lot of this before, but G does have a way of presenting information in an interesting form.

For the rest of the week the weather was good and we all did some good cross country flying. I struggled on the first day as the ground was soft from the previous days' rain and because I started too early (several pilots had re lights). The task was short, Manilla Airstrip, Kaputar Tower and return.

On the leg to Kaputar I followed a sink street and became progressively lower. In the area north of Rangori I entered a valley below 3,000 feet and was seriously thinking of wimping out... turning for home and starting the motor.....

Then I heard Justin Smith (in the Duo with G) on the radio saying he was rounding Kaputar Tower at 12,000 feet. This was a defining moment when my attitude changed. I saw the light ! Perhaps like St Paul on the road to Damascus ! How could I be contemplating a (technical) outlanding when others were flying at over 10,000 feet ?



I found an area where I could hold my height and eventually I began to climb. It was pretty slow going. It might have taken me an hour or more to crawl out of the valley and gain workable height. I turned away from home and back towards Kaputar. Like Justin Smith, I turned at the Kaputar Tower at 12,000 feet.

So much of gliding is attitude and G Dale discussed this in detail. On the last day I flew with G in the Duo. The day was a boomer and we spent most of the flight to Tambar / Narrabri and return above 6,000 feet. But there was a point out of Narrabri where we got low (probably a bit below 4,000 feet) and hung in there with a slow climb (probably around 2 knots) for half an hour or so to achieve to final glide.

We have in our Club some fine cross country

instructors. Some have given me great insights into the skills and attitude required of a cross country pilot. But my enthusiasm for gliding had waned with the long drives from Sydney and other diversions like sailing, golf, family / grandchildren etc.

So I found the G Dale Week enlightening. G is a professional who demonstrated a wealth of knowledge and experience. He spoke for hours without notes or powerpoint slides etc.

We all left the course at the end of the week with a great deal of respect for G as a trainer / educator and a renewed enthusiasm for gliding.....

Ross Edwards

TIME WASTERS

Dave Shorter

Not everyone is interested in racing, and flying fast.

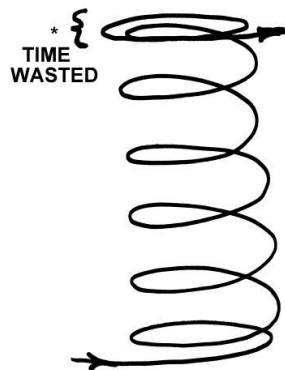
But, if you're interested in flying cross country, doing badge flights, and flying tasks, improving your speed is a necessary requirement for getting there. Getting there faster may be the difference between achieving your goal or landing in a field.

If you want to progress from floating around the home field, to going somewhere, getting there efficiently without wasting time is critical. And one of the biggest factors in efficient speedy flying is the elimination of wasted time.

Here is a list of **COMMON TIME WASTERS** you can avoid. Work on eliminating these and you'll get to your destination much quicker, and be able to fly much further.

TW #1. A few extra turns at the top of a thermal.

It's very easy to try and milk a few extra feet out of



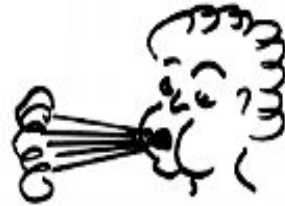
each thermal with a few extra turns at the top.

You're wasting your time!!

Keep Soaring

As soon as the thermal starts dying, leave! Two or three extra turns trying to find where the thermal has gone will cost you valuable time – a minute or more for say 15 thermals in a task is ¼ hour lost.

TW #2 Turning in a gust.

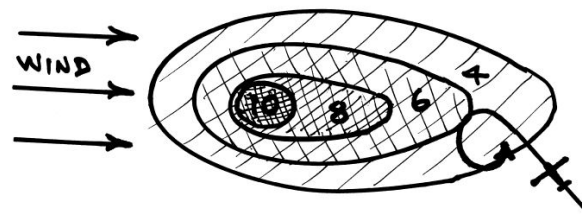


Be careful about mistaking a gust for lift. When you hit a gust, the vario behaves the same way as when you encounter lift – it goes wild. If you turn in response to every time the vario goes off, you'll waste a lot of time turning in sinking air.

You must wait for the seat-of-the-pants feel as well as the vario – wait for the "surge".

If you do initiate a turn and the vario immediately goes dead, turn away before you complete 90° and fly on.

TW #3 Thermalling out of the core

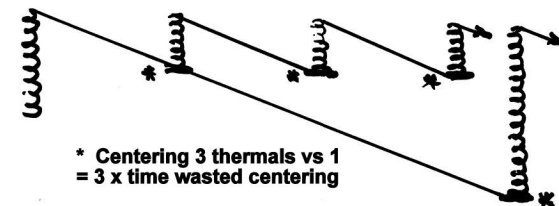


Gliders can often be seen flying in weak lift when there's a big thermal core only 5-800 metres away. Get into the core.

Thermals often are surrounded by trailing areas of weak lift. If you turn immediately you fly into this trailing area of lift, and you'll miss the big core.

When you come into an area of buoyant air and the glider starts climbing, try easing into wind and testing the air further on. Often you'll find continuing buoyancy followed by a strong surge of the big core. Trading 3-4 knots for 8-10 knots will halve your climbing time.

TW #4 Taking Every Thermal.



Centering each thermal wastes time - one or two turns (sometimes more) at the bottom of most thermals will be spent getting into the core – maybe a minute per thermal? How many extra minutes will you waste in a long flight if you take every thermal you encounter?

When you're high, you can afford to be much more discriminating in the thermals you accept – fly on through those that are not boomers.

Ideally you want to get a 10 knotter from 3000ft all the way to 10,000ft. Taking lots of 5 knotters from 8 to 10,000 ft is very wasteful. (The practical solution is somewhere in between.)

TW #5 Excessive Deviations

Flight	Task	Selection	Phases			
01SPA1 - 20YCCA - 33DUNS - 44JIMB - 10YKRY						
Distance: 400.0km						
Start: 12:24:09 at 6795ft						
Finish: 13:25:34 at 1881ft						
Duration: 03:01:25						
Speed: 132.31km/h, XC Speed: 126.53km/h						
Circling:	Time	Vario	Alt.Gain	Alt.Loss	Thermals	
Total	00:34:51 (19%)	4.4kts	18232ft	-2546ft	16	
Left	00:03:06 (9%)	4.6kts	1598ft	-157ft	1	
Right	00:31:45 (91%)	4.4kts	16634ft	-2388ft	15	
Tries (<45s)	00:05:23 (3%)	1.3kts	1798ft	-1076ft	8	
Straight:	Time	Dis.Done	Alt.diff	Netto	Avg.GS	IAS
Total	02:26:34 (81%)	431.4km	20610ft	8.0kts	177km/h	158km/h
Rising	00:47:16 (32%)	122.2km	30039ft	9.3kts	155km/h	141km/h
Sinking	01:39:18 (68%)	309.1km	-50650ft	7.3kts	187km/h	166km/h
Netto rising	02:20:13 (96%)	413.0km	-16988ft	8.4kts	177km/h	158km/h

You need to be pretty sure about large deviations from track to reach another cloud. I've occasionally made a 90° deviation of maybe a kilometre or more for a promising cloud, only to find nothing. Another 30 seconds or more dead loss!! Even if you find buoyant air, but it's not enough to climb in, it will still be wasted time.

Only make the deviation if you're absolutely sure (another glider climbing strongly) or you have multiple options following on from that cloud – a string of other likely clouds.

Better still, plan further ahead and line up your track into buoyant air/cloud streets/linked clouds – from 30-40 km away. If you know the line you are going to take 30-40 km ahead you can avoid major deviations.

Every deviation adds kms to your task – more flying to do, and costs you extra time. You can check how much extra using Seeyou to analyse your results. In the flight shown here, from the Kingaroy Nationals, I've flown an extra 31kms in excess of the task.

The winner on that day, David Jansen, flew just 420kms of straight flying, 11 kms less than me – that's about 4 minutes of extra time lost.

TW #6 Turning Back.

You flew through a thermal and haven't found anything ahead? You need a very strong reason to turn back – imminent outlanding is the only reason I can think of. "There's always a thermal ahead" was a mantra I was quoted by an early cross country instructor. In my experience that's mostly been true, (and when it hasn't been I've ended up in a paddock). But if you're not prepared to press on your cross country speed is doomed to be slow.

Conclusion

A few minutes here or there doesn't sound much – each of the Time Wasters I've mentioned may only waste a minute or two (or even less), but add them all together and multiply by say 20 thermals in a typical day's flight and you might be surprised how much longer your flight will take.

If you want to improve your cross country speed and go longer distances, eliminate those Time Wasters.

Recommended Reading

One of the best best texts on similar issues is the chapter "Low Loss Flying" in the book by George Moffat - "Winning II". He adds up the small differences, many only seconds, over the length of a flight. You'll be surprised how much the end result is affected by each of these small decisions..

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Flying fast can be a pain in the neck. It's noisy, bumpy and uncomfortable at the best of times. I would guess that many of us have enough hurry and stress in our non-gliding lives that we don't need to carry it over. However, it's worth noting that in this Time Wasting article, Dave is giving a lot of pointers as to how to fly fast without actually increasing your flying speed.

It's also worth stating why it's important to achieve a reasonably fast cross-country speed. In the first paragraph, Dave says "Not everyone is interested in racing, and flying fast." Quite. Some of us are not very interested in racing at all... in fact it would appear that most club pilots are not too interested in competitive flying.

However, not wasting time is different. If you are flying cross-country, you want to make the best of the day and to fly as far as the conditions allow. On safaris, we have a destination each day and the intention is to fly there during the flyable part of the day. Knowing how to make the best of the conditions becomes an unconscious skill which can make flying more relaxing rather than less so. You can fly further with less effort.

Finally, the best thing I did to make my flying faster was almost the easiest. Fitting a Quiet Vent to my glider has allowed me to fly perhaps 10 knots faster. This little \$5 gadget smooths out the airflow around the canopy vent and reduces the noise to a remarkable level making fast flying much easier on the ears.

THE GREAT SAFARI SWINDLE. OR, WHY I WILL NEVER TRUST A MAN AGAIN.



This is not really an article for gliding blokes so some of you may want to turn the page right here. Yes, it's about gliding and its ups and downs but in this case, mainly the downs. It's useful for me to note where things went wrong so I and others won't repeat the same mistakes.

No doubt the gliding bits of this safari will be covered by the flyers so I'll just concentrate on the swindle bits... life at ground level.

According to my mother (her opinion at the time... she later recanted), my first and biggest mistake was marrying my first (current) husband. I was brought up as a vicious feminist by my mother and never saw myself as the kind of person who sat on the beach watching her hero surf. (Oddly, I quite

enjoy my husband watching me surf and his positive comments on some of my better waves but that's beside the point.)

When he took up sailplane flying, #1 husband read me a story about Phillip Will's wife Kitty, who drove about 1,350 miles on an Easter weekend in a Standard Vanguard towing a glider trailer... in England... in the mid '50s.

Well, it was a different era wasn't it? And wives were expected to do that sort of saintly thing. Me, I was different and a life on the (hard) road was not what I was looking for when I signed on. (Regrettably, I was forced to admit that I actually did sign on when he produced a photograph of me doing it.)

So how, you may well ask, did I, a thoroughly

THE GLOSS SAFARI

AN APOLOGY FROM THE ORGANISER

"GLOSS was the subtitle of the 2013 Keepit Safari ... Geraldine's Luxury Outback Soaring Safari, it even had a logo and stickers on the car doors and the gliders.

The idea was to pamper Geraldine for her years of driving long distances, late in the afternoon, dodging roos, emus, goats and stock as she towed the trailer full of luggage and glider gear to each day's destination.

The Safari will be remembered for many things, but it is unlikely that it will be remembered as being luxurious.



modern woman, get conned into driving literally thousands of kilometres on gliding safaris over the last five years? And why is this last safari, my last safari?

It started two years ago on our Lake Eyre safari when we were weathered for four days at Wirrealpa. We had a great time at this 150 year old sheep station and it was the highlight of the trip. There were few if any highlights advertised for the following year's trip to Burketown and realising this, I think the organisers started cooking up the idea of this year's "carrot". A "payback for the girls."

Geraldine and Lynne's Luxury Outback Station Safari was the name written on this carrot. I'm not averse to a bit of luxury... who is? (I have no idea why #1 husband's family calls me "The Princess"... I never

get treated like one!) When Lynne Thompson bailed out due to other commitments (what did she know that I did not?) it became just the GLOSS safari.

My first husband's choice of transport for me this year was not the Range Rover Sport of previous years. No, it was something completely different. I have to state right here that though I have managed to run over a wide range of Australian fauna on the street where we live, I have managed to have only close misses with animals in the outback and it was he who hit the kangaroo (with the \$10,000 repair bill.) The emu I hit this year was too light to really damage anything other than the poor bird. But in keeping with his idea of having a car which could survive hitting a dinosaur, this year's car was a Landrover.

And there is no truth in the rumour that Geraldine left the safari a day early from Gilgandra muttering under her breath "that bastard Barraclough's idea of luxury is unbelievable". She left to catch up with her daughter who was moving interstate!

Up-market destinations had been booked, like 'Bindara on the Darling' but they cancelled us two days before departure when they had an urgent health issue.

And there was the Mildura Grand Hotel with dinner reserved downstairs at the legendary Stefanos restaurant ... that was cancelled because high winds led to a re-shuffle of our planned route.

Mungo Lodge would have been great also, reputedly 4 star, Jacques, the French owner and chef, has developed quite a reputation there, but the 'Mighty Rushing Winds' blew away that stay also.

And the Cooper Creek Homestay at Innamincka was also a casualty of being tied down in the strong winds for two days in Tibooburra; it would have been unusual and interesting if not quite luxurious.

And, well, the Royal Mail Hotel at Hungerford may not have been luxury, but it was certainly unique; best forget about the bunkhouse which was a mosquito infested tin shed.

We had to drive 100km after landing on two occasions to find beds for the night and back again next morning ... that may have been a bit of a downer.

But the restored Imperial Hotel in Broken Hill was pretty good. Geraldine chose it and she and

Anyone who was awake in 1955 would instantly recognise this Landrover. They might not know right away how to operate the electric windows or air-con but apart from that, it's exactly the same vehicle. OK, there are now disc brakes and coil springs but that's it. No airbags, not ESP, no warnings that your seatbelt is not done up or that a door is not closed and no make-up mirrors in the sun visors. And the ride of a short wheelbase Landrover could not be described as rough because that suggests that there is a ride in the first place. Misery!

On most of the early legs of the safari, we stayed in towns like Walgett or Burke where the shops, houses and motels are all behind bars. There's got to be something wrong with a town that has to spend as much on bars and grilles as most places spend on street lights.

The strangest sight was the wash basin outside the bank, between the front door and the bars outside. Are customers forced to wash their hands before entering that hallowed place or do they wash the dirt off their hands after leaving it?

If the distinct lack of any form of luxury on the first few days only whetted my appetite for what was to follow, a few days weathered in Tibooburra sharpened it even more.

I would not describe Tibooburra as an armpit of a place... some people have nice armpits. (My daughter says I do.) A lot of the accommodation was booked for the Pipeline Crew. I was hoping that this would be a surf music band but to my great disappointment, they were a bunch of hairy oafs in high vis gear and utes without a Hawaiian guitar between them.



The only good feature about being weathered was that we missed out on an 800 km drive to Cooper's Corner, all on badly rutted dirt roads... to see a tree! I can hear you gasp. 800km to see a tree is not luxury in anyone's book! I think the tree has "dig" written on it. Big woop! I can write "dig" on a tree in Tibooburra and avoid the two day drive!

The flies at Tibooburra are very like those exotic magnets that #1 husband bought for the kids. He promised to double their pocket money if they could pull them off the fridge door.

Needless to say it was money well spent on the magnets but probably ruined their trust in human nature... or men. The flies stuck like those magnets to your face... except when you tried to swat them.

The other car on the safari, Al Giles' Forrester Gump was either driven by Al, or Jenny who were sharing a glider. This was difficult because Al is around

John had an enormous suite with lounge room and verandah ... which they generously shared with all of us.

Maybe we need to have more champagne next time?"

This 'Dig Tree Safari' will be remembered for the frequent troughs that brought head winds, meager thermals which led to flying low over completely un-landable country. Typically 3 knots to 5,000ft was our lot. There were a very few occasions when we reached 7,000ft, and for the most part we used a narrow working band of perhaps 2,000ft just above un-landable scrub.

Because of the headwinds we had many days where we could not reach our intended goal for the day and had to land at small towns along the way. And we lost 4 days due to the 'Mighty Rushing Winds' that kept the gliders firmly tied down at Tibooburra for 2 days, at Broken Hill for a day and again at Gilgandra.

So we had to cancel the leg to Innamincka and The Dig Tree ... and it was supposed to be 'The Dig Tree Safari'.

The visibility on the ground on Saturday morning here at Seaforth was down to 50 metres ... I could just make out the house across the road. The golfers found it a bit tricky.

Ian Barraclough

the maximum volume for any glider and Jenny, since she was on a starvation diet through most of the safari, had to add a lot of lead.

I started this same diet as soon as I got back to try and shed the kilos put on by a constant diet of chips and I can tell you, or rather my first husband can tell you, you get a bit grumpy in the afternoon which maybe explains why Jenny drove like a bat out of hell in the Gump and Al swanned along as if he had all day.

It was expected that the Gump pulled the trailer but I think there was a risk that the trailer would pull the back off the Gump so as soon as a dirt road loomed, the trailer was on the back of the Landrover. Which does not have great gobs of excess power.

But at least the back end is firmly bolted on. Anyway, after Tibooburra, we did a runner and went all the way down to Broken Hill instead of “enjoying” a night at some god forsaken desert research station which fortunately was full.

At Broken Hill, I had a brief glimpse of something less than roughing it at a nice old hotel with a proper bed. The food at Broken Hill is OK and it was fortunate that we were weathered again there so I had two nights of it. In fact, the pilots never stopped moaning about the fronts which appeared every day or two and about entire flights spent below 4,000'. Again, big woop! Man up! If you can't take a joke, you shouldn't have joined.

Due to the weather, we had to skip the leg to Mildura and back... I think it was more due to the fact that some mean ASIC customs people took Geoff Sim's Swiss army knife from him. Mildura was meant to be one of the luxury legs. The amount of luxury available at our next stop, White Cliffs, would not even have



A SAFARI IN OUR ARCUS M

Wendy Medlicott

Yes please was my first reaction.

Harry needed no more encouragement. We set out with an ASH25M an ASH26E and a DG800.

Eight of us all together with 6 in gliders.

The route was explained and we would have two vehicles travelling with us to carry luggage and glider gear.

The cars would also convey us to the “luxury” hotels and stations we would be staying at. How good is this going to be! The perfect area for good high cloud base and long flights.

The good high cloud base did not exist. A few

days we could not launch at all as we had 35 knot plus winds on the ground.

On other days we managed to launch into a blue sky with an inversion most days at 3000 ft or so.

Not a problem unless the land underneath you had very few landing options. “Look for the homestead and you will always find the airfield or stay above the road”. No Problem.

Harry was getting annoyed with me on the many occasions I let him know that I had the fuel turned on and the throttle in the correct position for the engine to go up and be started.

He just said “there will be another thermal but to keep you happy I will fly over the area we will be able to land if we need the engine. Of course we never needed it.

satisfied a boat person, let alone a Princess comme moi. So it was down to Tilpa Station to be the luxury highlight of the trip. I'm sorry to say that luxury is not in the eye of the beholder. To a large extent, luxury is a measurable quantity and the quantity at Tilpa could hardly be measured.

I forgot to mention the noise level in the Landrover. At highway speeds, it is probably well over any OH&S limits (though not as loud as economy class in a 747) so even though noise cancelling headphones were provided as a sop, I preferred to wear earplugs and turn the stereo up high. This meant that I did not always hear calls from the pilots complaining about this and that.

There's a sense of panic which often sets in during the early days of a safari when the prospect of three or four thousand kilometres of driving seems impossible to take. Normally transcendental boredom sets in and one gets through it. Yes, not without quite a bit of moaning but there has to be some payback.

This year, weathered again in Gilgandra, it got the better of me and I decided to do a bolt. I am not a bolter by nature, but Gilgandra is strictly for Gilgandra lovers. With our baggage of a daughter about to run off to Perth with some Kaffir, I used this as an excuse to do a bolt and catch a plane from Tamworth back home.

Freedom at last! And maybe I could do better with my daughter than my own mother had done when she uttered the words "What can we do to stop her marrying that awful man." to my friends while I was trying on my wedding dress. If only she'd said it to me!

*Geraldine (formerly) Clark
(with help from ghostwriter)*



After 30 years of flying with Harry I still have trouble working out how he does it. The flying was difficult every day except the last day of course but a great sense of achievement in flying in these conditions was something that will stay with me for a long time- until the next safari.

The "luxury" accommodation comes in the form of a motel in Walgett that has a locked gate and very high fences around it. A landing in Waanaring short of our intended destination had us travel 100km by road to Hungerford in Queensland for the hotel as Waanaring was full with gas line workers and that was the next nearest accommodation.

Hungerford is reached by a border crossing – a gate in the dingo fence – and has a population of about 17. The pub was clean with facilities about 3km away! It seemed that far anyway. It could only get better and thankfully it did.

I certainly look forward to the next safari with a wonderful group of Keepit pilots and the lovely Geraldine who drove over some of the worst roads in the universe every day as our support team.

This also entailed re booking accommodation and cancelling when needed, making our lunches and organizing restaurants for dinner. She was also our SAR contact. The other vehicle was shared by Al and Jenny who also shared the flying in the ASH26E.

Ian Barraclough has organized the safari's for the last 20 years or so and is excellent with all he does. We were given booklets with all the landing areas, GPS co-ordinates, phone numbers.

Everything was arranged and when necessary re-arranged for us. He also kept track of all of us whilst in the air. Thank you seems so inadequate for the time and effort put in.



The road stretches in front of me like a long, long towrope connected to a tug, invisible over the horizon. It's 2° in the cockpit so all the vents are closed and the DG and I drift silently over the outback. Other than the road itself, there's nowhere visible to land for miles. It's blue, the thermals are rough, weak and low. Another Keepit Safari. Lovely!

Walgett itself is one of those Australian towns we don't talk about, where something has gone really wrong. Almost all the shops and businesses down the main street have mesh scenes or bars over the windows. Many have 3 metre fences around them. At the motel, they lock the barred gates at 9 and open

them at 6.30 and it is not to make sure that the guests don't leave without paying.

The next leg from Walgett to Bourke should have been easy too but things are never that way on Safaris. The first thing was that we landed at Brewarrinna, some 100 kms short.

It's normally necessary to blame something like the weather for things like this but in this case, we'll blame Geoff Sim. The day was not forecast to go over 4000' and the thermals under 5 knots. As we were getting ready at the strip, washing down the wings and removing tie downs and solar panels, a deck of high

POST TRAUMATIC SAFARI SYNDROME.

Al Giles

This safari was remarkable for me in that I seem to have emailed very little, and PTSD has obscured most of the rest.

The leg from Walgett to Brewarrinna was like one of those Monty Python nightmares where no matter how much you attempt to escape the horror close behind you, it gets closer still. The only way out was into a strong headwind and virga; the alternative was to stay in a town where everything is locked and barred, for your own safety, including the motel gates.

Most motels just settle for a cordon sanitaire across the toilet seat but not in Walgett. As we had bookings in Bourke and a party was promised it was push on into the teeth of the gale in light broken lift and try to ignore the fact that every time you looked around, Walgett was still right there.

The 25 barrelled off over the horizon and I was just admiring their style when their suggestion came over the radio that perhaps we might return to Walgett, as they had already restarted the engine four times.

But the compromise was made that we push on as far as Brew (as the locals call it, can't think why) and the other three gliders didn't need to restart their engines as the day slowly improved - in fact we may well have been able to make Bourke but the 25 was tied down at Brew so Brew it was.



"No, really strong is how I like it... I'm really relaxed and I'll fight anyone who tells me otherwise." Geoff Sim has a short black from the in-car espresso machine while the long suffering Geraldine prepares lunches.

cloud came over and even by midday, the temperature did not feel more than 22°. As we took off, a lump of this cloud had developed enough on track to cause widespread shading and some rain. The pilot formerly known as Mister Gloomy, Geoff, has turned over a leaf and is now undeniably Mister Optimistic. Mister Optimistic decided that the leaf du jour was to be taken from Nelson's book...

"Bugger tactics, just steer straight at 'em." The result of this was that within 20 minutes, the ASH 25 was under motor at 6,000' flying though very smooth air indeed... because they were about 2000' above the inversion! And Geoff was back to feeling gloomy about the day's prospects.

The rest of us, Harry, Wendy, Al Giles and myself decided that staying airborne was the first priority and getting on track could be done later. So we skirted the over-development, looking for patches of sun on the ground and deviating up to 80° off track at times to stay in the air. The thermals were weak and initially topped out at 3800', only going up to ear-popping 4200' later on.

The traditional strong quartering headwind meant that we were not making rapid progress towards Bourke so stopping short at Brewarrina did not seem a bad idea... but not necessarily a good one either... Because we were booked into a motel at Bourke and were expected at a barbie.

A dash by road into Bourke and we were installed in the Riverside, which had an excellent view of the levee bank on the town side of the Darling, and were off to a party.

Here a local who bore a strong resemblance to Ned Kelly the Elder and who had found himself called to the bar in Bourke ten years earlier and unable to leave it, regaled us with stories of outback jurisprudence ('a case of non-consensual fellatio'), and the local GP-obstetrician described a typical day's work ('32 years old, advanced labour at unknown number of weeks, dilated 8cm but not progressing, no antenatal care, morbidly obese, uncontrolled diabetes and hypertension, twin breech presentation, gravida 12, para 10, all to different fathers'). They're different in the bush...

Yesterday was quite a blast - I took off first from Louth, 15kt+ dead crosswind which with a heavy left wing (extra fuel) meant a snakedance on launch followed by a smart right turn as soon as I lifted off; however I lobbed straight into lumpy four kt lift and had only .1 of an hour engine run including warmup (Jen and I are having a competition for the shortest engine run) and the others followed me up.

Above 4300' the broken lift got smooth and strengthened and I climbed to 7000' which was very nice because there is nothing landable for a very long way south of Louth and I was already 10km downwind.

Then it went higher still, 8kt to 8500, and I thought that one piece of unlandable scrub is as good (or bad) as any other and pointed straight to Nyngan. The others followed the dirt road to Cobar,

So as soon as the gliders were tied down we were on the road for the 100 km drive to Bourke. .

Now we are off schedule and racing to catch up the 100 km that we lost. Fortunately the next day is a boomer with a few good thermals and better than 6000'... but it is not a 300 km day. Wanaaring where we landed consisted of a few tin sheds and a pub. The nearest place to stay is Hungerford which as Lawson said, had plenty of Hunger but no visible ford.

Hungerford is on the border with Queensland and there's only a humpy or two on the civilised side. To cross over to Queensland, you need to go through the

fence formerly known as the Dingo Proof Fence. Once there, we were in for a rare treat, at least those of use lucky to have a double room in the 1880's hotel.

The single persons, Al and Ian B, had to sleep in the "bunk room". This was a two story affair or rather a big shed with a mezzanine and both the ground floor and mezzanine were filled with dozens of plastic covered beds. The overall appearance was much more Auschwitz than Great Western.

As they they say: "For the record, there is not a single mosquito in Hungerford. They're all married with large families". In the bunk house you have two



Coopers Corner. JC, Jenny and Harry are in Queensland while Wendy and Ian are in NSW. Geoff and Al are in South Australia, poor bastards and Geraldine has a cheek in two states.

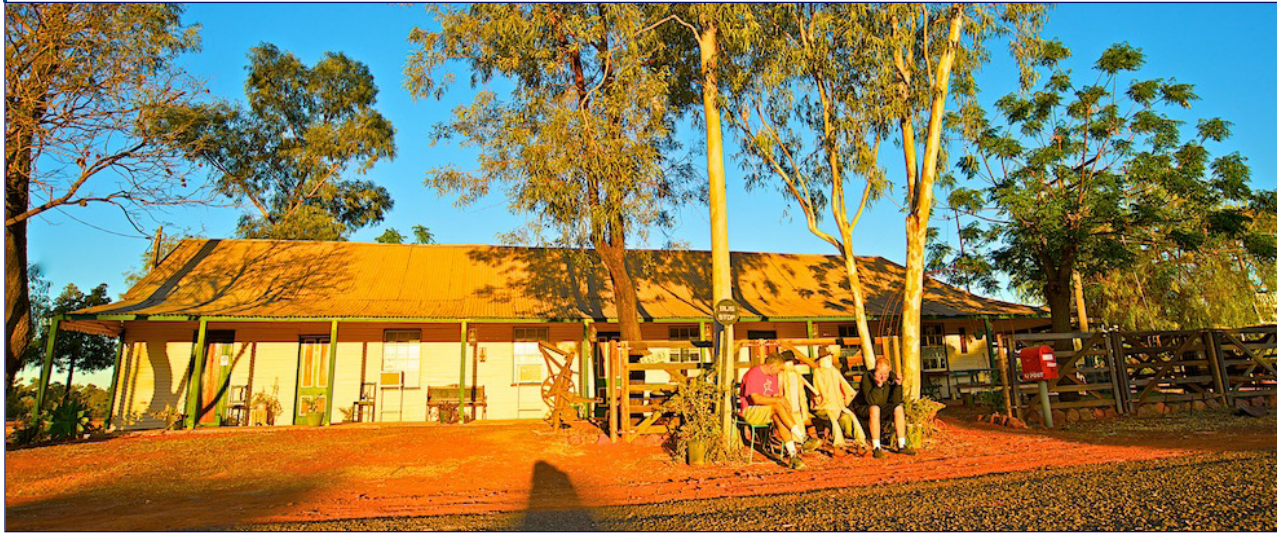
which, if you land on it, at least makes the wreck easier to recover.

Never leave the vehicle, it makes the body easier to recover. Interesting feeling in intermittent heavy sink down to 5000' and nothing but arid bleakness to the rapidly shrinking horizon but I always got a climb out (as you can tell, since I'm typing this) and it never got worse than that; still, I was happy to see the first paddocks and airstrips appear - OK, I'll stick with my species a little longer yet.

Barrelling into Nyngan way in front of the others and I get a radio call from Ian and Geoff, stay high, it's a good day, we're going to Gilgandra. No drama, dial it up on the GPS, 160km away and already I'm only 4000' below glide.

Another good climb at 110 km out and it was a joy to just sit back and watch the scenery unfold - back in wheat and grassland country, left the unlandable scrub and spinifex behind, and there's Gilgandra and its airstrip appearing under the nose. Coming from HG, it still feels bizarre to know that I have glide to goal with circuit height included from over 100km out and all I have to do is remember to look at the windsock, make the radio call and put the wheel down.

After I landed and rolled off the strip, a Hercules came along and did a touch-and-go, leaving parallel ruts in the dirt strip and a cloud of red dust in the sky, obscuring the Warrumbungles on the eastern horizon.



ways of dealing with the mozzies; one is to try and spray them with the supplied nerve gas... if it does not take them out, you'll never notice. The other way is to turn on the fan and blow them out the room... Easy, because the walls don't meet the ceiling.

The next leg was Wanarring to Tibooburra. Again, the safari turned on something special. The leg is over largely un-landable territory with only a few strips and salt pans. A nice leg to cruise over at 9,000'...so it is a pity we only had 4000' or less for most of the leg.

Wendy said it was the worst fly of her life... and she flies with Harry! From take-off, we got barely 3800' and little by little edged towards Tibooburra, some million and a half light years away beyond the curvature of the planet. Flying like this is a little like banging your head against a wall, you soon get used to the pain... and so we did get used to flying so low. After a couple of hours, the inversion lifted to an occasional 5000' but the lift got weaker as you went higher.

Interestingly, especially for the pundits, Al Giles and I were in the same air in very similar gliders for almost

the entire time but using fairly different techniques. Al took as many thermals as would cooperate up to 5000'. He also claims to bank around 30-35°. Me, I gave most away when the lift decreased at 4300' and banked 45+°. At the end of this fairly trying leg, there was nothing to choose between us.



Today we were meant to go off to Innaminka but the Lord sent a rushing mighty wind and great temperatures. We spent the morning tying down the gliders. The airstrip has two stakes to tie down to and the famous screwits do not screw down in Tibooburra dirt. In fact, they barely screw down in a children's playground sandpit!

With the help of the heritage English Land Vehicle, Geraldine and I towed an old rusty (heritage) water or fuel bowser over to the wing-tip and tied down to that. The other wing tip was tied to an existing iron stake and the tail tied to a couple of big tractor tyres. Heaven knows what the others tied to... I was too nervous watching my glider buffeted by the gale.

We may cut the Innaminka leg out but will decide when the RMW dies tomorrow, depending on the headwind/tailwind/difficult-wives/800-km-round-trip-on-a-dirt-road-in-a-heritage-vehicle variables sort themselves out.



MAROONED IN TIBOOBURRA

The weather was very windy at Tibooburra, the temperature dropped and the wind blew for two days. We visited the town of Milparinka, population two who were both out of town, for a barbecue but the heat, wind and flies chased us away.

The following day, we visited Cameron's Corner where three states meet at a stick in the ground. Regrettably, there are three different time zones because the other states cannot agree what the proper time is. It was still blowing dogs of chains but not enough to blow away the flies.

Cameron Corner is a strange place... it's raison d'être seems to be that it's absolutely nowhere important so heaps of 4WD and GA pilots with time on their hands and nothing better to do turn up to have a beer.

Finally, the weather turned OK for a flight down south to Broken Hill. The conditions were, for the Safari, great for a change. Blue, with a slight tail wind and a forecast of 5,000'

After launching and climbing out to a relaxing height of 3800' we headed out on track. Conditions slowly improved but there was some sort of trouggy fronty sort of clouds coming in from the west. Sort of alto CU at about 11,000'. I thought this meant bad news and tried to get ahead but their shadows were moving across the ground faster than any cloud-shadows I'd seen before. Harry thought they meant good news and aimed for them.

By the time we'd got 150 km towards Broken Hill, we were getting as high as 5000' and breaking out the oxygen.



LETTER(S) TO THE EDITOR.

Dear Sir,

I take it that every one of the pilgrims, not only the scribe, attests to experiencing a "rushing mighty wind" on each of several days. Long ago, there was a report that an assembled group heard "a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind". Was your experience of an actual wind, or was it just a sound that you heard?

When gliding safaris are lost in antiquity, this manuscript may be studied by scholars trying to understand what could have caused the rushing mighty wind, and to what purpose.

Concerned of Manilla.

It was an actual wind... maybe 30-40 knots of it. We have some experience in tying down the gliders now and the strip at Gligandra rates a full "5 screw-its" as a site to tie down. The soil has a firm sandy texture and the things go in easily and hold down tight. In my opinion, not shared by Jenny who recommends them, this is close to a first or unique or a miracle with screw-its.

Anyway, it blew like buggery almost all of Thursday so we went off to the Gilgandra Heritage Museum, hoping to find another heritage vehicle but instead found the Cooe Hall of Fame or suchlike, immortalising the march of the same name. An interesting diversion all things considered. Gilgandra is about 22% more interesting than Tibooburra because of it.

Truthful Scribe.





Meanwhile, Wendy saw something else nasty in the wood shed... Somewhere further back, Harry had found that the clouds did not actually contain lift. Wendy would have bailed out had the Arcus got dual canopies but just told Harry, "I've turned on the fuel." "I'm ready to raise the motor" etc. until at about 1200', Harry did find some good lift and got back to less than panic height... not that Harry was panicking.

So we arrived at Broken Hill which for a change was Rex and RFDS free, tied down just off the strip and went in to find a hotel and dinner. I have to say that everyone was in great spirits. You don't need 13,000' and ten knot thermals to have a great time.

MAROONED IN BRON ILL

That day, (Sunday in NSW but only Wednesday in Broken Hill due to daylight saving and their insistence on being South Australians) the wind did not blow dogs off chains. It blew much much harder and made Tipoobera's rushing mighty wind look like a summer breeze.

In fact, it blew so hard it folded the ASH 25's TE probe clean in half. Note to self... do not put sandwich bags on carbon TE probes.

On the next leg, we were going to Mildura but the airport guards were mean to the Pilot formerly known as Mr. Gloomy and took his Swiss army knife away so we're going somewhere else like Louth, some 330 km away and not going anywhere near Wilcannia (see notes on Walgett).

The gliders are parked so far out on Broken Hill's airstrip that they are hull down on the horizon when seen from the terminal. This means a hell of a lug for refuelling. However, the gliders may be parked nicely for a quick taxi out onto the dirt strip which Rex don't use. Fingers crossed!

It was sodding cold. That's a less-used imperial measure but those unfamiliar with this, it was something like 4° in the morning and we needed 3 layers of clothing while fuelling up and fitting SI's taped up TE probe which looked more like a kebab than something off a glider. There were bits of cloud all over the place and the possibility of more bad stuff coming in from the West.

Wendy, after seeing something nasty in the woodshed on the previous leg, decided a leg in the heritage land vehicle would be a better idea and took her handbag from the back seat and left Harry to his own devices.

It's a tricky call. The land vehicle is not the most comfortable of cars, according to the designated driver and the back is so full of offal that only the fit and flexible can climb into the one usable back seat.

We took off from Broken Hill fairly late with the intention of making White Cliffs, perhaps 230 km away and the hope of making Louth and Trilby station, some 400 km away. With such a cold forecast, it seemed unlikely. I hooked into some strong lift off the end of the dirt strip and shut down the motor with barely 1 litre used and headed out on the highway, looking for adventure and whatever came my way etc. (Note: The Otis Redding version rather than the Steppenwolf version.)

I cannot remember flying in such cold air. At 5,000' it was only 2°, so all the vents were well shut. We tracked towards Wilcannia with until it became obvious that White Cliffs was going to be easy but Louth highly unlikely... so we cut the corner and aimed directly at White Cliffs. The country below was as desolate as it gets but surprisingly, there were air strips everywhere on the path I took, with sometimes as many as three within gliding range some of the time.

Almost within sight of White Cliffs, I ran out of good air. I got lower and lower, wriggling around in bumps and bubbles and focussing on a landable area of mud flats, polished and red and relatively free of trees. Finally, just before winding out the motor, I got into something which gave me final glide to White Cliffs.

I could see a road train coming along the dirt road beside the strip and the plume of dust which followed it, glowing in the afternoon sun, hung in an orange curtain beside the road, barely drifting. This meant that I could use the longer tar runway. I briefly started the motor to clear the strip for Al Giles.

Ian and Geoff landed soon after, followed by Harry with Geraldine and Wendy arriving soon after. We

retired to the hotel, where all the locals are still called "John" which helps if anyone asks for ID.

We had to make Louth and Trilby station the following day (Tuesday) because Geraldine had made the booking so many times that she did not want to change it. Since it was a short 200 km leg by air, it was unlikely we'd miss. The road trip was about 90 km longer because you had to go back down to Wilcannia and then take one of two routes alongside the banks of the Darling River, depending on which the Shell servo told you was the least worse.

Beyond White Cliffs, which is extremely arid, the Darling River arcs down south of Wilcannia. Perhaps 50 km into the leg, there are a series of remarkable blue-green lakes, mostly full with water. A few which looked full of muddy water, turned out to be in crop of some sort which was bizarre, so close to White Cliffs.

Typically, the lift was very bad around this area and both Jenny and I got very low, me, low enough to get my headset on in preparation for a landing. There was a road gang grading the road below and I planned to line up over the water truck and land between that and the grader on the hopefully smooth section. They probably would helped me push the glider off the road but how gently is the question!

The rest of this leg was brilliant. Beyond the lakes is a vast grey floodplain which is as flat as a billiard table and almost completely featureless. It is around 12 km wide and runs hundreds of km towards Bourke. Louth is just at the end of this, on the Darling River and it was such a pleasant fly that after getting safely to the area, both Jenny and I boated around taking pictures and enjoying the view, waiting for the cars to arrive.

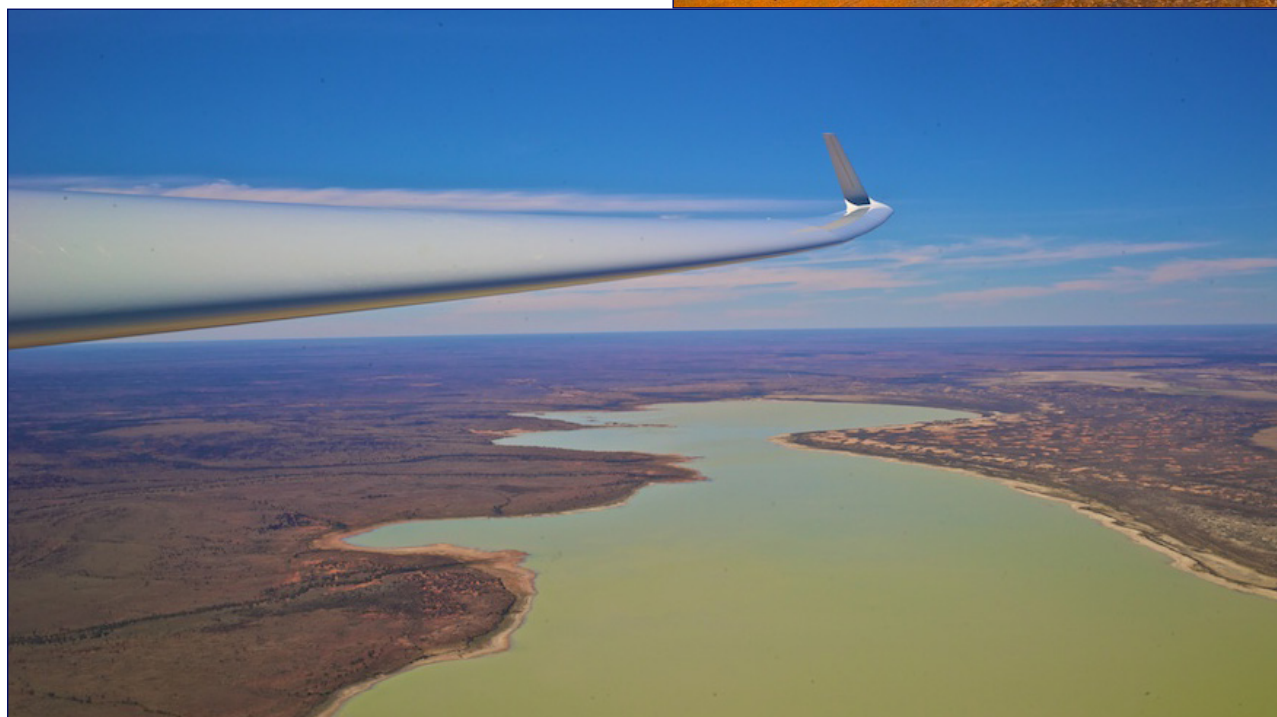
THE NICOLE KIDMAN HERITAGE TRAIL

We were now on the Nicole Kidman Heritage Trail and staying at Trilby Station. This is a working sheep station and has accommodation for tourists like us. I understand that the NKHT has been instigated as an apology for the film "Australia" and to try and redress the poor image of the bush (and of Nicole herself).

The next leg is Nyngan, via Cobar. I don't mind Cobar so much but it does not please everyone. Here's a sample from the NKHT book which might inspire Jim and John Hoyer to further rhymes.

COBAR.

It's built upon a barren waste
As if Dame Nature, in distaste,
Had passed the wretched place in haste,
Passed Cobar.



The water's bad, the food is worse,
We've blight, Barcoo and typhoid curse,
And many a man takes to a hearse,
In Cobar.

I have not any hesitation
In giving forth my condemnation,
It is the dead end of creation
Is Cobar.

MAROONED IN GILGANDRA

We left Louth, aiming for Nyngan, via Cobar. Initially, the conditions were as before... blue but with well sign-posted thermals at regular intervals which could be felt in the air as easily as one might feel a good caning back at school.

However as the inversion lifted, the thermals got further apart. Some were getting up to 8,000' and Al Giles decided at that stage to cut the corner and head straight for Nyngan. Others headed closer towards Cobar along the road, partly because agriculture starts around Cobar and there are recognisable fields to land in. It's some sort of comfort.

I think Geoff and Ian in SI and Harry and Wendy in HM turned somewhat before Cobar to cut the corner, but I'd optimistically opted for a longer task to explore the mines of Cobar and look down into the deep open cut. At this stage, people ahead of me started talking about extending the leg and getting nearer home.

After a show of hands, the Beloved Leader and his friend the Pilot formerly known as Mr. Gloomy, decided 2-0 to fly to Gilgandra. This day was in terms of distance, the best we'd had at close to 400 km but not really up to the booming standards we've come to expect from this part of the country.

Gilgandra strip is nicely surrounded by a pine plantation and there's a nicely height-graded shrubbery effect in the approach pattern, I guess so that the brushing of the tree tops on the fuselage reminds you of the correct glide path. There are a few new housing developments going in where the aero club used to be and you might wonder if the strip's days are numbered.

From 6000' over Gilgandra, we could have seen Keepit but we could not get there because of another rushing mighty wind had set in which traditionally gives biblical amounts of sink around the Warrumbungles between. The forecast was for all classes of wind, thunderstorms, rain and troughs and probably hail as well so we abandoned flying and spent the morning



tying the gliders down at the strip... which rated five Screw-its. Not only did the things screw in reasonably easily but also seemed difficult to pull out... a first!

The next day the wind was coming from the south, not quite as strong, but the air was full of smoke or dust and it was very cold again. We turned up at the strip and for want of anything better to do, towed the gliders out to the end of the strip.

The Pilot Formerly Known as Mr. Gloomy decided that this day, the sun would not set and therefore the thermals would go on forever. This positive outlook prompted Jenny to launch... either that or she was bored with waiting. I followed her a few minutes later and while busy trying to find something going up, noticed her rushing in below me in my weak thermal. This was not a really good omen.

The second not so good omen, was that the visibility downwards was ace but sideways was... probably just on the legal. At some 4000', I decided that was the top of the lift and headed out on track to Coonabarrabran, hoping to avoid anyone flying near me. It was a real pea souper and I reckoned that any GA planes were likely to be on top of the smoke and only descending or ascending through it, making monitoring the CTAF frequency more essential.

The ASH and Arcus launched soon after. In fact, they lost sight of us at 1500' or thereabouts which either says something about their eyes or the state of the smoke. Al Giles could see us well enough to state that we were on our way.

By now, after 10 fairly similar days, I would have to say that you could read the thermal signature like



braille and picking one could be done with one's eyes closed just base on the vibrations of the aircraft. Not a day for eye's closed flying though!

The "cloud base" lifted fairly rapidly and by the third or first climb, we were getting a more comfortable 5,000'. That is, until you take into account the way that the country round Coonabarrabran comes up at you. Passing the Warrumbungles, you could see the tops of some thermals by the way the smoke rose above the general level of murk below the inversion.

Occasionally, you could see the gleaming white tops of clouds, real clouds, over the smoke ahead on track. I

don't think anyone thought this was much more than a mirage at first but as we got close to Mullaley, the welcome tones of Ian Downes came on the radio to say that a southerly wind change had blown away almost all the smoke from Keepit and the visibility was excellent.

So, on the last of 10 days flying, we aimed towards clouds, many of which were working, and life became fairly easy for a change. We landed into a stiff 20 knot breeze coming down 14 and pretty much all of us who landed long, failed to make the distance for a hangar landing.

All up, an interesting safari. We did not achieve our distance and speed goals on every stage but as a learning experience and a confidence builder, it was excellent. I think that this type of flying improves one's airmanship in a way that few other types of gliding can. Not just the fact that we are flying declared tasks every day under any conditions, but the other factors, unknown airstrips, tying down gliders, moving them around a strip to the tiedown or launch areas and so on help to round out one's abilities as a pilot. Great stuff!

HERRO DORRY

I have a story about Gilgandra too... Back in the day, we were flying a state comp out of Narromine. Our second leg went from somewhere down south, over the top of Gilgandra to one of the silos north of there, maybe Armatree. There was a huge storm over the Warrumbungles, and unbeknownst to us it was pouring a great swathe of cold outflow mostly in a westerly direction, over the top of Gilgandra. On a day when 10 knotters were only just good enough, we charged on under yet more super cumulus, only to have the air go kind of cobblestone (if there is such a word) and soon afterwards the Gilgandra airfield became home to about 95% of the competition gliders. By then the cu's had all disappeared, and the bigger picture was obvious.

But that is not all... our good friend Macca was flying the old Ventus, UKM, and borrowed a tail dolly from Shinzo to help tow it back up the field for a launch. The tugs duly arrived and off we all went, but it was halfway back to Narromine before Macca realised that the tail dolly was still attached to the Ventus. Meanwhile a slightly annoyed Shinzo was seen wandering around Gilgandra airfield muttering, "Who has stolen my tail dorry?"

Bruce Taylor

I can claim to be just about the only one who identified the problem and thereby avoided the great outlanding. (But I was not as fast as the few who got through before trouble struck.) At launch time, the cu-nim over Tooraweenah was in plain view from Narromine. The first leg was to Wellington,

making the second leg pass east of Gilgandra. The fleet was caught in a gravity flow: a rushing mighty wind flowing west down the mountain under its own weight. On hearing the first wails of distress, I did a detour to the west to avoid the bad air.

Either Macca or John Wolfe can entertain with a first-hand account of the Ventus "dorry" incident. Kerry Claffey has a story about "famous" Japanese pilots who outlanded that day.

My own Gilgandra experience is of landing there, sure I could never make it back to Narromine with thermals going to 2000 feet over flooded paddocks. John Rowe simply flew home – no problem!

I was a co-author, in 1988, of a paper on this very topic: Rushing Mighty Winds. As I recall, it was titled: "Potential wind erosion in Australia: a continental perspective on Rushing Mighty Winds" (Kalma et al. *J Climatol* 8, 411-428.) Any university student or staffer (but no-one else) can read the paper in their library.

October is the month for RMW's in this country. Essentially, a small hot continent in a large cool ocean sucks the air in at high speed. It rushes towards Uluru, where it is spat upwards into the stratosphere. Oddly, the flow is anticyclonic: westerly over the whole of WA, SA, TAS, VIC, NSW and southern QLD, turning southerly on a line from Kingaroy to Burketown, then easterly for the rest of QLD and NT. There is an almighty convergence of easterlies and westerlies from Derby all the way to

Uluru, which acts like an upside-down plug-hole.

My map shows October RMW's in the region travelled by the safari pilgrims as west-south-westerlies, strongest (statistically) near White Cliffs – Tibooburra – Bron Ill. At this latitude, strong winds mainly come with fronts, meaning they start northerly, then go westerly, then south-westerly.

The Gilgandra-outlanding RMW is a different species. It was a dust-free haboob, enhanced by gravity flow.