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Walking on Air at Feshie

Walking on Air made its annual visit to the Cairngorm Gliding Club at Feshie for the Mayfest early in May. Gliders K21 WA1 and LS7 WA2 made the trip into the mountains with other SGU members and gliders. Most of us stayed at the Badaguish Outdoor Centre nearby, which has very good disabled facilities.

As usual on these visits Feshie made us all welcome and made room in the clubhouse for several wheelchairs without complaint! The weather was mixed, but some good flights were had by all members, including one by Dave Tuttle who was towed to the top of Glen Feshie by Nick Norman in a NE wind into a gap in the clouds - Nick advised that there was a "hydraulic jump" which was indeed very rough with strong lift to the extent that the glider was still gaining height at 90 kts in spite of using full airbrake. There was also a lot of sink!

Maria Duncan and Gordon Macleod had several rather less bumpy flights in strong thermals up to cloud base at c6,500' over the snow covered Cairngorms, with amazing views and some flying through snow showers.

The disabled local people who usually fly with us were sadly too unwell

this year, but we look forward to flying them next year. On a previous visit we flew one young disabled boy who, after landing, turned to the instructor and said "for once I will have something to boast about at school tomorrow". Made it all worthwhile.

We look forward to going again next year to this very friendly club in a beautiful part of Scotland.



Walking on Air would welcome more helpers to join the Friday rota. There are always two helpers who take out and DI WA1, help disabled people in and out and put the glider away. Helpers are usually rotated no more than once a month.

Please email: info@walkingonair.org.uk

Peter Clayton

Portmoak History - Andrew Thorburn's Big Stone

For about a year before the Second World War, and on occasions during the late 1940's and early 1950's, when conditions were suitable, gliders were launched from Bishop Hill.

Before the war, gliders were dragged up the hill from the SGU's training area around East Feal cottage, about a mile to the east of the hilltop, and were launched from around the bowl, by bungee or winch. After the war, when the club was based at Balado Airfield, the hill was too far away to reach, unless the pilot was able to thermal there, so a couple of single seat Cadet gliders were kept in a hut at the top of the wood, and on west wind days, they could be rigged and bungee launched from the top of the ridge above the golf course.

Throughout both periods, the normal landing area was on the top of the southern spur of the bowl, the area marked as the Pinnels on the O/S map. The area

is quite flat, and covered with tussocky grass, no problem for gliders with skids, except for one snag – a single large boulder in the centre of the area, deeply embedded in the turf, just waiting to rip the bottom out of any unwary glider.

The solution was low tech, but effective. The duty instructor, who was generally Andrew Thorburn, founder member and first CFI of the SGU, would stand on the stone, to mark its position, whenever a glider was about to land. Perhaps he would also throw in a few hand signals, like the deck landing officer on a carrier, to help the pilots with their approaches!

Next time you take a walk up Bishop, have a look for Andra's Big Stone – it will likely still be there until the glaciers come again.

Bruce Marshall

Portmoak Open Day



After weeks of preparation, planning and hard work, the Club held an Open Day on 23 June 2019. With representation by various flying-related Clubs and Organisations, attendance was high and there were many displays and activities to entertain the local community.

Kicking off the programme was a skydiving display by St. Andrews Skydiving team. In bright sunshine, although hampered by strong gusts, the parachutists took to the skies!

Club members had the opportunity to display their aircraft and give the local community the opportunity to sit inside these amazing gliders.



A display by the Glenrothes Aeromodelling Club delighted the public with their performance of agility, speed and aerobatics. Their skills in flying radio-controlled aircraft were remarkable.

The public showed a great interest in Walking on Air, Gliding for Disabled, proving that the sport is open to



everyone.

Throughout the day, the public had the opportunity to have a short Trial Flight, of which we sold around 50!

Although conditions were not ideal for gliding, the Club pilots managed to give the public a great experience of gliding

A vintage car display proved to be very popular with the younger members of the public.

The simulator was up and running, giving everyone the opportunity to view the new virtual way of training which is going to have a positive impact on the flying of our pilots.

A special thank you to all the visiting pilots and organisations who really helped to make the day a success!



An amazing day was had by all and thanks are extended to everyone who donated their time and those who put in so much work to ensure that the day ran smoothly.

Here's hoping we will have another successful open day next year!

Kerrin Dutton



Interclub League - Round 2

SGU wins the ICL!

Contingents from all the Scottish clubs trekked up to Easterton for Round 2 making a total of 20 gliders competing of which 8 were from Portmoak.

As usual on the Friday evening a lot of us got together for a group hug and bonding session and this year's venue was Ada's Turkish restaurant in Elgin.

Seventeen of us turned up and we had a truly stupendous meal. However, the bill came to over £700 which prompted a mass exodus. However, "long arm Sant" managed to extort the required amount from each participant which in itself must be a gliding record. Suffice to say that at that price it really was an excellent meal to the extent that many doggie bags were taken back to the clubhouse and Matt "4 egg roll" Roberts, amongst others well it was mainly

him stuffed themselves.

Thankfully, Saturday was not a gliding day (although we did in fact grid) and we had another really good get together with the Easterton club providing an aromatic Moroccan Tagine and plenty of ale. A very good evening indeed. Suffice to say it was not the weekend for sharing a tent.

Finally, Sunday provided a racing day. In true Scottish fashion Highland magicked a task out of the short weather window before really heavy showers set in. The task was basically an AAT with Loch Morlich and Dufftown being the fulcrum points. It really was a matter of going as far as possible (but not too far) before the showers set in. SGU made a clean sweep of it winning in all three classes, Adrian Docherty in the

Novice, Mike Forster in the Intermediate and Sant Cervantes in the Pundit.

So, the SGU wins in 2019 ICL. The last time we won it was in 2007 so it's about time. Let's not leave it so long next time. As a footnote for those doubters, Portmoak would have won irrespective of the penalty points awarded to other clubs.

Next year the ICL venues are Feshie (CGC) and Aboyne (DGC), both fabulous sites.

It was great visiting Easterton, a really lovely club which is an exemplary example of how a small club should run.... Excellent.

Roll on next year.

Sant Cervantes

Hus Bos Challenge Cup – Regionals Competition. 3 – 11 August 2019

There were 50 gliders entered in total in a single class.

From Portmoak we had

- Tony Brown (ASW20)
- Alan Boyle (DG303)
- Kate Byre/ Alan Gillanders (Discus 2cFES),
- Adrian Docherty (Duo Discus XLT)
- Dougie Wilson (DG300)
- Gareth Francis (Mosquito)
- Brian / Fiona Scougall (Duo Discus).

Saturday 3rd

192km task set. I ended up 6th. Gareth was 10th and Kate 12th. The conditions were weak and a bit difficult but we had a good run around the short task. All of the times were quite slow with the day winner only doing 83kph.

Sunday 4th - Scrubbed

Monday 5th

The task was 300km. I managed to get around OK but, as usual, was too slow and was 21st beaten by Brian and Adrian. Dougie Wilson managed to get a prize for his double land-out – arriving first at Lyveden gliding site and then in a field a few km away from Hus Bos when the aerotow retrieve back released in turbulence.

Tuesday 6th

The day was scrubbed after we gridded. Cloudbase never got high enough to launch the grid.

Wednesday 7th

I was near the front of the grid so launched early but then really struggled to stay up. Having spent 2 hours scrapping about mostly at circuit height after

dumping water I eventually had to land back at Hus Bos before the start opened - along with about 10 other gliders. I took a relight and head off on task where I got stuck at the downwind turnpoint near Alconbury with weak climbs and 20kt of wind making it difficult to make any progress. I eventually had to start the engine to get back as did Brian and Kate.

Tony almost got back but ended up in a field about 5km short.

Thursday 8th

A proper English Thermal Day. 300km task.

A proper racing day with Brian coming 6th with just short of 100kph but Tony ending up at 23rd - despite doing the task at 91kph - and me at 33rd due to not being able to fly in straight lines. It was nice to be on a comfortable final glide well before the last turn point and able to come back quite fast which boosted my snail pace to 86kph.

Gareth managed 31st with 87kph and Dougie Wilson also made it round the task at a respectable 74kph.

Adrian made it around most of the task but then ended up in a field not far from the airfield as he had set the wrong height on the 3km finish ring (500' below ground) and didn't notice until too late.

Alan Gillanders had to start his FES just 8km from site as the day died after managing his longest XC flight so far at 253km and Alan Boyle did a respectable 139km.

Friday 9th - Sat 11th - Scrubbed.

Full results at https://www.soaringspot.com/en_gb/husbands-bosworth-challenge-cup-2019-husbands-bosworth-2019/results/regionals/task-9-on-2019-08-11/total

Alastair Mutch

