

*North Wales Hang-Gliding & Paragliding Club*  
*Newsletter - May 2012*



*Carl Wallbank sets off to establish a new UK distance record*

*From the Chairman / Editor*

March was literally a flying start for some members, with 100km of XC flights made during the warm and dry month - and another 100km on 1<sup>st</sup> April! Since then, April 15<sup>th</sup> saw Carl's Wallbank set off from Llangollen on a flight which set a new UK Open Distance record for HG, flying some 280km to Weymouth, Dorset. See it all on U-tube via the link on our club homepage. Others flew XC on a strong day: three of the 'Flying Kynastons' went XC, as did Bob Little and intrepid PG pilots Stu Lloyd, Graham Cummins and Clive Mills (I reckon the PGs only went XC 'cos they couldn't penetrate back to the hill against the wind!). Let's hope that when the wet weather passes by, we can clock yet more distance.

The AGM Report (published in this Newsletter) reflects the healthy state of membership, finances and access to our sites, but also reports on a growing problem of too many visitors wanting to use our sites on good days, sometimes to the detriment of our members. The Committee has looked into means of controlling the number of visitors and our plans are outlined elsewhere in this Newsletter. It may do no more than boost our membership and not really solve the numbers problem. Only your care and common sense about whether it is safe for YOU to fly, can answer that.

In the December 2011 Newsletter, I predicted that it might be the last. However, we are struggling on with it, chiefly because I have been reminded that it is accessible via our website to anyone who wishes to read

it, whereas the postings on the Members Forum are for members only. So, I shall try to keep the Newsletter going – but please help with your input! For instance, can you help with the following topic?

The Club will be 40 years old in 2013! While we are not yet planning any celebratory function, we would like to get in touch with any former members and bring together any old records and documents relating to the formative years. Can you help? If you are still in touch with former members, please ask them if they have any memories or memorabilia which we could use in some form of anniversary event or publication – maybe a Club Night get-together?

*I copied the photo from the website – my thanks to whoever took it!!*

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## News

### Parachute Repack

Our Parachute Repack took place at the end of January last and was attended by some 30 members, most from outside the club. It's a useful earner for us – but why so few of our own members? It really is wise to check your reserve regularly. I hope to run another repack at the end of January 2013: why not plan to be there.

### Sub 20 Wings

Are you flying one or tempted to get one so you are not grounded by stronger winds? Being fairly new to the scene, these wings are regarded by BHPA as uncertified and in order to comply with BHPA Rules and Regulations, Sub 20 Wing should be registered with BHPA. Also, the pilot should hold a 'Development Glider Endorsement' issued by BHPA. This topic was first announced in Skywings some months ago and the form to register a Sub 20 Wing and apply for a Development Glider Endorsement can be obtained / downloaded from BHPA.

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## Features

### Visitors at Llangollen

**The problem:** The North Wales HGPC site at Llangollen has been the start point for many HG and PG cross country- flights, the most successful being Carl Wallbank's recent UK Open Distance record of 280 km to Weymouth, flown on 15<sup>th</sup> April. The site's reputation makes it popular not only with NWHGPC members, but also with pilots from other Clubs who come from far and wide to fly here and whose numbers sometimes exceed that of NWHGPC members wishing to fly that day! The problem invariably occurs at weekends and there have been days when members have chosen not to fly because, with so many gliders / visitors in the air, the risk levels take them beyond their 'comfort zone'. Their subscriptions contribute to the charges we pay for the site – but they are unfairly crowded out.

**What we propose to do:** The NWHGPC is proud of its Open Sites policy but has no wish to play host to any mid-air collisions. The Club Committee has therefore been decided that - with safety foremost in mind – the time has come to limit the number of visitors it can accept at Llangollen, especially at weekends.

The first step, to be applied with immediate effect, will be to carry out more stringent marshalling as pilots arrive at the gate to the take-off area. All will be asked to:

- Show that they are current BHPA members (and are thus insured for third party risks) and CP qualified, so **carry your BHPA Membership Card or Helmet Sticker with you, ready to present when it is asked for.** (Yes, club members as well; we cannot expect all marshals to know all members!)

- Visitors who are not current NWHGPC members will be asked to pay a £3.00 day fee. They can also book and pay in advance via the NWHGPC website, and on showing a receipt for the pre-paid day fee, will be given priority when numbers have to be restricted.
- If not already familiar with the site, receive a site briefing from an NWHGPC member / Club Coach. (Visitors should also review in advance by reviewing the details of the site given in the 'NWHGPC Site Guide', which can also be accessed from the NWHGPC Website. This includes advice concerning car parking, either at the roadside or within the landing field).
- While flying, adhere to established rules and conventions for 'Avoiding Aerial Collisions' as set out in the BHPA Pilot Handbook. This is particularly necessary if weather conditions prevent gliders from gaining good height and separation. Under such conditions, Marshals / Club Coaches may take steps to restrict numbers in the air, rather than just numbers on site.

**How you can help:** Whatever the membership affiliations of those fly at Llangollen, when there 20 or more gliders using the prime areas of dynamic lift, vigilance is needed and life becomes very difficult for any hang-gliders. Established rules and conventions for avoiding collisions support a ridge soaring etiquette (i.e. glider with ridge to the left gives way) of '*Clear of the face if heading west; close to the face if heading east*' when there is a lot of traffic. Even with good climbs and separation between gliders, 30 or more in the air at the same time is probably enough – even if they are all NWHGPC members! We also impress on you to consider not joining an already crowded sky, and landing if it becomes too busy for comfort. *Fly within your 'comfort zone'.*

**Site Marshalling:** The Marshalling process will be carried out by both committee members and other club members on a loose rota basis, according to need and who is available. Since most visitors arrive by mid-day, it is hoped that these periods of duty will be fairly brief (e.g. 45 minutes before someone else takes over), so you should still have plenty of time to fly. We want to keep the Marshalling job simple and hope it will involve no more than:

- Ask all flyers (including NWHGPC members if you don't recognise them – we do not expect the Marshals' to recognise every Club member!) to show you their BHPA Membership Card or Helmet Sticker; check qualification and currency of membership and are thus insured for third party risks.
- Ask visitors who are not NWHGPC members to pay a £3.00 day fee. Encourage them to join the Club (*though this will not necessarily reduce numbers!*), via website or by application to Secretary.
- First timers to the site should be directed to an experienced NWHGPC member / Club Coach at the take-off area, for a site briefing. (*The Marshal at the gate will not be in the best position to give this*).
- Remind them to adhere to established rules and conventions for 'Avoiding Aerial Collisions'; to fly within their comfort zone.
- Non-qualified pilots who turn up with 'Ebay wings': Explain why we cannot have them on site - it breaches our terms for use of site; why they should be properly trained and qualified; need for insurance; danger to others, etc. (A case where group action might stop them leaving ground).
- At the end of the day, pass fees collected to the Club Treasurer or other committee member on site; stow tabards, collection box, etc. in the locker provided (TBA).

The following will be provided to the Duty Marshal:

- Conspicuous tabard to identify the Duty Marshal(s).
- A suitable container for fees collected.
- Notebook and pens so notes / records of fees collected can be recorded.

Dealing with the awkward ones: We do not expect Marshals to put themselves at any risk whatsoever.

- If threatened, do not provoke. Appeal to their better nature.
- Try to get their name. If they present a membership card, record their name so Committee can complain to their Club/BHPA.
- Let other members know: a group may be able to act together against the person / to stop them flying.

*This advice will be updated as required, once we have some experience of the Marshalling process.*

## **NWHGPC Annual General Meeting, held on Monday 26th March 2012**

**Present:** Club Officers - Chairman Jerry Hazzard (JH), Sites Steve Kynaston (SK), Treasurer Steve Taylor (ST), HG Coach Steve Hogan (SH), PG Coach Brian Dillon (BD). Webmaster Tim Salter (TS), Bill Seward. Five other members were present, and one visitor/prospective member. Apologies: Membership/Secretary Ian Home, G Bulling, Neil T.

**Chairman's opening address:** "Welcome to the Annual General Meeting! Unless things happened that I didn't hear about, the flying season since the 2011 AGM was both active and safe, for both disciplines of the sport. While we keep no records of the total number of flights made or exact numbers of who fly regularly, website reports suggested a lot of activity, despite poor weather at times. Some 660 km of XC flights were recorded in the Club League last year – and we've already got off to a good start this year with 100 km of XC flights before April.

We lost one of our members in a hang-gliding accident while training in the Peak District, shortly before the 2011 AGM. On the PG side I am aware that a member made a hard landing, but hobbled away undeterred. No other injuries occurred while flying at our sites. Let us all take care to ensure that flying this year will be without incident.

We maintain good relationships with our site owners; our membership numbers are good and our finances in excellent health. The Club is healthy in all respects. My sincere thanks go to all members of the Committee for their help and support, according to their various responsibilities, during the year".

**Minutes of the 2011 AGM:** The previous year's AGM minutes were accepted as a true record of that meeting.

### **Club Officers reports**

**Membership/secretary:** (Being on holiday, Ian Home had left the following report for the meeting)

"Our current paid-up membership is 123, up just two from a year ago. In addition there are 21 lapsed members who have mostly received email reminders. So potentially we could have about 144 members if all those lapsed decided to re-join. In the past year we have had 13 new members - 8 local and 5 from more distant addresses (over about 1 hour's drive). The ebb and flow of members of multiple clubs probably accounts for the fairly-constant membership numbers despite new members joining.

In February 2012 our membership list was checked with the BHPA for currency of BHPA membership. There were 2 members who had the incorrect BHPA number in their club records who were in fact fully paid-up, 5 whose BHPA and club membership had lapsed so have probably stopped flying, and another 5 who needed to renew their BHPA membership. Three of these five have been contacted, and I need to follow-up on the other two.

If anyone feels keen to pay subs tonight, Steve Taylor will be pleased to receive them, whether already due or due in the near future. Any subs paid early by cash or cheque will still have 12 months membership from their due renewal

date. If anyone has any queries to this report, Jerry or Steve Taylor can probably answer them". TS confirmed that all was well with the IT side of membership applications and records.

**Sites Officers:** SK reported that all was very well concerning our flying sites and we are on excellent terms with landowners. The fee for Llangollen had increased by 10%. There are still plans to fell the trees on the face at Llangollen, and the twin aerals may be replaced soon with a taller, single one. All is good at Moel Accre and the Gyrn. It was noted that the Joint Services PG Club has asked if they might use Llangollen for a midweek event in June: SK will liaise.

It was noted that despite a promise to send them back in January, Berrington Estates has still not submitted invoices relating to our use of Llantysilio for the past two years. JH will send a reminder.

SH told the meeting that a site off the Conway Valley, previously used by HGs, was now under management by the Snowdonia National Park, and might be accessible again. Steve Taylor and Roger Pierce, fluent Welsh speakers, have been asked to meet and discuss prospects with the tenant farmer.

BD reported that there were no problems with coastal sites but the Great Orme was increasingly being used by non-member 'Speedriders'. JH told the meeting of a recent call to Doug Jones re the Clwyd sites. There has been some confusion: Doug thought he had been asked to 'hold off' on his visits to the landowners whereas JH was anxious that they should be made. Doug will visit ASAP, even though no longer a current club member – though he may return! It may be necessary to find a new Site Officer for the Clwyd sites.

**Coaching and Safety:** HG Coach Steve Hogan has members Sean and Chris under his wing. PG Coach Brian Dillon has no takers for Pilot Training at present, but offers coaching where needed.

There was discussion about an untrained, non-member wanting to fly a PG at Thurstaston, which raised the question of our authority to act against such people on behalf of site landowners, who have granted the Club use of these sites. SK offered to look into the extent of such authority.

BD reported that 'Sub 20 wings (speedwings)' now require mandatory recognition by BHPA. An announcement will be drawn up and published in the next Newsletter. Action by JH.

**Webmaster:** TS reported that all is well with the Club website and membership processes. Committee thanked him for his excellent service – in particular, for his very reliable weather predictions.

**Editor / Social:** JH said that the regular reporting of activities on the web pages left little to put into a Newsletter! But was reminded that these 'blogs' were for members only whereas the Newsletter was accessible to any non-members accessing the Club website. So it will continue in its modest form! JH again urged members to propose possible topics and speakers for future club evenings.

**Treasurer:** ST presented a statement of accounts (audited by Steve Kynaston) for the year ending 1st March 2012. They are attached a footnote to this report. The committee thanked Steve for his work and expressed satisfaction with the Club's finances. Annual Subscriptions will remain at £15.00.

**Discussion and voting on matters proposed by the Committee / by members:** None

**Election of Officers:** No-one had been nominated for election, but all members of the committee were happy to continue in their existing roles. JH invited Simon Wilson to join the committee as an ordinary member: he was willing to do so and was proposed by JH, seconded by BD and voted in. Once again, the Chairman thanked committee members for their help and support.

**Any other business:**

The Club will reach its 40th anniversary in 2013! It was suggested that we should try to find any old records that members might be hanging onto, and to contact any early / founder members in the hope that we can put together some form of anniversary document. Action by all over the next six months, especially those who may be in contact with former members.

Steve Anderson brought up the problems of serious overcrowding at Llangollen in early March, when some 20 or more visitors arrived without notice, intending to fly. At least 30 PGs were there that day, and a number of our HG members deemed it unsafe to fly among such numbers, so their day out was wasted. He suggested that there was a clear case for controlling the number of visitors, so that members did not lose out. His views were sympathetically received and the committee discussed the subject and noted a number of ideas for how things might be controlled. The committee will meet in April with the main objective of coming up with a workable scheme to avoid such overcrowding.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10.05pm

### Statement of NWHGPC Accounts for year March 2011 to March 2012

<u>Income</u>		<u>Expenditure</u>		Start Balance AGM 2011 £452.65
		Transfer to Savings Acc (1)	£300.00	
Membership -cash / cheque	£405.00	Mostyn Estates (Grt Orme)	£25.00	
Membership PayPal Transfer	£1,500.00	Club Night Speakers (2)	£0.00	
Llangollen	£3.00	Doug Jones Christmas 2010	£172.06	
RePack	£250.00	Repack -Packers	£175.00	
		Repack -Postage etc (JH) (3)	£0.00	
		Site fee Llangollen (4)	£0.00	
		Site Fee Llantysilio (5)	£0.00	
		Christmas 2011 (6)	£0.00	
 Total Income	 £2,158.00	 Total Expenditure	 £672.06	 £1,938.59
N.B I have £3 Llangollen fee to pay in.		N.B		
		(1) 12 x 25		
		(2) Rod Buck £50 cheque not presented		
		(3) JH £10 not yet re-reimbursed		£25.00
		(4) Not yet paid / re-reimbursed	approx.	£800.00
		(5) Still awaiting invoice for 2010 and 2011		£420.00
		(6) Christmas 2011	approx.	£200.00
		(7) \$38 paid for web - PayPal transfer		
		(8) Need to bring PayPal into accounts		
			Appox Total not yet paid	£1,445.00

### Statement for Savings Account March 2011 - 03/02/ 2012

Income		Expenditure		Start Bal
Transfer from Current (11X25) *	£275.00		£0.00	£9,431.07
Interest **	£5.90			£9,711.97

\* Because of dates of transfer

\*\* Includes interest for Dec 2010 and March 2011, not included in last year's Balance because of Bank Statement dates

## *What's on?*

Monthly Club Meetings assemble from 7.30 onwards at Broughton Wings Social Club at Airbus UK, Broughton, Chester CH4 0DR. Talks or whatever start at 8.15pm. Future meetings are scheduled for Monday 28th May, Monday 25th June and Monday 30th July, but as yet there are no plans for speakers or other entertainment. Watch the Members Forum. If anyone can suggest subjects or speakers for any of our future meetings, let me know!

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Club News and Information; contact details for all Club Officers, and a Membership application form, can be accessed on the Club Website at <http://www.nwhgpc.org.uk>.

All paid up members of the club who provided a valid e-mail address at renewal time should also have received an e-mail invite to join the "members only" area. If you have not received an invite and you feel you are eligible, please e-mail [webmaster@nwhgpc.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@nwhgpc.org.uk).

Contributions to this Newsletter are welcomed from any member. Ideally, please submit copy as a Text File or MS Word File on CD to Jerry Hazzard, Mill Cottage, Mill Road, Bronington, Whitchurch SY13 3HJ or by Email / Email attachment to [jerry.hazzard@btinternet.com](mailto:jerry.hazzard@btinternet.com) If you are unable to provide text in these formats, the editor is willing to type up your scripts from longhand! The editor reserves the right to correct grammar, syntax and spelling, and to trim articles to fit page layouts.

We try to publish this Newsletter quarterly, on/about the 1<sup>st</sup> of February, May, August and November. Articles / copy for inclusion in a Newsletter should reach the Editor two weeks before publication date.

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