

NORTH WALES HANG-GLIDING & PARAGLIDING CLUB

Newsletter – Summer 2016



First flight - Dave Edwards tries his new Triple Seven Rook 2 at Llantyisilio – April 9, 2016

From the Editor / Chairman

A good start to the season, with HG ace Carl Wallbank re-flying his run from Llangollen to Weymouth where, in 2012, he just missed his declared goal target. Not this time! He made it to goal without difficulty, to establish a new European straight distance to goal record of 275km. Other PG members have also made a few XC flights this year (see League Table on Club Website home page) but July was more overcast and windy. Let's hope for better flying weather in August.

On the subject of XC flights, the feature by Carlo Borsattino in the April 'Skywings' was a revelation to me. It summarised the state of UK XC PG flying in 2015: I didn't realise that so many were regularly flying so far here in UK. Are we not trying hard enough, or are we content with boating around enjoying the lovely scenery? Could we be doing more to promote / educate members to fly XC more often? Ideas, please ...

Another 'Skywings' feature well worth reading and learning from is the BHPA Accident and Incident digest (as I read it, I often think 'There but for the grace of God ...'). Without doubt, Pilot Error is the most common fault and yet can be easily avoided with planning, good observation – and taking the safer option rather than pressing on. Be safe, and enjoy the rest of the flying season.

Other News

We need a new PG Safety Officer ...

While Brian Dillon remains Chief PG Coach, he has given up the role of PG Safety Officer (see AGM Report which follows); this is not to say that safety matter overwhelmed him! Would any other Pilot rated member care to take on this task? Talk to Brian or to me, the Chairman, for more information.

... and other Committee Members in the near future

I announce in the 2016 AGM Report that follows, that I too, plan to stand down as Chairman at the 2017 AGM. I've been doing it for twelve years; I've thoroughly enjoyed doing it, but I am not getting any younger and I think it is high time someone else took over. (I am willing to carry on arranging Speaker Meetings and the Annual Repack for another year or two).

The Chairmanship is not really an onerous task – we manage with just two Committee Meetings and an AGM each year, and the amount of time I spend representing the Club and dealing with enquiries is minimal. I am also conscious of the fact that more than half of those on the Committee are already retired and may themselves be looking to 'pass the baton' to a younger member. Continuity in Club Management is desirable and with this in mind, I ask some of our younger members (i.e. middle aged rather than retired!) to give a bit of your time to help run the Club, which – I hope – has contributed to the pleasure and companionship you get from free-flying. Talk to me about it!

Hawarden Radio Mandatory Zone (RMZ)

With an increasing number of aircraft movements as Airbus ramps up wing production, the RMZ will require all aircraft using the airfield, or transiting close by, to be in radio communications with Hawarden ATC. The RMZ comes close to our sites at Moel Accre and Moel Famau, and anyone flying a downwind XC from these sites will soon enter the RMZ. I am pleased to advise you that, the result of negotiations we have held with Hawarden ATC, we will be allowed to continue to make such flights – **so long as a new notification process, enshrined in a Letter of Agreement (LoA), is followed.** It is a straightforward process and once we know when the RMZ comes into effect (expected later this year), your Committee will announce the procedure as an update to the Sites Guide and as a downloadable document on the Club Website homepage..

Advance your qualifications and skills

Those of you who hold BHPA Club Pilot rating may wish to use this season to train for BHPA Pilot rating, first by undertaking the necessary practical skills assessments, then finally the BHPA Pilot theory examination.

BHPA Club Pilots and above may take part in the BHPA Club Coach programme: see the announcements of such events in 'Skywings'. By getting involved in coaching others, you are honing your own and broadening your knowledge of our sport. To encourage members to take part in BHPA Coach Courses, NWHGPC will pay your Course Fee! (Sorry, we don't stretch as far as meeting travel and accommodation expenses).

If interested in either of these opportunities, please talk it over with our Chief PG Coach, Brian Dillion in the first instance.

NWHGPC Annual General Meeting - Monday 25th April 2016 at 8.10pm

Present: Officers: Chairman / Social / Newsletter: Jerry Hazzard (JH), Sites: Steve Taylor (ST), Webmaster: Tim Salter (TS), Membership/Secretary: Ian Home (IH), Treasurer: Fin O'Leary (FL), Powered HG: Bill Seward (BS). Two other members were present.
Apologies: HG Coach: Steve Hogan (SH), Senior PG Coach: Brian Dillion (BD), Peter Blanchard

Chairman's opening address

The Chairman welcome the few members present, and expressed regret that so few bothered to attend. He continued with the following words: "In opening this meeting, once again I could repeat word for word what I have said at the last two AGMs, but I shall simply say that the Club is healthy in all respects, thanks to the good work of your Committee – who will each give a more detailed report regarding their responsibilities after this address.

Despite what I remember as too many wet and windy days last year and this, a review of our PG XC League report shows that 10 XC Flights were made last year, and that 8 have been made so far this year. But things are looking up – and away! Currently, there are no HG XC League Reports, but Carl Wallbank has been chasing records again. Last year he made a cracking flight from South Wales to Norfolk and just last weekend set a new UK Declared Goal record with another flight from Llangollen to Weymouth. Three weeks ago his valiant attempt to set a 300k record from Llangollen to Devils Dyke in Sussex failed by 20km. I am sure Carl still has this destination on his 'To Do' list - for early action.

So much for our successes. The sad news of the past year was Dave Shields' accident while competing as a member of the UK Team at an international event in Spain last September, as a result of which he has suffered life changing injuries. We also remember our friend and former member Roger Pearce, who suffered similar injuries in a mountain biking accident last year. We wish both Shedsy and Roger the best possible recoveries. No other accidents or injuries have been reported to the committee

I extend my sincere thanks go to all members of the Committee for their help and support in fulfilling their various responsibilities. All are willing to remain in office for at least another year, but we do need a new PG Safety Officer – more of this later when we re-elect the Committee. We look forward to an active year of flying: It's up to you to make it a **safe** year of flying".

Minutes of the 2015 AGM

Chairman expressed the hope that members present had reviewed the Minutes of the 2015 AGM from our website and were happy for them to be accepted as an accurate record of the meeting. He was confident that all actions have been followed up by the Committee, and invited a proposal that they be accepted. Proposed by Clive Mills and seconded by Steve Armstrong.

Club Officers' reports

Membership/Secretary: Ian Home reported that our current paid-up membership is 138 of 126 at the last AGM. "This increase, while I would like to say it has come from my urging lapsed members to re-join, has mainly come from the unusual number of new members joining for the first time - 30 in the past 13 months since our last AGM. (cf.15 in previous 12 months). About 18 have not renewed either because they no longer fly in this area or have left the sport. In addition there are 26 members not currently paid-up, who I'll be contacting in the continuous process of renewal or cancelling membership.

Our annual check of club members having membership of the BHPA, which is required as part of reregistering the club (confirming club officials, club description), was carried out in February and resulted in 12 club members requiring reminders to renew their BHPA memberships. Of these 12, 3 responded to emails and a further 3 responded to letters posted to their last known address. However this still leaves 6 un-insured members possibly still flying. The ultimate sanction of removing people's access to the club forum may need to be exercised in these 6 cases in order to elicit a response. Finally, if anyone changes their email address can they let me know ASAP as this is our main method of maintaining contact with members".

Sites Officer: Steve Taylor reported that on the whole all was well with sites. The Jun 2015 Parafest event (no link to the club except via one club member) had been a larger and noisier event than the event host Martin Sands had expected. The owners of adjacent Pengwern Hall complained to Martin and to ST of the noise level and of its duration throughout the day (paramotors), even though they were aware that it was not our event. (Such fears had been voiced at committee meetings beforehand..

At Llangollen there had been complaints about two incidents of gates being left open – in one case the double gates out onto the top road – now much easier to secure with Steve's chain and carabiner – and in the other the 'notice' gate into the t/off field was left open which allows sheep to spread widely across the hillside. The Long Mynd club have lost 2 sites this year due to a code-padded gate being left open, and to sheep being disturbed at a sensitive time.

The site guide for Llangollen requires updating for the fenced and planted part of the landing field, as part of an overall review of the site guide information. At Thurstaston there have been no developments regarding a formal agreement for us to use the site or of setting up a permanent windsock. In a written report, Brian Dillon stated that: "The projected permanent windsock and safety notice suggested by Joe Hannik, the Head Ranger at Thurstaston, seems to have died a death. In spite of a number of emails and attempted contacts, there has been no response from the Ranger Service and I can only assume the idea has gone cold! However, this does mean it is very much our responsibility to ensure that a windsock is in place, visible from the beach, every time we fly there. **No exceptions - no excuses. If you don't have a windsock, you don't fly**".

With regard to the planned introduction of a Radio Mandatory Zone (RMZ) at Hawarden airfield, we await a Letter of Agreement (LoA) which will set out terms which will allow us to fly XC into that zone in future. These must be included within the Club Site Guide before the RMZ becomes effective during 2016. The Chairman contacted the Hawarden ATC Manager, Mark Downes, earlier in the year for a progress report and received the following response: *We've had a slight delay on the process as we needed to get some more feedback from some consultees. We are still forging ahead, but won't be ready for April. As soon as we have some idea of a likely inception date I'll let you know.*MD

ST had been contacted by the BHPA to review all the sites registered to the club and other flying sites in our area even if not registered to our club. Penycloddiau and Moel y Parc are now registered to NWHGPC for the first time. A number of other changes were sent to BHPA to reflect current site usage e.g. change of name for Cefn yr Ogof/Abergele Hill (was Gwrych Castle), Trefor Rocks is registered but is not in our site guide, etc. A further 10 NWHGPC-registered sites were no longer in use. Finally there was some discussion on the whiskey run around Penycloddiau, including two

farming families below the west side whose land had been used in the past by bottom-landing hang-gliders. This will be discussed further at a committee meeting.

PG Coaching / Safety: Due to his absence abroad, BD had sent a written report: “I can report a quiet year as regards safety matters. No serious accident or incidents have been reported to me in the last 12 months and no other safety matters have arisen. On the Coaching front, all goes well, and a number of new members have recently passed their BHPA Pilot exams. Coaching on the hill is an ongoing thing and it's good to see that all the Club Coaches have been active during the last year. I would like to thank them all for their help and support, not only to the newer members but also to me. My expected hip replacement now seems to be further down the line than I had first thought (not in the next 12 months anyway) but it's not stopping me from flying at the moment, so I would be happy to continue with PG Coaching, but would like to relinquish my role as PG Safety Officer”. “There are now even more people joining our annual trip to the World Airgames in Oludeniz this October. However, places are now rapidly filling up so if anybody wants to join us please ask them to contact me ASAP. This is definitely my last year coaching on these visits: I've now been nearly 70 times!” (*He said that years ago. Ed*)

HG Coaching: Steve Hogan, recently back from Australia, is currently on honeymoon.

Webmaster: TS reported that the club forum and website continued to be well-used in that it provided information that members wanted about weather and flying activity. Also that the site service provider can now offer ‘cloud storage’ for Club archives, something we may wish to use.

Social/Newsletter: JH reported that we had had some good talks from helicopter and light-aircraft instructors, and a well-attended Repack day. Ideas for future Club Night talks are being followed up. Our Airbus factory tour last October had been very informative and popular with members, some of whom wanted to know if there might be a future visit to the A380 wing plant.

Financial Report

Club Treasurer Fin O’Leary presented a statement of accounts for 2015/16 and explained the sources of all the entries. Our payments for site fees and whiskey run costs were detailed by site. As a result our Current + Savings + PayPal accounts total balance over the year had risen a little from £11961 to £12460. FL will inform HMRC that our net annual income from non-members, namely Llangollen visitor fees and Repack fees, would not exceed £100 a year, and therefore we would not be liable for Corporation Tax. A copy of this statement is attached to this report.

Election of Officers:

BD had told JH that he wishes to relinquish his position as Safety Officer but was happy to continue as PG Chief Coach. With no other changes, there was no election required and all members of the Committee continue in their posts.

JH asked for volunteers particularly from the younger end of the club. TS mentioned Ollie Bross as a possible new general member on the committee. Finally, JH informed the meeting that he intends to stand down as Chairman at the 2017 AGM and invited anyone interesting in taking on this post to discuss the matter with him.

There were no matters put forward for discussion at the AGM, nor was there any other business, so the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.20pm



Treasurer's Report

<u>Statement of Income & Expenses</u>				
	2016		2015	
	£	£	£	£
INCOME				
Membership Fees	2,190.00		1,905.00	
Site Visitor Fees	57.00		234.00	
Parachute Repack Fees	280.00		280.00	
Interest	5.34		5.28	
		<u>2,532.34</u>		<u>2,404.28</u>
EXPENSES				
Site Fees:				
Llangollen	748.00		829.50	
Llantysilio	200.00		400.00	
Great Orme	25.00		25.00	
Penycloddiau East	185.50		388.32	
Gymre Moelfre	104.00		0.00	
Moel Acre	36.00		0.00	
Gifts	72.00		0.00	
Repack Fees	200.00		150.00	
BHFA Fees	0.00		0.00	
Charitable Donations	0.00		0.00	
Web Hosting Fees	53.11		51.00	
Club Night Speaker's Fees	200.00		50.00	
Repairs & Maintenance	95.82		42.00	
Paypal Fees	113.80		108.25	
		<u>-2,033.23</u>		<u>-2,022.07</u>
SURPLUS		<u>499.11</u>		<u>382.21</u>

<u>Statement of Movement In Reserves</u>				
	Current Account	Savings Account	Paypal Account	Total
Opening Balance (1st March 2015)	239.64	10,627.17	1,095.05	11,961.86
Income	243.00	5.34	2,284.00	2,532.34
Expenditure	-1,866.32	0.00	-166.91	-2,033.23
Transfers	1,700.00	300.00	-2,000.00	0.00
Closing Balance (29th February 2016)	<u>316.32</u>	<u>10,932.51</u>	<u>1,212.14</u>	<u>12,460.97</u>

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.