



Nov. 2015

# Hangar Soaring

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE WOMEN SOARING PILOTS ASSOC.  
www.womensoaring.org

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## 39<sup>th</sup> WSPA Seminar Women Soaring Pilots Association

Aero Club Adele Orsi • Varese • Italy

27<sup>th</sup> June - 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016



*Every day you will be able to fly over the Alps  
Double seaters with experienced pilots available on site  
Possibility to rent a glider, having mountain flight experience*

**Come to Varese!  
Don't miss the 39<sup>th</sup> WSPA Seminar  
in Italy!**

*During the week  
interesting conferences.  
In case of bad weather,  
organized trips and visits  
to wonderful sites*



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THE WOMEN SOARING PILOTS ASSOCIATION (WSPA) WAS FOUNDED IN 1986 AND IS AFFILIATED WITH THE SOARING SOCIETY OF AMERICA

## BOARD

ASSOCIATION (WSPA) WAS FOUNDED IN 1986 AND IS AFFILIATED WITH THE SOARING SOCIETY OF AMERICA

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[editor@womensoaring.org](mailto:editor@womensoaring.org)

## Badges

(reported through November 2015)

### Silver Badge

Rachel Conklin  
Mary Movius  
Katherine Smith

### Silver Altitude

Mary Movius  
Katherine Smith

### Silver Distance

Mary Movius  
Katherine Smith  
Gail Schipper

### Silver Duration

Rachel Conklin,  
Mary Movius  
Katherine Smith

### C Badge

Mary Movius

### B Badge

Mary Movius  
Kimberly Kramer

### A Badge

Brittany Morgan  
Dana Bartgis  
Mary Movius  
Alyssa Santos

## Kolstad Youth Cross Country Awards

Century III: Katherine Smith

**2015 OLC summary.** Top five (see note from the editor)

31 women pilots flying in the US posted their flights

### Sybille Andresen\*

25 flights, 15200 km. 14281.20 pts

**Kathy Taylor**, 37 flights.

8623.75 km, 8800.30 pts

**Susan Simmons\*\*.**

12 flights, 5364.07 km, 5611.2 pts

**Maryanne Guerin**, 27 flights  
4482.37 km, 4698.16 pts

**Neita Montague**, 22 flights,  
1617.74 km, 1874.92 pts

\*visiting for several weeks from Germany

\*\* as co-pilot with husband Al

## President's Note



Hello, everyone! Here in Michigan our soaring season is coming to an end. Lack of thermals and the cold air makes us start thinking about winter and other activities. I'm good with that, because I love each season equally for what it has to offer. For me, it's cross-country skiing and snowshoeing up north, so bring on the white stuff!

I'm also looking forward to next year's seminar in Varese, Italy. It will be my fourth seminar with WSPA, and my first overseas. Travel plans aren't published yet, but it's fun looking at the maps of northern Italy and thinking about what to do before and after our week of soaring in the Alps. Hopefully most of us can coordinate with one another for the seminar so no-one travels alone.

I really enjoy flying with an instructor at our seminars, and since that was about the only time all year that I flew gliders, I didn't see the point of taking another (hated) checkride. Although I've been struggling with finishing my glider rating, I've finally found a purpose and a way to get it done. Michigan's Civil Air Patrol has a glider program not far from me, and it's finally opened up to senior members (previously it was only for cadets). Once I get my FAA checkride done, I can take a checkride with CAP and fly cadets on orientation flights. Now I'm motivated! Maybe next year will finally be the year I become a glider pilot!

One more thing before I close: WSPA is a volunteer organization. We have so many wonderful people working hard to make things happen for us. If you get a call to help out, please consider making time to contribute. It's greatly appreciated.

Anne



## From the Editor

Another soaring season has come to an end and at this time of the year it presents itself to have a look back and also look forward to the upcoming soaring season. As many of you might realize, I keep pretty well track of women accomplishments, not only of WSPA members but women in general and when ever possible international. I keep detailed records of OLC postings by women (and again, not only by WSPA members) in the US.

I do not keep track of OLC postings by women in foreign countries, because doing so is very time consuming. But, would any of our foreign members, including the Canadians, go to the trouble of extracting the women postings and send them to me I gladly include them in my yearly statistic.

I am always disappointed how few women post their flights on OLC (get one of these little recorders as a Christmas gift) and when they post, I find them most of the time at the bottom of the listings. This year was an exception when suddenly, early in the season the name of Sybille Andresen popped up together with her husband Ingo Andresen. I watched them flying all over the western US. They were obviously German. But I could not figure out who they were and where in Germany they came from. Most of their posting were in the top ten, Sybille usually a few points ahead of her husband (they flew individual planes).

Finally, after the OLC season ended late in September, Elke Fuglsang-Petersen was able to shed some light on these "mystery fliers" and she send me the URL of their Blog.

<https://soaringusa2015.wordpress.com/>.

Have a look and enjoy this couple's soaring adventures in the US. (Since I don't discriminate in my OLC statistic, Sybille's flights are included in my statistic).

The same disappointment befalls



me when I comb every month through the Badge and Record listings in SOARING Magazine. There have been months when not a single woman was listed either under the Badges or Records. The same holds true for contest participation. As far as I could determine only two women participated in any competition in 2015: Sarah Arnold, who flew in the Region 5 contest and won and at the Standard and 15 m Class combined Nationals in Elmira, NY (flying in the 15m Class) where she landed out one day and thus not finishing in the top ten but in 17<sup>th</sup> position. The other woman flying in a contest was Kathy Williams. She flew in the 1-26 Nationals in Minden.

The long-time question pops up again: why do we see so few women participating in all these events. I hope we do better in 2016,

Frauke

### New Life members

Tom Johnson,  
Katie Berkey Krapes  
Colleen Koenig  
Sylvia Szafarczik



Ritz de Luy, Netherlands, receiving the 2014 Majewska Medal

Hangar Soaring just received word, that Margot Aquaderni established a webpage with seminar information

<http://acao.it/wspa-39th-seminar/>



Margot Aquaderni, hostess of the 2016 seminar

*Editor's note: I have been in contact with Marguerita (Margot) Aquaderni since the early 2000. We met in person at the 2005 Women's World Championships in Klix, Germany. It was there that the idea of holding the seminar in Margot's home country Italy came up. Now, more than 10 years later, this dream to have the WSPA seminar at the legendary soaring site of Varese in Northern Italy is becoming reality. (That same summer I paid our Slovenian friends a visit which led to the unforgettable 2009 seminar in Lesce/Bled, Slovenia. We had more than 20 participants from the US attending that seminar). The following are excerpts from the proposal for the 2016 seminar, that was submitted in 2013 after Margot and I met again at the 2013 Women's World Championships in France*



**AERO CLUB  
ADELE ORSI**  
[www.acao.it](http://www.acao.it)

### Accommodation facilities available in the local area

At the airfield there is a comfortable, shady camping site, with water and electricity connection, shower and toilets. In the vicinity there is a wide range of accommodation. On the lake banks there are very many restaurants and there is a shopping mall very close to the airfield, with several shops and supermarket. At the airfield there are two restaurants, of which one open to the public without direct access at the operational area, and one in the club house, only for pilots and accompanying persons, with direct access to the runway. Just outside this restaurant there is a nice swimming pool, not accessible for spectators. (It's only for pilots and families)

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### A comprehensive survey of meteorological conditions

Weather conditions in Calcinate: June /July  
The weather conditions during this period are usually favourable for gliding with thermal conditions. If there are weak thermal conditions the flights be possible along the piedmont. For better thermal conditions you can fly in the mountains with very strong thermals and wonderful sites. It can happen to have strong north wind (but very rare during this time of the year) in which you can have wave flights

### Entry fee (Club membership)

EUR 100 , temporary club membership

### Rent \*

EUR 100/day single seater  
EUR 150/day double seater+ pilot who will be "coach"

### Tows\*

Same as for club members (presently EUR 60)  
\*as of the latest information. These are the same rates members pay (editor)

### Tourism :

In the heart of Europe, in northern Lombardy, lies the province of Varese studded with lakes of different sizes, rich of green areas, wonderfully framed by the Prealps and the Alps. It is close to Malpensa airport, the most important hub of south Europe, to the business city Milan and adjacent to Switzerland. Furthermore the area is very attractive besides the beauty of the landscape thanks to the excellent quality of the resorts, hotels, camping sites, farmhouses, bed and breakfasts and sport facilities such as golf courses, riding schools, over 100 kilometres of cycling paths and prestigious convention centers.

Depending on the number of participants and what your desire is, we can organize plenty of trips, including a visit to Volandia , one of the best aeronautical museums in Italy <http://www.volandia.it/en/volandia/volandia.htm>

You can find many news about our area looking at this website : <http://www.vareselandoftourism.it/Home>

The above is preliminary information. The WSPA Board will make detailed information available via the mail group, Face Book and the Webpage. In addition the following google group was established at the recent seminar as a platform for discussions

<https://groups.google.com/forum/?hl=en#!forum/wspa-2016-seminar-varese>

## Adele Orsi, the woman after whom the hosting club of the 2016 WSPA seminar is named

*Editor's note: I met Adele Orsi during the 1974 World Championships in Waikerie, South Australia. Adele was the only woman flying in these worlds and she flew the biggest glider at that time, a Kestrel. One small incident during the practice week is burned into my memory. On one of these days Adele landed at the airport with the landing gear retracted. One of the well known German pilots and sailplane builder loudly voiced "typical woman, typical; woman" Well, the soaring gods sided with Adele by having this big wheel pilot landing with wheel up the next day. I still grin when I think about this incident. The following is an article translated by former Italian WSPA member, the late Roberta Fischer, and was previously published in Hangar Soaring.*

### ADELE MAZZUCHELLI ORSI – a farewell to soaring

*from the Book "Il grembiule di castagne - Ritratti di donne a Varese" (An Apron Full of Chestnuts - Portraits of Women From Varese), by Luisa Negri, published by Varese Municipality, translated by Roberta Fischer Malara*

Many people used to ask me about my feelings when I soared in the air as high as possible, and my glider became a small white dot up in the sky, shiny as a star. They wanted to know about my thoughts when I was no longer earthbound, they wanted to learn what was passing across my mind when I was aloft. The same questions are posed to all those who have no fear to fly, and in particular fly as pilots, not as passengers, hence keeping the situation firmly in their hands.

During my first solo flights I had not time to speculate. I had to concentrate and avoid making mistakes following the instructions I had been given, and I had to be prudent, again as coached.

Yet I still found some time to discover and enjoy the ever changing and wonderful landscapes beneath me, to feel enthusiastic at the sight of the dense clouds that now and then surrounded my sailplane, and to be happy because the wind whims made it turn round and round like a merry, drunken toy. I soon realized I had to compete with the eagles, but they only wanted to defend their airspace. More lessons to learn. As my flight experience accrued, I became less surprised by those beautiful birds, as high altitude is their realm - and was becoming mine. But getting used to fly never lessened my pleasure to be in the air, and surprises continued to come, in spite of my very careful flight planning. And this became even truer when I started competing. Competitions soon replaced my tranquil hopping around in the sky. And my sky changed. It was no longer the sky of my home place. It was the sky of far away countries all over the world, with characteristics changing with latitude and longitude.

Flying became a compelling need for me, either alone or with a friend. As a beginner I felt fairly shy. I learned to fly with my husband and my friends, then, little by little I grew more and more confident, and came to know my limits. I started relying on the long white wings of my sailplane. It had no engine, the only noisy mechanical device on board seemed to be my heart, whose accelerated beat I could sometimes hear when something was not going as smooth as it should have. The land under us (i.e. my glider and me) also changed as time passed. At the beginning, when I took off from Calcinato airfield, whose construction was in progress under my careful and expecting eye, I could see the large garden of my house on a nearby hill, the beautiful 17th century bell tower of the cathedral of my home-town, the entire lake of Varese. And the clouds reflected by the water, the variegated green of the vegetation along the shores, the fields and their crops of corn and the snow-covered mountains delimiting the horizon on all sides. I had the impression that I could take all those things below in my hands, just leaning out, and with them I could pick up my loved ones, my family, my friends, my best acquaintances. I realized then that very many precious people and things stay close together under the same small bit of sky. Maybe I needed to climb high to understand that. At the same time, while the people and things dear to me appeared microscopic, but for this reason more within my reach, more belonging to me, the ugly ones, that I could not picture precisely, but imagined gray and hiding on the bottom of the lake, in the shadows of the houses or in the dust of the roads, revealed their insignificance. They could be forgotten, if not purified in the deep silence around my cockpit.

I did not hear the deafening noise of the world when I was flying. The void and loud words of those who always want to have the last say. Also, I did not hear the cries and sighs of those who were suffering. I knew this, but I also realized that I would have neglected them to an even greater extent during my everyday life, absorbed by my many chores. In the sky I had at least the time to tell a silent prayer for them, and beg pardon for being negligent, as we all should do every day.

Thus I learned that I could not live without flying. I was a different person after experiencing flying, and could not revert to be my previous being. The same happened to my husband, with whom I learned to compete, and to all my friends. Some of them lost their life while soaring. I knew it could happen, happened and would continue to happen. But I took all precautions. Those who know me, also know that I am extremely careful, that I prepared all my competitions beforehand, in great detail, on the ground. This both when I was to fly alone or with a "navigator" in the back seat, both in Italy and everywhere else in the world.

I did that for myself, but, and mostly, for my family, which was waiting for me at home. I was sorry to make them worry, to leave them to fly in far away places. But I could deceive neither my family nor myself about the possibility that I could give up flying. It would have been like giving up living. It is not by chance that I gave up flying when I got sick.

I am not angry with God this punishment inflicted on me in the maturity of my life.

I knew the time would come and I was able to accept this illness that nearly confined me to a wheelchair. Maybe I was given this fate so that I could be spared the hard choice to decide stopping flying myself.

But I have not lost my navigation skills, and my eyes are still as sharp as those of the eagles. I think back to the many years during which I was up in the sky, conversing with it, and continue seeing in my mind Varese, my house, the surrounding plots of land, the lake and the bell tower as from aloft. And the roads bring to the hills, blown in the wind, the sins of my little town.

*And in the meanwhile, I am getting ready for my last take-off, and write down on paper all the details I need to fix. My friends tease me about taking such a pilot approach. But I am used to precise calculations, and I tell myself that no outlanding will be possible this time.*

I imagine it will be a very peculiar flight, an endless flight in a windy sky. I shall be able to skirt again the edges of the clouds towering in the blue air, and keep forever a watchful eye on my small world down below.

### ADELE MAZZUCHELLI ORSI (1928- 1998)

Born in Varese (Italy), 14 October, 1928 into a wealthy Italian family, she discovered soaring in the fifties together with her husband Giorgio, also an active glider pilot, and attended one of the first civilian flying schools in Italy, at Vergiate. In 1959 she obtained her glider pilot license.

In 1960, together with her husband Giorgio Orsini, who is an experienced glider pilot too, she created the first Italian gliding airfield, establishing the Aero Club Voloveli-stico Alta Lombardia, which is one of the major gliding centers in Italy and one of the best known in Europe. She also set up an Alpine Gliding Studies Center which promotes scientific and meteorological research activities on mountain soaring.

She was publisher of the only Italian magazine concerning the gliding air sport activity, named "Volo a Vela", founded in 1946 by Plinio Rovesti.

She took part in several women, national and international competitions, winning 8 Italian championships and breaking many Italian and World Records in different categories (distance and speed). After giving up her sports career, she is continued flying throughout the Alps to provide the Alpine Gliding Studies Center with technical information for the development of the high mountain soaring.

She has been awarded the FAI Paul Tissandier Diploma and registered in the Italian Board of Aviation Pioneers.

List of World Records of Adele Orsi, flown as pilot or involved as copilot, quoted from the Italian curriculum vitae

1. 17.08.1973 Speed 100 km triangle, single seater, 120,153 kmh;
2. 17.08.1974 Speed 100 km triangle. two-seater, 101,758 kmh, copilot: Patrizia Golin;
3. 19.08.1975 Speed 300 km triangle, two-seater, 97,741 kmh, copilot: Franca Bellingeri;
4. 27.04.1976 Distance out and return, two-seater, 546 km, copilot: Mina Monti;
5. 05.01.1992 Speed 750 km triangle, two-seater, 121,02 kmh, copilot of Katrin Keim;
6. 05.01.1992 Distance triangle, two-seater, 760,4 km, copilot of Katrin Keim;
7. 06.01.1992 Distance out and return, two-seater, 673,5 km, copilot of Katrin Keim;
8. 10.01.1992 Speed 100 km triangle, two-seater, 141,9 kmh, copilot: Katrin Keim.

In 1995 she was awarded the P. Majeska medal.

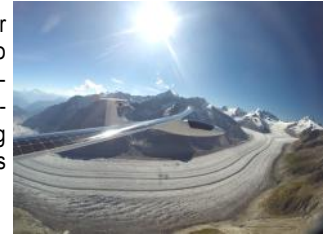
Information from Fred Weinholtz, Roberta Fischer Malara

### In the News



Although Dani Cerne from Slovenia was unable to attend the Minden seminar, she came to the US a few weeks later and had some great flights in Air Sailing and neighboring sites

**August 12, 2015:** Another major milestone for the Sunseeker Duo has been set. Eric and Irena Raymond repeated the 2009 adventure of the Sunseeker II, crossing of the Alps in both directions this time with the Sunseeker Duo.



**September 23, 2015** the Perlan 2 glider successfully completed its maiden flight in Oregon. This glider is designed to go to 90 000ft

Two WSPA members recently tied the knots. Phyllis Wells and Randy Owings got married on October 15, 2015. Seminar attendants met Randy in Minden, where he had joined the crew that made sure we all were in good fodder. Phyllis describes Randy as "tall, handsome, gentle, likes to hike, is a pilot, a former farmer and widower who likes art and music and likes to cook. Randy recently bought a touring glider, a "Sun Dancer" that was built in the Czech Republic. He and Phyllis are checked out in this plane. Both Phyllis and Randy are planning to attend the 2016 seminar



Life member Katie Berkey and Dillon Krapes (former WSPA member) got married at Grand Targhee ski resort in the Tetons late in September. The reception was at the Driggs Airport in ID. Both, Dillon and Katie are naval aviators and they proudly wore they Navy wings on their wedding outfits. Both were members in the Tidewater Soaring Society before military duty moved them west.

**Congratulations Phyllis and Randy and Katie and Dillon. Many happy flights together**

### A 4th Generation Pilot Soars (submitted by Cindy Brickner)

Sunday, September 27th . Was this a special day, an anniversary, an historic occasion? It was not an equinox, nor a perigee, not a "day of infamy", but it was significant to one family. It was much more than a day of a red moon, or a lunar eclipse.

Kenzi Holt is a mostly typical Californian teenager. She is a high school sophomore, plays in marching band, juggles her wardrobe like many young ladies. She calls Santa Margarita home on the Central Coast region in California. But her family has a slightly different passion, aviation. They fly. They fly gliders, airplanes, helicopters. And -- it has been the women that have flown, mostly. But now we have a fourth generation engaged in flight.

Robbins Smith was the first of the family to soar. He flew primary gliders in the 1930s in the Southern California deserts and mountains. No, Smith could have flown earlier, generationally, as glider flight was only born at Kitty Hawk in 1902!

Robbins' nephew, Dave Smith, and young wife Shy, flew in Hillsboro, Oregon, adding glider licenses to their airplane certificates due to the

*(Continued on page 6)*



(Continued from page 5)

promotion of Schweizer gliders in the early 1970's. Dave and Shy moved to Santa Ynez and assumed management of the airport. Dave gave glider instruction and was a glider FAA examiner there for six years. After Dave and Shy divorced, Shy remained as airport manager and she also raised her family -- on the airport.

Shy's daughters both flew. Surrounded by pilots, they pumped gas, cleaned canopies and took rides with appropriately responsible ( and occasionally wilder) pilots. Girls will be girls. Daughter Teri flew airplanes first, soloing a Cessna 120 at 16 years old. Teri became a Commercial glider pilot at 23, giving rides and introducing hundreds of people to silent flight through 3 different schools at Santa Ynez.

Teri took a six-year sabbatical from flying to fledge her family, and returned to piloting glider rides for Santa Barbara Soaring in 2014. She brings each of her kids to the airport on occasion. But the middle girl, Kenzi, was struck by the awe of the view from aloft. In 2014, Kenzi began training in gliders.

Despite a delay from a broken collarbone, Kenzi persisted with ground studies, helped as able as a launching assistant/cashier/receptionist, and healed through the summer of 2015. It might have chafed her pride to watch other teenagers solo in July and August, but Kenzi learned patience, maturity, leadership, and that all good things are worth a little waiting.



Sly Cindy Brickner Kenzi Teri

The two weekends of September 19-20 and 26-27 saw a compressed burst of flight training, and the calm and quiet of the late Sunday traffic pattern at Santa Ynez Airport was the perfect time to launch another student pilot. As the fourth generation of her family to fly, Kenzi did

a lovely job of precision formation flight on aerotowing aloft, gave a radioed-crow of delight and thanks to her tow-pilot after release, reveled in the late afternoon burst of sunshine under the cirrus deck, and made an adapting, adjusting, precision landing in the small confines of the dirt under-run at Santa Ynez's 'gliderport'.

The glider may be a plain-Jane, the airport premises may be ordinary, the support of the organization at Santa Barbara Soaring may be normal to aviation, but the spirit of accomplishment, and the joy of flight is unparalleled in the heart of a young California girl. Congratulations, Kenzi! The sky is no longer a limit, it is her highway to the future and a connection to her heritage



The above is the logo for the upcoming "Witches Meet", the annual weekend gathering of the German women pilots. Elke Fuglsang-Petersen will be one of the featured speakers. She will talk about WSPA.

Elke recently had articles published in Gliding International and SOARING reporting about the 2015 seminar in Minden. Thank you Elke for all the publicity you are generating

### New virtual magazine for women pilots

Colleen Koenig forwarded the following to HS

"Aviatrix Aerogram is distributed as an email attachment from me. I blind copy the recipients so that nobody ends up with a bunch of crazy "Reply All" responses. On average, you can expect about a half dozen email

messages a month from me (the monthly issue, prompts for submissions, and occasional other information that may be of interest). You are free to opt out at any time if you aren't interested.

If you want to join in, send me an email with "AA OPT-IN" in the subject line and I'll add you in. If you have no interest and do not wish for me to ask again, please send me an email with "AA Not Interested" in the subject line.

Happy Aviating!

Laura Smith

[laurasmith@aviatrixaerogram.net](mailto:laurasmith@aviatrixaerogram.net)

Ed. note: the August issue was attached to this e-mail. Several WSPA members had articles published

## Competition News

### Women's Worlds 2015

This year's Women's World Championships were held in Arnborg/ Denmark. Anybody who is familiar with the geography of Denmark knows that it is a peninsula bordered by the North Sea on the West and the Baltic Sea on the East and a latitude that would put it high up in the Hudson Bay (56° 01' 0" North) on an American map. Therefore everybody was aware that the weather could be dicey and several of the regular participating teams decided not to come to these Worlds. No American pilot participated. Kudos to the Australians who did not shy the long trip and made the word "Worlds" a reality.

Jo Davis, a first time participant from Australia reports in SOARING NZ. "The competition highlight for me was during the day when we had a clear 3000ft AGL. Sheer undulated luxury" Her final summery of the contest was: " In the end we had a successful competition. The requisite number of days were met and there were no mid-air. The organizers were awesome. That said, each day we flew would have been cancelled in Australia. We were the only representatives of the Southern Hemisphere and the Northern Hemisphere was under represented. Even the Brits did not come.... The camaraderie of the aviatrix is a well known phenomenon and this competition was no exception. I was adopted, inducted as a fully fledged witch and made great friends I hope to see again in Europe, or even better in Australia should we be successful in our bid to host the WWGC in 2019. Never again will I look at an Aussie sky and think it's not worth pulling the glider out.... It was an experience of a lifetime, it did wonders for my flying and I met amazing people. The pilots were worth traveling to meet, just in themselves. I'll will be forever be safe in the knowledge that there is a world of women out there who love to fly every bit as much as I do".

## Results

### STANDARD CLASS

- |                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 1 Aude Grangeray, | France         |
| 2 Dana Novakova,  | Czech Republic |
| 3 Jana Veprekova, | Czech Republic |

### CLUB CLASS

- |                      |          |
|----------------------|----------|
| 1 Sabrina Vogt,      | Germany  |
| 2 Christine Grote,   | Germany  |
| 3 Editha Skalskiene, | Lituania |

### 15 METER CLASS

- |                           |         |
|---------------------------|---------|
| 1 Anne Ducarouge,         | France  |
| 2 Marilyne Abadie Bérard, | France  |
| 3 Katrin Senne,           | Germany |

### 1st 13.5m World Championships

This first 13.5m World Championship replaced the former World Class Championship that was limited to the PW5 only. Turning it into a 13.5 m World Championship opened the field up to other short winged gliders like the Silent. The Championship was held at Pocunai, Lithuania which also hosted the first Women's World Championships in 2001.

The US were represented by WSPA member François Pin and Tony Condon, WSPA Board member Leah Condon crewed for her husband. Francois finished with a very respectable 3<sup>rd</sup> Place while he and Tony also got the 3<sup>rd</sup> place Team Trophy. Congratulations to François and Tony.



### 1-26 Nationals

This year's 1-26 Championship was held in Minden, NV on the heels of the WSPA seminar. WSPA pilots seemed to have used up all the good soaring weather and left the 1-26 pilots and their colorful fleet with challenging conditions made worse by a nearby wildfire.

This year, the Virginia M. Schweizer Trophy which is awarded to the highest placing female pilot was not awarded since only one woman, Kathy Williams participated.

## WSPA's 30th Anniversary Memories

Sharon Smith writes

### Dream of Wings

Guarding the old Moody Coliseum at SMU (Southern Methodist University) stood the rusting fuselage of the P-51. I was five years old and in love for the very first time. My father hoisted me into the cockpit and I flew. It seemed natural to me then as it does now after thirty plus years of flying under my belt.

Ten years later, I saw an article in National Geographic magazine. The center spread offered a deep blue sky, puffy white cumulus and a sparkling sailplane. The caption read something similar to this: Richard H. Johnson, seven times US National Champion, flies his glider over Dallas, Texas. Dallas, Texas – where I lived, golly.

I saved my flights in memory as I waited for a chance to actually fly. And I wanted to fly gliders. But I had a long wait. First college, then law school and finally a break. One of my colleagues said, "Oh my husband flies gliders. He'll take you for a ride." Of course I hadn't realized that the unlucky husband was constantly offered up as ride giver to her friends who usually responded after the first few minutes of being airborne, "Bring me down now, I think I am going to be sick. Regardless of how reluctantly, Bob took me flying, at a gliderport, only 12 miles from my home. Amazing!

At least I was different than his previous rides. I happily took the controls and asked for more. I experienced the joy of soaring. When we landed, I joined Texas Soaring Association and finally was able to satisfy my wish to fly, a desire I still hold no matter the years.

I went on to receive my Private, Commercial and Instructor Glider rating, I also finally got a Private Pilot Airplane so I could tow. But all these accomplishments and various badges had their beginning in the broken down fuselage of a P51. A perfect start to a dream of wings.

(Sharon is a WSPA charter member. And served as President and Treasurer for many years. She also put the incorporation papers together and handled the incorporation procedure).

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### Linda Mae Draper-Hivert remembers her early days of flying

My Father loved to fly and owned an airplane at different times, even as early as the 1930s. He often spoke of dreaming he was a bird. It wasn't accepted for young ladies to take up flying in the 40s and 50s. I remember going up in his airplane when I was very young but only impressed by the size of the cows and the cars. Most girls liked clothes and boys!

It wasn't until the early 60s that an airline pilot friend suggested that I could fly! That had never crossed my mind before, but the idea turned into quite a challenge. After moving from Kansas City to San Francisco he supported the beginning of my glider flying at Sky Sailing in the Bay Area. On my occasional days off from work I was able slip away for a glider lesson.

I soloed in 1967 with the help of mentors, Les Arnold, Barry Jacobsen, and Jim Indrebo, among others. My log book even mentions "gained 600 feet twice at Mission Peak." It was amazing that I actually gained some altitude.

One beautiful July day, as I crossed the San Mateo Bridge there was an interruption in the music on the radio. It said: "Special News Bulletin, Man has just landed on the moon. Neil Armstrong stated, "One step for man, one giant leap for mankind." What a thrill it was to hear those words as I was about to take to the air in my own small way.

Getting married created a seven year dry spell which consequently destroyed my confidence. I had a couple of flights with the "Salinas Sinking Society" and eventually moved to Tahoe where I learned to ski and taught skiing.

In the late 70's my husband bought a new Cessna 152. He noticed that glider pilots came to Minden often during the summer for what they called "wave camp." He called the Schweizer dealer, at Stead and ordered a 2-33 and a 1-26, which turned out to be orange, my "pumpkin." I soloed again in 1979, earned my Commercial Glider Certificate, and my Silver Badge on a flight to Silver Springs the next year.

My girlfriend wanted to go for a glider flight soon after I got my Certificate. We took off in the 2-33 following the tow plane heading toward Spooner Summit. I didn't know why the tow was going so far away, but I followed. When the tow plane rocked its wings, which was the signal to release at that time, because there was no radio in the glider yet, we released. When we turned around and looked for the Minden Airport it was sooo far away! There really wasn't any lift and I just headed for the airport. Uuh, will we make it? Les Arnold told me what speed to fly in a pinch and I held that. As we approached the end of Runway 16, I told my friend to tighten her belts and as we slid over the threshold and rolling out on the pavement. When we went back to look at the landing site there was a 2 inch deep tire track in the mud at the edge of the runway! The tow plane "wave off" was just due to turbulence. The tow pilot's question was, "why did you get off there?"

On one of several badge attempts, my start was late due to working the line. I needed to earn my flying. As I scooted around the north end of the Pine Nuts, the lift was dying. The "Dayton Duster Strip" was just below me but forbidden for gliders to land there. Irrigation equipment in all the fields around made these fields not an option. I decided to land on this nice open gravel strip and pay the consequences. I got out of the 1-26 so scared; no one was around. I dragged the glider to the end of the runway with the shoulder belts, staying behind it in case someone started shooting at me. Eventually, I found a tire to hold the wing down, and set out to

find a telephone. There were a couple of farm workers down the road who didn't speak English but established that I needed to go to the farm house to find a "telephono." I did not want to go to the farm house. The owner hated gliders. Then all of a sudden there was the familiar sound of the tow plane engine. It made a low pass and landed. We hooked up the glider as fast as we could. As I became airborne; IFR in dust, couldn't see the tow plane, however, continued "I Follow Rope!" Made it! We were out of there, and on our way back to Minden in a flash. The next day I conjured up the courage to go back to the unwelcoming duster strip, taking a bottle to the owner and the intend to offer him a glider ride. I delivered it to his wife in spite of the enormous dogs that resided there, but never heard from him.

I continued having fun flying my little orange "pumpkin." My first "Lennie" pin and diamond altitude came next, along with some glider aerobatics. A trip to Mauterndorf, Austria for the first World Glider Aerobatic Championships fueled the flame for more unusual attitude flying. While there, I was privileged to fly a K6 at Niederoblarn, next to the magnificent Grimming (Mountain).

One day while driving down the Kingsbury Grade from my home at the top, I was planning to go skiing with some friends. One look at the towering lenticulars above the Carson Valley immediately changed my mind to ride the "pumpkin" instead of my skis, and perhaps set a record. I bundled up in my wave gear, wound and sealed the barograph, and followed the tow plane toward Heavenly Valley in the air instead by chair lift. The wave was pretty easy to find and I immediately made my notch and ascended upwards toward the sun. Upon reaching 29,500 feet I remembered that the barograph only went to 30,000 feet and if I would keep going, the stylus would get stuck on top of the drum and the flight would be disqualified and with it a record. Unsealing the barograph after returning from my lofty height, whew, the stylus was still on the drum! We carefully removed the trace. After calibration of the barograph, I discovered that I had reached 29,900 feet. Sure glad I quit when I did, another 100 feet and there would have been no Nevada Feminine Altitude and Altitude Gain Records which stood for several years.

Cross country flights to Stead Airport, or "Topaz International," or Bridgeport or Hawthorne in my "Pumpkin" were great fun due to the convenient accessibility of the "in house tow plane." However, the student of a guest instructor totaled my little orange bird, which was devastating.

A couple from Germany came frequently to Minden to fly in the Sierras. Stehle, the woman and I established a German Feminine Altitude record and later intended to make a distance record in the Janus.

The all metal fleet needed to be updated as the age of "glass" continued to descend upon the soaring industry. An Open Cirrus was added and became my favorite. Although it was for rent, I made sure everyone knew who's it was by putting painted strawberries on its nose.

Shortly after it was added to the fleet, a "Soaring Safari" was planned on a round about route to Heber City for the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the SSA. I was to fly the Open Cirrus which I barely had enough time to be comfortable with. But, I wasn't going to let someone else fly it! The first destination was Elko. I joined the group, thinking that if I made it to Carson City; I would have at least tried. We started out on a good thermal day. Low and behold, I climbed up to a respectable altitude and headed east. Soaring passed landmarks and airports; I was thrilled to be doing so well. As I reached Battle Mountain, looking for the next landmark, there was no more Sectional!! I landed there pleased with myself and thrilled that I made it that far.

The next day's course took us to American Falls, Idaho. We were getting into less familiar territory, but had a Sectional this time, with airports on it! Shortly out of Elko, the battery pack of 3 or 4 round cells in the nose, taped together with duct tape, began to bounce around. It was obvious that there would be no contact with anyone else in the Safari or the Crew vehicle. I didn't want the crew to have to turn around, so I kept going. The scenery was magnificent and the Snake River was certainly a viable landmark. As I approached American Falls, I began to see other gliders from the group. What a relief it was to know that I was at the right

airport.

The following day's forecast was less inviting, and we all trailed to Driggs, Idaho. There was a nice long runway at the base of the magnificent towering Grand Teton. I can honestly say that soaring the Grand Teton was one of my most memorable flights. The tall, stark, granite tower seemed so foreboding, yet like a toy to be played with and it was so much fun. Other gliders from the safari were all around. The radio was working this time and a voice said "put up your gear." This was always my nemesis, since I needed to use the rigging tool to hold the handle in place to lock it. When it was time to land I set up my pattern and turned base only to find the local Lark right in the middle of the only runway, not moving in either direction. What to do? Land over the top of it? Not much runway left, nor time to debate. I remembered in the briefing that the area beside the runway was landable, in spite of the tall alfalfa field. Thus, I landed in the alfalfa beside the runway. My glider was fine except for green stains on the wings and fuselage which easily washed off. The rest of the safari was fun flying in Heber City and Parowan, Utah.

Until 1983 we operated the gliders with the local power flight school and FBO. It became evident that the glider operation needed to be separate. I noticed that the glider pilots who came from California during the summer and for wave camps donned bumper stickers touting "Soar Minden." I checked with the State, and Soar Minden was not a registered business name. I was obliged to make it one, and thus "Soar Minden" became officially, the first commercial soaring operation at the Douglas County Airport.

That same year I had the opportunity to fly an open cockpit Slingsby T-21B in Puna, India. The following year I earned my Gold Badge and an "Out and Return" state record on an uneventful flight to Mammoth. We made an industrial film for Reader's Digest, for which I was paid, and featured in the flying scenes.

The SGS 2-33 was sold and our fleet dwindled down to only the two-place Lark. The Lark owner who was our Soar Minden partner sold the Lark due to his health. There we were with a soaring operation with no glider to fly but the Rallye, and a Super Cub, as tow planes. We found a Lark at Sky Sailing whose owner was willing to put it on lease-back. Our instructor employee and I headed to the Bay Area in the Super Cub and towed the Lark back to Minden. A club from the central valley came to Minden for a soaring camp. We loaned the Lark for instruction. It was totaled. Again we were a glider operation with just a couple of tow planes. It was the end of the season, and we were not too desperate to assume the expense of a glider as the holiday season approached. As usual, shortly after the first of the year the SSA Convention convened. We perused the exhibit hall, drooling over all the beautiful glass equipment, wishing for a miracle. A former student of mine showed up, asking me advice about a new Grob Acro displayed there. Would I like to fly it? Could we rent it? Could we use it for a lease back? Why yes, of course! Soar Minden was saved. The season opened with a brand new fiberglass trainer.



Meanwhile, a program was being created to break the world altitude record with a Grob 103. It became known as FL500 and I was the female pilot. We made presentations at SSA Conventions and the World Contest in Reiti, Italy. Parachute training, including a jump, was required, and we got extensive physiological training at the NASA altitude chamber in Houston. The full pressure suits, U2 type, were on loan.

On one particular occasion FL500 was invited to display at Edwards Air Force Base. Taking off from Tehachapi, everyone on the airport gathered on the top of the building to watch this operation. I was flying the Super Cub towing the FL500 Grob. The two big guys in the pressure suits were piloting the glider. Overweight? We pushed the glider to the end of the runway which was a little uphill and back against a fence. The roll began



slowly as the tow plane and glider lumbered along reaching the end of the runway and sailed over the gravel pit in a slow climb. We climbed up cautiously above the mountain and on to Edwards where they released. I circled down to land on one of the taxiways when a voice came over the radio "Super Cub 83449, understand you're circling to loose altitude." "Super Cub 449, yes," I answered. I was cleared to land and touched down on the designated taxiway. The Grob planned to land behind and I added some power to pull over to the side in case they needed more room to roll out. The Cub didn't move. I was mystified. The controller announced, "Super Cub 83449, hold, your rope is wrapped around a runway light." I had never been so embarrassed in my whole life, especially, as I climbed out of the tow plane, two Generals were rolling up the rope and handed it to me. The humiliation subsided as we approached the enormous swept wing glider (the Shuttle) from space on display.



About that same time, Marion Barritt joined Soar Minden as a partner. We held Aerobatic Camps. Air Force glider pilots helped us with instruction and operation. I even jumped at the opportunity to share the cockpit of one of our gliders with the world famous Ernie Gann.

At one of the contests we sponsored, the pilot of the rented Grob slithered into the office proclaiming that our glider had landed at the unlandable strip in the Topaz Valley. He didn't know how we were going to get it out of there, but he had to leave! We debated, and I finally obtained a flatbed trailer and headed for the strip. I wasn't sure of how to get to the strip, but no matter which way I went the road had so many hills that the trailer's wheels were off the ground between them. That was without a load. Not an option. How are we going to get the glider out of that strip? Can't leave it there? We needed it to rent! After contemplating for a day or two Marion and I decided to fly the Rallye over and take a look. The tow plane did have short field take-off and landing capabilities. It looked okay and we landed. We pushed the glider back to the fence, and pulled out the weeds in the path of the takeoff roll. With Marion in the glider and me in the Rallye, I gave the short field take off procedure, starting the roll. Bang, the glider released! What happened? There was a "short field, stop and taxi back". She didn't like eating dirt and released. We closed the vent and pushed the glider back against the fence again. It was now or never! I gave it full power and brakes, released the brakes and off we went. Climbing out and barely missing the fence at the far end. We were air borne and made it back to Minden. The glider was in the air the next day.

Shortly there after, forced to find a flying job, I answered an ad in Trade A Plane and headed to Alaska. The "land of the midnight sun" provided three summers of hazardous enterprise; one bush flying, one fire tanker flying and one fish spotting. I was never brave enough to spend a winter. Stories for another occasion! After a year stint in the Virgin Islands flying Twin Otters and Mallards, it was back to Minden for gliders on week-ends and Las Vegas during the week for my ATP.

Jumping forward about 20 years. The Sports Aviation Foundation has been formed to develop the east side of the Minden-Tahoe Airport with an International Soaring Complex and Sports Aviation Center. We currently do many Youth Programs at the Minden-Tahoe Airport. Please check our web site [www.sportsaviationfoundation.org](http://www.sportsaviationfoundation.org).

## Monique Weil remembers her early years of soaring

Exactly 50 Years ago started a new chapter in my life -----FLYING!! In late 1964, I returned to the US, after spending 6yrs living and working (as social worker with children in an institution) in Israel, I came to the Bay Area to visit an old friend who had moved here. Before long I was hired as a full-time Social Worker in Oakland, liked the job and the area and decided to stay.

One weekend day, on the way to visit my friend, passing Hayward airport, I saw a big sign advertising an introductory flight lesson for \$5. I was hooked! I had my first flight 10/16/65 and fell in love with flying. I was captivated by the idea of flight but had not thought previously about learning to fly, not even dreaming that I would actually be able to become a pilot.

I was really transformed by experiencing flight – Then, a few months after this first flight, I was lucky to sample glider flying when I landed in Sky Sailing glider field in Fremont thinking this would be a good way to practice power-off landings prior to my check ride – I became a Private Pilot Airplane the following summer, just after my first glider flight on 6/5/66.

Since then, my identity has changed, and flying has become central to my being. First power flying, then even more powerfully, flying without power brought me new feelings of freedom and self-confidence, joy of being alive as I experienced the beauty of flight. I have felt so lucky to be able to fly and I spent most of my free time developing my skills both in power flying as well as flying sailplanes. During my flight training I rarely saw any other women who were flying and at times I had to deal with some deprecating or mocking comments criticizing my landings.

While progressing in training for advanced power ratings, – (Instrument rating, Commercial rating, - followed eventually with CFI, CFII, Multi-Engine, Complex aircraft, ATP etc.), I also continued glider training and - in my 40<sup>th</sup> year, I felt privileged to achieve my Private Glider rating on 2/3/68, with none other than the famous Les Arnold, who had started the Sky Sailing glider operation and was a renowned glider pilot and instructor.

I loved the soaring flights, often spending many hours at any time of the year, playing back and forth and doing figure eights along the Mission Peak ridge and taking friends up to experience soaring. We had soaring days with thermal, ridge and wave flights, sometimes all on the same flight.

I loved both soaring and airplane flying and enjoyed giving rides to friends in gliders as well as in powered aircraft. After I became a CFIA, I joined the Civil Air Patrol as a Mission Pilot and Check Pilot and had some very rewarding experiences, especially when finding a lost aircraft or even lost persons who wandered off. [Actually it took me quite some time to find a squadron where I would be accepted as a pilot. There were no other women pilots in any of the local squadrons in those days; the atmosphere was often not receptive to women pilots, and at best I was often just ignored. I did find a couple of individual pilots who were very welcoming in the squadron I eventually chose.]

Over time, in the past ten years, I eased out of power flying as I found soaring so much more rewarding.

I have accumulated over 9,500hr total logged flying time, over about 49 years. Of these, over 3,000 hours were logged glider flight hours, which include over 2,000hr as glider instructor.

After becoming a glider instructor, I instructed and also gave rides in a SGS 2-32 in Lagoon Valley, near Vacaville (which closed decades ago). Later I was part of a group, called "Soaring Experience" purchasing a Blanik L-13 glider, supposedly for women pilots– As I found out later, I was the only woman pilot actually flying this glider, the other 6 or so members were wives of pilots. When this FBO was about to close, we disbanded the Blanik group and a couple of us decided to bring the Blanik to Byron, and join the NCSA club, a group of pilots who had moved from Hummingbird to Byron and formed the Northern California Soaring Association.

The first summer I began instructing for the club, I found myself the only club instructor as the others preferred to go to the mountains and fly. Giving instruction to beginning students in the club was a delight from the beginning, seeing the sparkle of joy in the student and sharing the excitement of discovery of the freedom of flight, and the thrill of the first solo. I particularly enjoyed teaching young people and promoting a youth scholarship named after one of our flight instructors.

1985 – Air Sailing - was my first women's (pre WSPA) soaring week and my first experience in a different soaring site, except for one dual wave flight in Minden, during the 1984 PASCO Wave camp, when we were treated to a very high and fast sled ride in an SGS 2-33 which we trailered from Fremont Sky Sailing!!

I had not heard of any women soaring activities until shortly prior to the Air Sailing 1985 women seminar, but as soon as I heard about it, I decided to go.

There I rented a 1-36 and soon found myself climbing in strong lift over the red rocks. I was thrilled with the spectacular view of the blue Pyramid Lake ahead and, as I continued climbing, I tried to put on the oxygen mask – I had not expected to climb that high and had only superficially checked the mask before the flight.

Well, I lost my lift, so did not need the oxygen!

Lesson learned! Carefully do pre-flight of all the equipment!

Then I began to look for a good place to land. We had been told not to land on Pyramid Highway, so I searched for any place to land amidst the rough clumps of sagebrush and rocks which covered the ground in all directions ahead. By that time, I was descending fast, too low to return over the red rocks to Air Sailing. The highway was the only place I could see that had good landing options.

As I was circling to pick out a good section of road for landing---luckily there was no visible traffic --- I tried to relay my position and intentions to glider base. The landing was good, between two posts. I jumped out and as I started to pull the glider off the highway, a car arrived and stopped - I was handed a beer! I asked for help to pull the glider clear – and also for change to make a phone call in case my radio transmission had not reached base.

Before long, several women drove up, with a trailer on tow, ready to help disassemble and load the glider onto the trailer..... They were a welcome sight, very friendly and efficient.....

As we approached Air Sailing, I was a little embarrassed and expected to be reprimanded. I was surprised how relaxed and low key the debriefing proceeded.

I do not remember the rest of that week, except that I achieved my Gold Altitude, had a great time, enjoyed the camaraderie of the women and the excellent flying conditions.

I rejoiced in the creation of WSPA and made sure to attend as many WSPA seminars as I could after that.....

I thoroughly enjoyed all the WSPA seminars, soaring in new areas, re-joining old friendships, and making new friends,

Some memorable WSPA Seminars ...: 1986 El Tiro, AZ,; TSA; 1989 Tehachapi, CA; 1993 Black Forest, CO; 1996 Hemet, CA (where I managed to squeeze an aerobatic course in a Citabria very early every morning at the Flight School nearby); 1994 Hobbs, NM; 2003 Moriarty, NM;; 1995: Sugarbush, VT, where I completed my Silver Badge; 2009 Lesce/Bled, Slovenia etc. as well as several seminars at Air Sailing, where I was an instructor- (2000,-2005,-2010).



Miha Avbelj and Monique at the 2009 seminar in Slovenia  
Miha's quote: "I wish I will fly as well when I am 80 years old"

Several WSPA members had the opportunity to fly at the world renowned soaring site Omarama, NZ. Charles Petersen from the York Soaring Association, our seminar host in 2014, sent Hangar Soaring this report earlier in the year

### Mountain Flying in Omarama, NZ by Charles Petersen

Almost all my own experience, either at my club 100 Km' NW of YYZ, **York Soaring Association** ([www.yorksoaring.com](http://www.yorksoaring.com)), or at **Seminole Lake FBO** in central Florida ([www.soarfl.com](http://www.soarfl.com)), where I snowbird in the winter months, is over terrain that has no mountains. I am a flatland pilot. I have an instinctive comfort with altitude below me, and it is contra-intuitive to fly closer to terrain.

I flew from Orlando to Auckland, with a 3 day stopover in San Francisco, and then onward for the 12.5 hour flight, (but only a further 3 hour time zone change) to NZ. Prior to flying, I shared an incredible cruise on the **Seabourn Odyssey** with my wife down the E coast of NZ, across the Tasman Sea (ask how I know winds blow 60 MPH on this ocean) to Australia, with a couple of ports there. My wife left for home, while I flew Sydney to Queenstown (closest service to Omarama, and the approach is worth searching on You Tube) and then drove a rental car the two hours to the field on a Sunday, to settle in for the course start on a Monday. It is a long way to go, but the scenery in the Lord of the Rings films was not computer generated, and you'll see it up close and personal. I did find New Zealand is a little expensive compared to North American prices, but so too is most of the world.

What makes Omarama so special that it is a dream of almost every glider pilot? Well, it is the combination of the location in the Southern Alps, the complex air flow dynamics produced by the winds interacting with the island's topography, the super Duo Discus gliders, and instructors who are both excellent pilots and superb teachers.

The airport itself is amazing: a very lengthy 5000' turf runway, three large hangars that can house up to 80 gliders (a legacy of the world contest held there some years ago), and a large terminal building (the original hangar) where briefing rooms, offices, and club house facilities are enviable. Alongside this aggressively irrigated runway, are almost 30 chalets (privately owned but available for rent to visiting pilots), a well treed campground, a motel, and a cute cafe.

Each day starts with a public weather briefing, and the complex and thorough material includes wind, cloud, thermal and esoterica like Skew T graphs. Then the group for the Mountain Flying course assembles upstairs in a private briefing room, and begins with a review of the previous day's flights. Each glider is equipped with a logger that takes a three dimensional fix every few seconds, creates a file that can be animated by the program **See You**, projecting a flight trace on a white board. At intervals the replay (speeded up from real time), is paused so the staff can sketch wind and cloud info with dry markers on the board, enhancing the understanding of the source of the lift we enjoyed, - or, its evil twin, - 'sink'. Comments, questions and opinions from students and instructors flow in animated fashion.

Then, after a break, we assemble again for some ground school, - detailed insight into one of the types of lift, or advice on technique, centering a thermal, or the structure of a wave and how to work your way into one, for example. We break at noon for lunch (very civilized, this sport), and will find our ships, gridded on the flight line by the staff, at the appointed hour, usually 13:00 to 13:30. A Piper Pawnee 260, or its look alike clone the Australian Fat Man (a two seat side by side Pawnee), hooks up on a 200' line, and off we go. Tow height will be decided by the instructor based on the conditions. My tows were between 4000' and 1500', and you are charged by the height.

Now the practical lesson: flying, - and the fun begins. Our options are to tow to a ridge that offers lift from a wind against it, or to the clouds over

a ridge, that indicate the areas of convection, or lift. First day, we opt for the ridge, because ridge technique will be the focus of the day. But that is where the good lift is found. There are protocols to keep us safe. For example, we always turn away from the rocks as we work back and forth in an area of lift, - never succumbing to the temptation to circle as we would in a thermal, lest the drift of the wind take us too close to complete the turn without colliding with the rocks. So we fly elongated figure eights back and forth in front of the ridge where we have found good lift. And often, the wing tip is closer to the rock than it is to us, for that is where the lift is strongest. It is also important to keep enough speed to enable a nimble response should we encounter an unexpected down gust, turning towards the safety of the valley where there is altitude below. Low and slow is a no-no!

And for the bowls there is a poetic variation of this technique; my instructor G demonstrates after my too-tentative venture into one. These bowls can concentrate the lift of the wind, and G takes us back to where I started by putting out the spoilers (air brakes) to begin at the same altitude. He then flies in close to the bowl, turning with the wings parallel to the slope round the bowl, which yields a rich gain in altitude. I try it again, mimicking his technique, and the easy success is exhilarating. We spend almost four hours exploring the effects of different wind angles and different topography: spurs off a ridge line, flattened tops of ridges, lee side turbulence, etc.

G shows empathy for the workload of the uninitiated, never overloading me with too much information, but always keeping me on a steep learning curve. After almost four hours, the day is still flyable with ample lift, but we (I) have had enough, we return to the field, and there is one more surprising lesson. The wind a few thousand feet over the runway is light from the West, but the wind on the ground is ~25 Kt. From the East. It is a reverse wind gradient, the wind getting stronger as it gets closer to the ground. Woe to he who lands downwind; the airspeed will drop on approach, and lowering the nose to pick up speed will put the aircraft into lower airspeed yet. Danger Will Robinson!

The weather briefing next day is not optimistic, but G is cautiously so. He says the mountains are very efficient at scrubbing the rain and the moisture out of the atmosphere, - and he proves right. Today's focus will be convergence. G combines his extensive local knowledge with the information from the weather briefing, (of sufficient import that it is given each day by Lemmy, the CFI), and his experience reading the clouds to locate and utilize this lift. It is, as I said, the result of two converging winds, and if one is colder or has higher humidity, it will form a cloud base lower than the other air mass, resulting in a raggedy line of cumulus with a shelf-like wall between the two, beside which we find the lift we seek. We fly close to the curtain of misty cloud that joins the two layers, often with one wing right in this cloud, and the lift is good, enabling us to choose speed when we can't climb while too close to the ceiling of the upper layer. We cover a different area of the island today, and will each day. G knows every ridge by name, and by what he can expect, and shares his knowledge well. As an instructor myself, I appreciate his pedagogic technique, and am awed by his airmanship.

This convergence can also be found in the valleys and plains of the incredibly varying terrain of this relatively small island. We use it the next day to go north to the large mountains that form the impressive watershed along the West coast. Then we start climbing the mountains. The scenery is like a sequence of post card photos. The lakes have that unique turquoise colour from the glacial sediment emulsified in the water. The mountains, in the midst of mid-summer, have remains of snow, even on the 'dry side' to the East of the divide. And we cross from one set of peaks to another, over valleys with rivers and lakes, but most of the flight is spent at altitudes of only a few hundred feet agl, or less. I can't stop feeling like a country kid on his first visit to the big city. Not that I want to. The scenery is truly deserving of the adjective 'awesome!' The video on the Omarama web site will give you a better look than my words can describe, but the live show is better yet.

Over these peaks, it is the slope's orientation to the sun angle that plays the biggest role in choosing our flight path. A steep slope of bare rock facing the sun will become relatively very hot, and this heat is transferred to the air touching it, - and keeps heating it as it accelerates, flowing up the rock face to the summit, where it mixes with slower, less heated air from the shady side, forming gusty powerful thermals that challenge the pilot's skill in staying centered in the fastest flowing core of the thermal. When we have sufficient height, we can fly to the next peak. This day took us to within half a mile of famous Mt. Cook, but the congested weather on the West side prevented flying around the peak.

The Duo Discus, with its 20 meter (65.5 foot) wings has a best glide ratio of almost 45:1, and these long legs can take it amazing distances. And G has a wonder thingy in his panel; he is a beta tester for one of the flight computers glider pilots use to show turnpoints and range, among other things. And G's **Clear Nav** instrument offers a unique feature valuable in the mountains: it has a data base of the terrain contours and projects what it calls its 'amoeba' of achievable glide areas, considering the effect on the range required to fly around ridges or peaks below our glide slope when we can safely have final glide to home. What could go wrong?

Although the weather forecast had been pessimistic about the week I had booked to fly, we flew great flights four out of 5 days. That is the average during the season, the antipodal summer without hesitation.

#### About the Author

Charles Petersen is a retired business executive and recovering sailboat racer who began flying in 1998, and is now a Flight Instructor, Gliders, and an Aerobatic Instructor, Gliders, with over 2300 hours. He owns a Discus 2cT, a high performance cross country glider with a small engine that will get him home if needs be. Charles is Chairman of **Youth Flight Canada Education Fund**, a registered Canadian charity that promotes flight training for young pilots, and through its sponsorship of the **Freedom's Wings Canada** federation, offers Inspiration flights to those with disabilities, and at some locations, flight training for paraplegics in modified gliders. Charles did the groundwork for the 2014 Seminar at York Soaring Association in Ontario, Canada

Come and join WSPA at the 2016 SSA Convention in Greenville SC. Meet your Board members ( and HS editor) and join us Friday morning for the WSPA breakfast. Our booth will have many items for sale including raffle tickets for the 2016 raffle



Kristin Farry and her 1-26





WSPA member Elaine Carlson made and donated this beautiful little box (5x5x9) for our 2016 raffle. A card included with the box reads: *"This Scandinavian bent wood box is made from mahogany and basswood and decorated with a technique that the Norwegians call "kolrosing". The pattern is incised with a sharp knife and then finely ground coffee is rubbed into the cuts to bring out the design."*

Ed. note: an artisan mystery gift was added to the box. Raffle tickets will go on sale in January

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