

# **Black Mountains Gliding Club**

## **Minutes of the 2009 Annual General Meeting**

### **11/04/2009**

**Date:** 11th April 2009 **Place:** Talgarth Rugby Club **Time:** The meeting commenced at 19:19h

#### **Directors Present**

Clive Micklewright Chairman and Treasurer

John Horley

Gordon Dennis

Apologies were received from Mike Codd (Director) who was absent due to a back injury.

#### **Members present**

28 other members were present.

Apologies were received from 8 members.

#### **1. Approval of Previous Minutes**

Tony Crowden proposed that the amended minutes of the 2007 AGM held on 6th April 2007 were accepted, and John Clark seconded. The minutes were accepted.

John Clark proposed that the minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting held on 31st May 2008 were accepted, and Peter Saundby seconded. These minutes were also accepted as accurate.

#### **2. Chairman's Report**

Clive Micklewright began the chairman's report by welcoming members and thanking them for attending. An early vow that he would make AGMs more informative and pleasurable has been achieved despite the 'challenging' nature of the 2008 AGM and EGM.

The Chairman reviewed the past year.

- Despite high fuel prices and poor weather, particularly in August, the club has progressed well in the past year with overall flying rates maintained. He paid tribute to those members and their families who contribute so much to the club in progressing projects and keeping it a friendly, welcoming and well balanced operation and also to the four directors who have worked tirelessly with an almost 100% attendance record at Directors' meetings.
- Planning permission for the new building has been secured, and in consultation with the building regulators work is 99% complete. It is planned that electrical work and certification for the whole site will be completed in the near future.
- The requirement to pay interest on debentures was revisited (see the Treasurer's Report later).
- As suggested by members, the directors have sought to engage 'project managers' to relieve them of some aspects of club management. This has been largely successful although not all requests have resulted in volunteers.
- The successful visit by the BGA Duo Discus will be repeated this year.
- The club internet system has been improved and training videos added to the web site.
- Completion of the Briefing Room will leave the clubhouse as a 'social' area.
- The change in directors has been recorded with Companies House, with no Company Secretary appointed (it is not a requirement) though Mike Codd is carrying out this role in addition to his other roles. He is currently progressing permissions for improved roadside signage to the club.
- A new range of club clothing is now available.
- There were several good social events during the year, including winter lectures.
- The idea of a webcam was rejected until an agreed business case and cost benefit analysis was submitted.
- The club sent representatives to the BGA Chairman's conference, the CFI national Conference and the UAV flying consultation.
- While Christmas voucher sales were disappointing, year-on-year sales are no lower so

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far.

- On-line committee meetings are being developed so a director could live a long distance from the club and still attend meetings.

- John Horley is dealing with 'permissions' for non-members with a need to cross the airfield.

The Chairman looked ahead.

- Requirements from the insurers for fuel store insurance are prohibitively expensive so John Horley is seeking ways to improve security.

- Water pipes that freeze are to be lagged this year.

- Operationally the club will continue as before, which has worked well both financially and flying-wise, and the Chairman was pleased to welcome Bo Nilsson back as staff instructor for the 2009 summer season.

- Clive Micklewright is also Child Protection Officer. As it will be mandatory (by law) to introduce Criminal Record Bureau checks by October 2009, he is seeking a volunteer to manage this.

Club management

- Clive reminded the members that he was carrying out the dual roles of Chairman and Treasurer. None of the other Directors wishes to take on either position in addition to their current duties and no nomination for director has been received. Having seen the club onto a sounder footing since the last AGM, and being willing to continue in one, but not both of his current roles, Clive announced that he was standing down as Chair (a position decided by the Directors) after this AGM. He felt that the members were being unfair expecting him to continue doing both jobs. He would be happy to mentor his replacement in either role.

The three years he promised to serve as treasurer will be up next year also.

- This year the Directors have ensured that all their activities are open, with all reports appended to the minutes, though of course personal and confidential information is not shared. 'Independent' minute writers have been appointed who record minutes of Directors' meetings.

- There are currently four directors, one of whom is standing for re-election. A fifth director is sought who could be assisted into the role of Chair or Treasurer. The team of directors is working very successfully but the appointment of a fifth would relieve some of the pressure on the existing directors.

In conclusion

The Chairman ended his report by reiterating that the success of the club depends on the work of many people, and he thanked very many of them by name and felt that the challenges ahead would be met with success at BMGC.

He then took one step to the left to deliver the Treasurer's report.

### **3. Treasurer's Report (BMGC & TAL)**

Overview:

'Don't Panic!' was the first phrase in Clive Micklewright's report.

The club showed a loss of £6,600 on the books last year, and paid 47p corporation tax.

The Treasurer went on to explain why this was a good thing: -

At the end of the 2007 financial year there was £27,000 in the club accounts, including a £15,000 loan from the Phillip Wills fund. At that stage neither the £6,700 for the tug engine nor the £13,500 for the K21 re-gel had been paid. They were paid in January/February 2008 so the £27K in the accounts disappeared very early but the club was generating income.

In 2008 the club covered its outgoings and accrued no outstanding additional debts. In addition the £4,750 of member loans, £3,500 of the Phillip Wills loan, £6,000 of mortgage, £1050 of debentures and £1,860 of outstanding debenture interest (see below) were paid. Overall in 2008, which was not a good year weather-wise, the club generated an income of £120K (it was £117K in 2007), paid off over £18K debt and built a contingency reserve

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of £20,000.

#### Debenture Interest:

The Treasurer explained that there was a legal obligation to offer interest on all debentures as originally agreed. At a meeting between the Directors and the three 'trustees' it was agreed to offer interest to all those who had cashed in their debentures, and to do the same when current debenture holders cashed in.

Of 24 who had cashed in, 16 waived the interest and 8 required payment at a total cost of £1,860. There is now no liability for interest on the £36,300 of debentures already paid out.

#### Current debts:

The club owes £7,000 on the mortgage (reducing to £6,000 this year even without extra payments), £12,000 on the Phillip Wills loan, debentures of around £50,000 (with possible further debt of interest payments when redeemed).

#### This year:

The Treasurer will remain cautious despite the fact that the credit crunch has not had an impact yet. All charges are maintained at last year's rates despite costs increasing. The club is budgeted to repay £4,000 of debt but if it is a good year the Treasurer hopes to pay off at least £10,000.

He asked budget holders to plan ahead as the budget is tightly managed.

'Unusual' commitments this year include: -

Club glider instruments £500

Electrical upgrade £3,500

Briefing room completion £7,000

Simulator project £4,000 - to be reviewed in June.

Fuel store improvements £500

Apart from these there is no planned capital expenditure this year with club operation, completion of current projects and debt repayment prioritised, in the hope of being debt free in 3 years. However, if a suitable single seater became available at the right price, a purchase would be considered.

The Treasurer concluded by assuring the members that despite not being an accountant, he runs the accounts very tightly (detailed accounts have been distributed to all members) and thanked the members for their support.

The Treasurer then invited questions.

Q. Keith Richards asked how much the briefing room complex had cost to date.

A. Up to 2 years ago £21K. Last year £7-800. This year £7K has been allocated but it is expected that the spend would be half that amount. Total cost therefore £26K.

Q. Lesley Wright asked what the implication of being 'debt free' would be.

A. TAL is a wholly owned subsidiary of BMGC. As soon the TAL debts (debentures, mortgage etc) are repaid TAL would be dissolved. BMGC would be liable for corporation tax then, and spending would have to be planned to minimise tax, but the club would be in a position to improve facilities. In view of the increasing average age of the gliding community the future is unsure so it has been agreed to repay debts as soon as possible.

Q. Robbie Robertson asked whether the 5-year strategy agreed at the 2007 AGM is still part of the long-term plan.

A. Yes it is. Mike Codd has reviewed it recently and it will be revisited.

Q. Peter Saundby commented that the loss of the tug is the greatest vulnerability. Could a contingency fund be set up to buy a new tug when one comes on the market as it is not always possible to acquire one when required?

A. The Treasurer felt that a bank loan would be possible in the event of a purchase being necessary. However he asked the meeting if they would prefer this contingency fund to repaying debt. The members opted to keep the fund at £20K. Members' loans were not felt necessary and it would be ensured that the tug is adequately insured.

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#### 4. CFI's Report

##### 2008

Martin Langford gave an overview of 2008 during which the BGA Duo Discus did a lot of flying in its week at Talgarth, Mike Codd became a basic instructor, Mike Tomlinson the cross country coach and there was a batch of first solo's and badge claims. Pilot development progressed with instructor training days, availability of the Usk motor glider for training, creation of on-line training videos and a successful 'Bronze C Weekend.

##### 2009

The plans for this year include bringing on new tug pilots and instructors, developing a 'mentor' system led by Don Gosden and Mike Entwisle and continuing to enhance safety and training. A 'Silver C Weekend is also being considered.

##### Safety / Annual Flight Reviews

Of the incidents in the past year it emerged that pilot distraction was often a factor, and that pre-take-off 'eventuality' planning as important. However the bulk of incidents involved visiting pilots and the CFI asked all members to report unusual flying to the duty instructor. The CFI then gave the members attending the AGM some safety reminders including currency, being aware of flying conditions and how they change the requirement to attend briefing or check in with the duty instructor.

The BGA and the insurers require increased levels of safety. The CFI is instituting a mandatory standard Annual Flight Review (AFR) for all solo pilots (with emphasis on stalling and spinning, which is part of a national safety campaign). This year all solo pilots must fly the AFR between 1st May and 31st July. In subsequent years it must be flown in the first quarter. No soaring charge will be made when these flights are recorded as an AFR on the log and current mandatory checks will count as an AFR. A list will be on the wall and signatures of instructor and reviewee will be required.

##### Training

BMGC is a good place to develop flying skills with training facilities soon to be enhanced by a dedicated briefing room, use of training videos (shot by John Scott) and a simulator, as well as the appointment of a Chief Ground School Instructor (Gordon Dennis), a cross-country coach (Mike Tomlinson) and an aerobatic coach (Don Gosden).

The new Talgarth Triangle is already being flown, the K21 plus XC coach or other P1 will be available for various events and the BGA Duo Discus will be at Talgarth for task week. As last year the Usk motor glider is available to BMGC members for training and this year navigation practice from Shobdon is available.

The idea of a gliding simulator as a training aid at Talgarth is being evaluated, and the CFI will report back to the committee with his conclusions. It would consist of a 'real' Pirat cockpit connected to simulator software and a charge would be made for use (e.g. £10/hr). It would have a 'freeze' facility for mid-'flight' analysis. The CFI and others have been in communication with other clubs who have simulators and he feels that it would be a useful training tool for student pilots and an extra occupation for those on a mini-course or awaiting a trial lesson. If approved it would be built next winter.

Finally, the CFI thanked the tug pilots and instructors and all helpers on the airfield. He then invited questions.

A discussion about the simulator followed.

It was established that a simulator session would not replace a trial lesson in bad weather and it would be in a dedicated room in the new building. It would be mainly used on non-flying days; it could be difficult to provide an instructor on flying days.

When it was suggested that the simulator should be simple to operate with 'One switch and go' the CFI said that a lesson plan would be supplied and that it could be used without an instructor. It is hoped that local scenery could be added.

There was a discussion about whether it should be a single or two-seater, as the single-seater now envisaged would have limited usefulness for ab-initio training. A second seat could be bolted on if there was space in the room or an instructor station set up with a

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second set of controls, but no feedback. Most other clubs have 2-seaters but RAF simulators have separate instructor controls, however with our small room the screen would be close and less realistic. Lookout would be limited with a single screen. As gliding is about 'feel' and 'feedback' it was suggested that the money could be better spent on things for club members such as hard standing for the private trailers with an electrical supply for dehumidifiers or a camping area. The CFI reiterated that an evaluation was still to be completed. The chairman suggested that members keep an eye on progress in the committee meeting minutes and contact the committee with any strong views on the subject.

In answer to a question - all instructors may carry out the annual checks.

It was suggested that the strategy should be readdressed - the new chairman would be asked to add that to the agenda.

#### **5. Safety Officer's Report**

Peter Saundby gave a succinct report about accidents and incidents in 2008, the full text of which is in Appendix A below.

#### **6. Members' Proposals**

The following proposal was submitted by Tony Bartlett and seconded by John Coward.

"Task week should be brought forward to earlier in the season i.e. May/June time, rather than the current practice of being at the end of the season."

He wrote "On Task week it is all about flying cross-country. The club encourages early/experienced pilots to experience cross-country flying either with Instructors or solo. I feel that currently Task week (last week of August) is too late in the season. For these early pilots to progress on after Task week the season is coming to an end, the weather is against them. They then lose interest/motivation to pursue their new skills.

If Task week was earlier in the season these pilots would then have all of the summer to practice their cross-country flying and hone their skills. I feel more pilots would "get the bug" to fly cross-country.....something which Talgarth does not do a great deal of."

The discussion which followed raised the following points: -

Tony Bartlett agreed he would be willing to organise a rescheduled task week.

While early in the season there were more fields available for outlandings, pilots' currency and experience were greater by August. The May option could be too early for good weather and crops can be more dangerous in June.

Several members would be away at other competitions in June and the 'end of season' club get-together in August was enjoyed by many despite possibly poorer conditions.

Alternative suggestions were that the duty instructor always set a XC task if conditions were suitable, or that a 'soaring week' was organised in May in addition to Task Week.

Tony Bartlett amended his proposal, which was seconded by John Coward.

"The club should have a 'Soaring Week' earlier in the year (in addition to task week) to promote cross-country flying earlier in the year. Tony Bartlett would organize it."

The proposal was agreed with a majority (22 votes in favour by a show of hands).

#### **7. Election of Directors to the Committee**

In accordance with BMGC Articles of Association, one third of the Directors retire at the AGM. Mike Codd retired at this meeting and was seeking re-election. His re-election was proposed by Anne Crowden and seconded by Martin Langford.

Anne Crowden requested a secret ballot, wishing to set a precedent for all future elections of directors.

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Mike Codd was elected by secret ballot (30 votes in favour).

#### **8. Any Other Business**

##### Webcam

Tony Crowden suggested that a webcam be set up at the club. He proposed that a simple system be used initially and described the advantages to be accrued. The cost of £400 could be recouped with the extra flying. He and Phil Swallow were willing to acquire and install the camera if agreed.

The discussion that followed raised the possibility of having a complete weather station instead of only the webcam. The cost of a suitable weather station with software (similar to that at Aston Down) would be £609. There was general support for the installation to include a weather station, though the question of whether there was a business case was raised and there was a suggestion that seeing early morning conditions on a particular day may actually discourage attendance. It was said that this was a project was overdue and would benefit all members as well as visitors.

Tony Crowden's amended proposal was "that the club should install a webcam and weather station. Tony Crowden and Phil Swallow would organise it. "

Geoff King seconded the proposal.

The proposal was agreed (22 votes in favour by a show of hands).

##### Gliders & tug

Keith Richards (glider maintenance) informed the meeting that all club gliders now had up to date EASA CofA's and that the tug hook was being replaced.

He asked that any problems found with the aircraft during DI's should be written on the whiteboard in the hangar as well as in the DI book. Martin Langford will brief members about this.

#### **9. Presentation of Awards**

Martin Langford awarded the CFI's Cup to Anna Baik and presented the Talgarth Triangle Trophy to Martin Pingel and the Tony Burton Cup to Tony Crowden.

#### **Closure of Meeting**

Gordon Dennis offered a vote of thanks to Clive Micklewright who more than anyone has held the club together in the past year and Tony Crowden thanked the committee for all their hard work. Both these were heartily endorsed by the members present.

The Club President and founder member, Derrick Eckley, thanked the Committee for 'looking after his baby'. The Chairman replied that there would undoubtedly be an event to celebrate the club's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in July.

The outgoing Chairman then closed the meeting amid concern from the floor that the club would have no chairman as there had been no nominations to for a new director.

The meeting closed at 21:07h

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**Appendix A**

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Annual Safety Report for 2008  
Club Safety Officer – Peter Saundby

During the calendar year 2008 there were no accidents to club owned aircraft; but we lost one privately owned two seat glider injuring a crew member, and damaged the BGA Duo Discus. On 26 January the Capstan T49 flown by two experienced pilots got behind a sharp ridge in a very strong wind and made a crash landing on unsuitable terrain during which the aircraft was destroyed and one pilot injured. Fortunately he has since made full recovery. The cause was a momentary lack of situational awareness by the pilots but a contributory factor was that no forecast of wind strength had been obtained or exhibited on the notice board.

The BGA Duo Discus was leased by the Club and following a familiarisation flight on 14 June was landed wheel up. No damage was done during the landing but during the lifting and recovery a trim tab was damaged. This incident was due to a failure to monitor an experienced pilot by an instructor.

A visiting pilot on 27 July after a transit flight landed wheels up and well short of the runway threshold. There was conflict of evidence as to whether the wheel was down and collapsed on landing or was retracted. That runway follows a steep upslope but the threshold is clearly marked. It is because appearances are deceptive that visiting pilots are required to attend a walk round of our airfield. A point was that this pilot still had the QFE of his airfield of departure set on his altimeter and that raised issues of altimeter setting procedures.

On 19 September there were two separate bird strikes in succession. No damage was done to gliders but two Buzzards died. Bird strikes are rare and perhaps the second was an unwise revenge attack. The 22nd October saw an AIRPROX incident when an RAF Hawk penetrated the airfield circuit and passed close to a visiting aircraft. On 31 October the propeller wash from the Pawnee while taxiing damaged a glider canopy that was shut but not locked. On 28 November there was an uncommanded release of the tow rope from the tug end but this was well handled by the glider pilot who landed successfully.

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