



WWGC Newsletter January 2024

From the President - Simon Casey

Happy new year! I trust your new year's resolution included some achievable goals for gliding such as getting to solo, QGP, participating in competitions and gaining a silver, gold or diamond badge. Or perhaps it is to fly more than you did last year. Whatever - the club is here to help you achieve your goals. In January we have an intensive training week and in February, we have the Club Class competitions. If you are not flying in it, consider volunteering. See Grae or David for details. More from David below.

We have started the new year with great weather and flying conditions. Several members have achieved cross country flights and durations in excess of 4 hours. I hope this is a sign for the rest of the soaring season. WWGC welcomes the El Nino weather pattern!

A big thank you to summer crew instructors Chris Sterrit and David Bente who provided much needed instructing for our club. David has headed north for some touring and Chris has headed south to Omarama. We welcome back Andy Parish and Ian Willows from their stay in Omarama. They will instruct for our club before their return to the UK towards the end of the season.

As you know, our club relies heavily on volunteers to operate. Some members put in significant time and make a huge contribution. All members contribute both time and money with the latter being membership and various charges such as flying, camping etc. All members should be part of a roster as without rostered duties, our club could not operate.

I have been made aware that some members who are unable to attend their rostered duty are simply not turning up. At the very least, we need members to take these rosters seriously and either turn up for their duty or arrange a swap with someone else. Simply not turning up for a rostered duty will not endear you to other members. There have been times where if it wasn't for someone being able to step in at short notice, we would not have been able to operate.

As part of the rostering, I would like to extend a huge thank you to Katrina Merrifield who has put hours into the latest roster. It is very hard balancing all the duties with the variable

availability of members. It should not be Katrina's job to find a replacement. But if you cannot find a replacement and cannot do the duty, please let her know but well in advance.

Finally, please understand that no matter how much you contribute to the club, we cannot entertain any special arrangements such as discounted flights, free camping etc in return for extra voluntary effort. If we did that then it really opens a can of worms. How do you value one member's contribution compared to others? We truly thank those who put in the extra effort as it makes a huge difference. It does not go unnoticed!

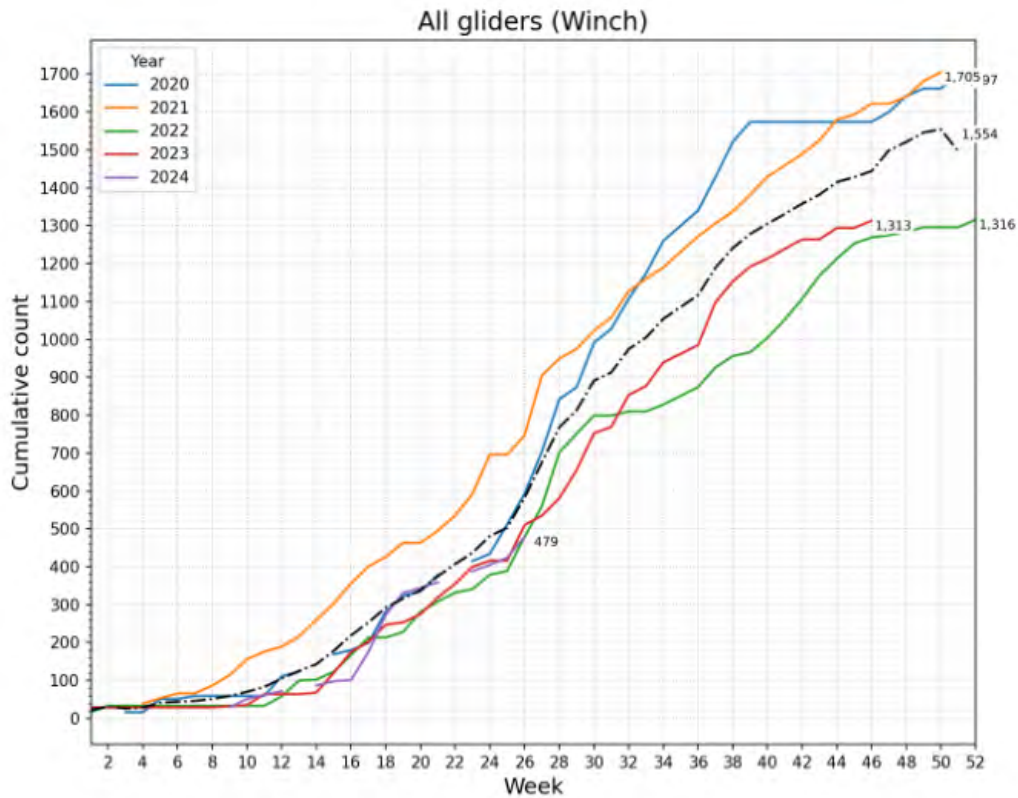
Achievements

A big congratulations to Ben Polaschek on his first solo flight on 2nd January just after his 14th birthday. Not only was his first solo 1hr 40m but he also reached 5,500'. That in itself must be a record for a first solo.



As you can see from the rather grainy image above of the bucket of water initiation for Ben, it is far better to go solo in summer than winter!

Utilisation



The utilisation has slipped since the last newsletter. Currently we are tracking about the same for the same period in 2022 and 2023. With the great soaring weather that started new years day, we should see utilisation begin to increase again. Let's get above the 5 year average!

Training Week 15 - 19 January 2023

You know that a long time between flights slows your progress. Take advantage of this 5 day intensive training week. With our highly experienced instructors - Andy & Ian, this will be your chance to significantly improve. It does not matter what you are training for, they are there to help you achieve your goals.

If interested, talk to them in advance of what you want to achieve and they will help you in your preparation for the course so that you get maximum benefit.

Lion's Group

On Saturday 2 December, we hosted the local Lion's group of 12 flights organised by Tony Bayliss. They had a great day and we were very happy with how efficiently and safely we ran the day. One member commented how well we briefed everyone. We feel confident that we can handle other groups from this experience.



Brian Foster Memorial Flight

Brian Foster was a NZ glider pilot who flew from 1963 to 2011. Although he flew mostly in the UK, he did have some flights at our airfield in Papawai many years ago. He did not have family in NZ and so was assigned a carer as he developed dementia towards the end of his life. He died in 2023 and I was asked by his carer Jill Stringer if we could fly his ashes. We

of course agreed and as Jill is not all that keen on heights, her daughter was more than happy to accompany the ashes in the front seat of the DG1000.

At the end of the flight, his ashes were released near the old Gliding Wairarapa club house..



Jill Stringer sharing the life of Brian Foster with members.



Brian Foster

Club Class Competitions 7-15 Feb 2023

Seats are still available in GR for the Club Class Nationals in February. This is a great chance (weather permitting) to fly a contest task and see what all the fuss is about. Preference is given to post-solo pilots, particularly those who have flown single-seaters but anyone is welcome to apply. The costs to you will be \$132 plus half of the launch fees; if you're under 26 it's half that again. Please contact David if you're interested and note that the cutoff date for applications is Jan 31st.

This month's funny side

