

CANADIAN SCENE

by DOUGLAS A. SHENSTONE

This column this month is given over to a press release from the British Gliding Association.

The British Gliding Association Comes Of Age

Twenty-one years ago, the British Gliding Association was founded at a luncheon party held at the Comedy Restaurant, Panton Street, on December 4th, 1929. Mr. Douglas C. Culver, a former pilot of the first world war, organised the lunch at which fifty-six people turned up. Proceedings began by discussing the formation of a gliding club; but by the end of the meeting, ambitions had risen to a "British Gliding Association," with Mr. Culver as Chairman, and the late I. Howard-Flanders, a pioneer British aeroplane designer, as Secretary.

During 1929, world interest in gliding had been greatly stimulated by a series of remarkable altitude and distance flights made in Germany by the late Robert Kronfeld, a young Austrian who subsequently settled in England and became naturalised.

As a result of the British revival, a large number of gliding clubs were formed during 1930, but many of them soon collapsed and only a few hung on for the next three years. Then, in 1933, British sailplane pilots began to learn the art of altitude and distance flying, and from that year onwards the British gliding movement grew rapidly, assisted since 1935 by a small government subsidy, up till the outbreak of war in 1939.

During the second world war, British gliding experts took a leading part in the development of troop-carrying gliders; but this of course, was not soaring flight. Many pre-war club members served as pilots in the Services, or Air Transport Auxiliary.

Two special features have marked the progress of British gliding since the war. First, there has been a great increase, not only in the numbers of people gliding, but also in their skill, this is shown by the number of Silver and Gold "C" badges. Secondly, gliding has been taken up by the services. Much soaring has been done in B.A.F.O., with requisitioned German sailplanes, and the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force have both formed their own Gliding Associations, while the Air Training Corps, which started gliding during the war, is paying increasing attention to soaring flight.

To date, the Association has issued the following Certificates and badges:

"A"	12,621	Silver "C"	296
"B"	4,257	Gold "C"	8
"C"	2,300	Diamond "C"	3

There are now 13 Full Member and 19 Associate Member Clubs affiliated to the organisation. The A.T.C. is a Full Member, as are the Royal Air Force Gliding and Soaring Association, and the Royal Naval Gliding and Soaring Association.

The activities of the Association include the control of the annual National Contests, (in future to be called the National Championships), the laying down of approved standards for club instruction and operations, the control of British records, and the analysis of accidents. In addition, the Association operates

GIVE THE CREWS A BREAK!

by Emma "Mom" Krohne

Sure, the Glider-Guider is an important person, that's admitted. But let me ask you, what would he do especially at a contest, without a CREW to get his ship ready for flight or to retrieve him (or her) afterward. Sometimes they land in the most inaccessible, impossible seeming, spots. Who does the dirty work? The crew, of course; who gets the glory? Why, the Pilot does. I am not saying that this is not deserved. No one admires more than I the fellows or Gals who can take a sailplane and do the miracles of flying we see them do. But let's consider, for a few minutes, the crew's job, then see if they don't deserve a few kind words, also.

We will assume that the sail-plane has arrived, via trailer, at the contest site, has been set up, with the Pilot's able assistance, as he is quite interested in the procedure. The assembly is complete, with instruments checked, barograph ready and every pre-flight detail attended to, prior to take-off time. The crew gets the ship placed in line, then waits for that final second when the Pilot is seated, wearing his parachute; safety belt and shoulder straps adjusted, take-off card signed, the last minute questions asked and answered and the O.K. signal given. The sailplane glides gracefully forward and the wing-tip runner returns to his place. The sail-plane is off the runway in a matter of seconds, as you watch. This is a tense moment, as some time tow ropes break or some unexpected thing may happen — usually it doesn't, but you watch your pilot, and find yourself poised, on tip-toe, with a lift that almost takes you off the ground, as if you meant to hold that ship aloft through your own will power. You watch it rise higher and higher—a sailplane in flight is a beautiful thing—and then your pilot has released from the tow plane and has wheeled into a thermal, we hope! Sometimes the thermal isn't there and again you observe, tensely, the maneuvers of your ship and pilot searching for the elusive thermal. Will it be found? Or is this going to be one of those times when the search is in vain and the pilot must land, and take another try. You are still standing

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an Airworthiness Scheme for gliders and sailplanes.

A number of Cups and Trophies have been donated to the Association from time to time, and on the occasion of our coming of age, our President, Viscount Kemsley, is presenting a Trophy to be awarded yearly to the Champion Club Team at the conclusion of the National Championships.

Although since the beginning of the last war the gliding subsidy has ceased, the movement has received most material support from the Kemsley Flying Trust. A fund of 100,000 pounds which was set up by Lord Kemsley in 1947 to assist private flying and gliding. Many loans have been made to clubs for the purchase of aircraft and premises, and the Trust is, with the Ministry of Supply, financing the building of a new two-seater sailplane. Last year affiliated Clubs flew a total of 7,134 hours. Today it can be said that gliding is the most flourishing branch of amateur private flying in Great Britain.