

# CLUB NEWS

Edited by B. M. RYAN

It is beginning to look like every column of "Club News" is going to start with a correction. But that is to our liking because it shows you are reading our articles. Last issue we mentioned Mrs. Van Thaxton of the Mid Georgia Soaring Association as being the only woman glider pilot in Middle Georgia. But Audrey Walker of Atlanta has a private pilot certificate with land, sea and glider ratings (the latter obtained at the Schweizer Soaring School last summer). Our informant, Mr. J. Emerson Ford, Jr., states: "You would have been amused, as we were, the afternoon she made her first landing in a 1-26. A group of 'innocent bystanders' were watching the very sharp approach when suddenly, as the ship floated past at eye level—Audrey's red hair gleaming under the canopy—one of the spectators turned to another and exclaimed excitedly, 'Oh, look, there's a woman driving it!'"

We suspect there are many more women glider pilots active in soaring than the general public realizes. For instance there are five flying from one field in California alone. It might be interesting to compile a list of the women pilots (at least solo). We hope you'll send us the names of the girls in your club.

Now back to the regular geographical distribution of "Club News." Up in New England, the wintry weather has caused the pilots to put their ships away until spring, but the clubs are still keeping busy with plans for the future. The New England Soaring Association put on a drive to interest enough members in soaring training that they could finance the purchase of a 2-22C kit. They came so close to their goal that two of the members made up the small difference with a loan. We are glad to hear NESAs will soon be active with their own sailplane.

In the same corner of the country, the MIT Glider Club (AES) is working on plans for winch launches. We think such a training program will be well worth while for these college students. Incidentally, the MIT Club is thinking of joining the increasing number of clubs that have 100%

SSA membership. To quote "Tarheel Wings" (more about them later) on this subject: "Let's join the SSA! The more we think about it, the more we believe SSA affiliation should be expected of us as individuals and as a club. Considering the benefits, the cost is low. We benefit ourselves by being better informed and more responsible members of the soaring fraternity. We read and enjoy the magazine and newsletters which keep us in touch with glider activity all over the country. We have a voice in the policies which are shaping the future of glider flying in America. Our interests are upheld before federal agencies which regulate our own activity. We get help in solving local problems. If all our members are SSA members, our club will be strengthened and be better able to cope with the many thorny problems that lie ahead. The availability of 'air space' itself may soon be a critical problem. It may be a case of 'united we fly and divided we stay grounded'—so, let's join the SSA! We'll be glad we did."

Up Harris Hill way, the winter really showed its full force for the Snowbird Meet (to quote Earl Southee—"polar temperatures and blinding snow"). Thursday and Sunday, scheduled as "informal flying days" turned out to be just about the only flying days. The other two days consisted mostly of hangar flying. (See details elsewhere in this issue.)

Other flying at Harris Hill (as reported in the "Harris Hill News") was more successful in the months before the Snowbird meet: In the first ten months of 1958, there were over 600 flights from the hill by aero, auto, auto-pulley and winch tows with over 200 hours of soaring, an average of 40 minutes per flight. Several pilots exceeded six hours duration in routine flights. And the Schweizer Soaring School, during their summer session, issued 80 glider tickets, of which 78 were endorsements to power tickets. Looks like the power pilots are beginning to show an increased interest in soaring.

Pilots in the East seem to be doing more and more wave flying. The

Wurtsboro Wave flown for Gold C altitude by Martin Beck was described in the last issue of SOARING but it is interesting to note also that there were about nine wave flights made from Harris Hill in 1958. One by Jack Wilkins reached 7000 feet above the hill and featured smooth, 600 feet per minute lift in front of a large cumulus cloud. Eventually, cloud base was exceeded and Jack found himself over all clouds in the vicinity—looking down at them. Later in the year, visitor Bill Ivans contacted a wave and rode it to 6000 feet. Howie Burr and several others flew in this same wave.

There is word in the Northeast of two new soaring clubs and possibilities for a third. The first is the Delaware Valley Soaring and Power Pilots Association. One of the founders became interested in soaring at the Northeastern States Meet at Elmira last July 4th and took glider instruction in a commercially operated 2-22 at Reading Aviation (Pennsylvania). Another member is Clarence Stein, the instructor from Reading Aviation. Word comes from John Peter of Hopewell Junction, New York, of the formation of the Hudson Valley Soaring Association.

A possibility for a club is centered around the activities of Bob Pfeiff, instructor at the Test Pilot School, Patuxent River, Maryland. He and a friend have been flying at Webster Field in Southern Maryland and made about 100 auto tows last summer. They used 2000 feet of manila and nylon rope for altitudes of 1400 feet, and 3000 feet of armored steel cable for 2200 feet of altitude. The runway is 5000 feet long plus 500 to 1000 feet overrun. The 2200 foot tows were made in 15 to 20 knot winds and with an aft tow hook on the 1-26. They plan to try 5000 to 6000 feet of cable with auto pulley tow.

In the Southeast, the Tarheels Soaring Club in central North Carolina is showing such enthusiasm in their first few months of existence that we know they are bound to be listed soon among the most active clubs. Their first meeting was in October and in November they elected their officers: Pres. J. Emerson Ford, Jr., Vice Pres. Gus Street, Jr., and Sec. Treas. Nyal Williams. They already have a very interesting newsletter—"Tarheel Wings"—and have plans for the early purchase of a sailplane, probably a TG-3. Flying