

# CANADIAN NEWS

Edited by DAVE KING

Items for this page should reach Dave King, 220 Iona St., Ottawa 3, by the 5th for the next month's *Soaring*. Photographs are welcome, but can't be returned. Copy should be about as you want it to read. Newsletters are welcome but we don't always have time to revamp them into items suitable for *Soaring*. "Letters to the editor" are invited.

## Altitude Records Broken Pincher Creek, Alberta, April 2

Julien Audette of Regina yesterday soared to 31,500 feet here in his Schweizer 1-23G, breaking the previous national record of 23,880 feet set a year ago by Ralph White of Calgary. Julien also set a new record for gain of altitude, with 24,400 feet, which is also good for his second diamond. On the same day, Kurt Weiss set a new multi-place national altitude record of 19,000 feet in his Bergfalke. Art Penz was passenger. All three of these records are of course, subject to confirmation.

Julien is a member of the Regina Gliding and Soaring Club and a director of the Soaring Association of Canada. Kurt and Art are members of the Western Flying Association, Calgary. They were flying out of Cook Field, Pincher Creek, base of the Cu Nim Gliding Club of Calgary, during the High Altitude Soaring Meet held Easter Weekend by the Cu Nims.

On the same day, John Pomietlarz of the Edmonton Soaring Club made his Gold C climb in his club's TG-2. Harold Eley of the Saskatoon Soaring Club won a diamond for his Gold C. Bob Shirley of Moose Jaw, Sask., a member of the Regina club, made a Diamond gain in his L-K, and Bill Thudium of Calgary hopes that calibration of his barograph will show that he did the same in his BG-12A.

Ten sailplanes were on the field, many of them beautifully refurbished over the winter. Bill Thudium's BG-12A attracted much attention; Bill finished it last fall and did a very fine job. The Edmonton TG-2 now looks like le dernier cri, with a fiberglass nose and a blown canopy. The instructors can now see from the rear almost as well as from the front. Calgary's 1-20 was not flying, owing to the high winds. Four towplanes were on hand, as well as Harold Townsend's Cessna 175 from Regina and a Fleet Canuck which lives at the field.

Pincher Creek is a windy place, and gusts of 85 or 90 mph claimed one well-known sailplane—CF-KPS, Ross Grady's L-K. Ross had secured it with great care after landing in a foothills ranch, but it blew away and was demolished while he was telephoning for his crew. The aircraft was partially insured. The two Fauvel AV-36's at the meet were both damaged to a lesser extent, one by the wind and the other in a flight accident. No injuries.

The meet was made possible largely by the hospitality of the owners of Cook Field, Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Cook. Their house is beside the field, and their base-

ment was thrown open to gliding types—20 of them were bunked there. Latecomers, such as your reporter, stayed in one of the motels or hotels in Pincher Creek, a ranching and oil centre in the southeastern corner of Alberta.

The Weather Observation Station at Pincher Creek issued forecasts daily at 5 A.M., especially for the meet. Their predictions were almost spot on; the wave conditions of April 1st had been forecast two days earlier. The met. men asked for reports from pilots reaching high altitudes. Such close co-operation between the meteorological service and soaring pilots will surely benefit all concerned. Al Laatch is in charge of the station, Bob Dobbs and Joe Greenly came down to the field Sunday afternoon, and they might be future glider pilots.

The Cu Nim club held a banquet on the evening of Saturday, April 1st, at the King Edward Hotel in Pincher Creek. About 60 guests enjoyed the excellent meal. The speaker of the evening was Charlie Yeates, vice-president of the Soaring Association of Canada and president of the Southern Ontario Soaring Association. Charlie reported on the recent Annual General Meeting of the SAC, at Toronto. Slides and a film followed. The film (also screened the previous evening) concerned the use of oxygen, and was provided by the RCAF's Institute of Aviation Medicine, Toronto.

Three of the five SAC directors—Yeates, Julien Audette, and Ross Grady. Roger Turner of the weather station attended with Mrs. Turner. Mr. and Mrs. Cook were also among those present.

This year's Easter meet at Pincher Creek has established Cook Field as Canada's high-altitude site. While the Cu Nims will probably not operate there every weekend in the future, meets will be held at the site from time to time and anyone wishing to try the conditions there should write to the Cu Nim Gliding Club of Calgary, Box 204, Calgary, Alberta. The spring and fall are the best times for wave conditions, according to observations made over the years by Norm Bruce of the Cu Nims.

## The Flying Eleys

*(The following article, originally titled "Sask. Farm Family Built its Own Flying Machine," is reprinted, with permission, from the REGINA LEADER-POST.)*

by JAMES REICHERT

*(Editor's note: The Eleys now form the nucleus of the Saskatoon Soaring Club, except that Harold is still with Regina.)*

In the late 1930's Norman and Arthur

Eley, on their farm near Colonsay, 40 miles east of Saskatoon, became intrigued with the idea of flight.

Planes designed just-for-fun use were hard to come by, so they did the next best thing. They ordered a set of glider plans and built their own flying machine.

It was a basic training glider—a sort of frame affair where the pilot sat in the front on a plank, with the control stick in his hands. It was like sitting on the front porch—only more precarious.

With the glider came a list of 10 easy steps to becoming an aviator.

### BIT DUST FIRST

With this type of instruction it was advisable that each rule be followed carefully. Otherwise—well, the pilot was sitting a long way in front, and usually hit the ground first.

When the craft was completed the brothers loaded it onto the back of a truck and carted it into an open stubble field. Onto the front end they hooked 400 feet of rope, and attached the other end to the back of a Model-A car.

The old car ground down the stubble, with the glider bouncing and jolting behind. At the controls for the test flight was Norman Eley, amateur aviator.

And when it got up to 30 miles an hour, the thing actually flew.

The next few years nearly wrecked the truck and the car, but the glider flew on.

By carefully following instructions the new pilots sometimes attained an altitude of 400 feet, and gradually graduated to 180 degree turns and cross-country flights over the fence to the next farm.

The whole community was whispering about those Eley boys, and how, someday, they would be scooping them and their flying contraption off the stubble.

### TIRED OF GLIDERS

Then Norman grew tired of flitting over the fence and flying at 30 miles an hour and took power flight lessons.

Before the war broke out he had been issued a pilot's license. During the war he acted as a civilian flight instructor.

Art joined the Air Force and served in the ground crew.

It looked like the flying front porch was pensioned off for keeps. But now a couple of other Eley boys didn't have their feet planted too firmly on the ground.

This time it was young brothers Harold and Wilbur. Harold, at 15, was the oldest of the two. Wilbur was three years younger.

Once again the old car was grinding up the dust, and the glider was floundering through the air. "It wasn't hard to handle," Harold recalls. "You couldn't really make much of a mistake in it. You just had to learn to fly by feel."

Norm Eley in the Daegling primary glider he built in the early '30's.

