

# A VISIT TO VARESE

by DR. WOLFGANG KLEMPERER

A soaring pilot's dream is coming true in the loveliest setting imaginable in Italy. I had the privilege of visiting its site during the last week end of May. My good friend, Dr. Piero Morelli, took me there in his sports car from Turin where he is Professor of Aeronautical Engineering at the Institute of Technology. He frequently commutes between this city full of monument of a glorious past and home of the great FIAT company and Varese, because he and his brother, Alberto, are the designers of the CDT and M-100 sailplanes which are built in the vicinity of Varese and test flown there.

Varese is a picturesque town nestling between the foothills of the Alps and situated at the southern tip of a lake bearing the same name. It boasts a unique gliderport with grass covered runway running practically along the lake shore. The name of the airport is Aeroporto Paolo Contri at the village of Calcinate del Pesce (which may be translated as Fish Ovens). There are two spacious hangars, an office building and storerooms. These facilities have supported extensive gliding and soaring activities almost exclusively for several years. The place is now known as the Study Center of Alpine Soaring Flight. However, what really is going to be an unusual attraction is a magnificent new club house. At the time of my visit it appeared to be 75 per cent finished. Of concrete construction, this building is of most impressive size and design. It is destined to serve as headquarters for OSTIV with office space, dining and assembly facilities and accommodations for visiting sailplane pilots who may come to participate in technical flight tests, meteorological research or in organized training activities designed to improve glider training techniques.

All this development is being accomplished through the genuine interest and largesse of Giorgio Orsi and his family. Theirs is the palatial home and park-like garden in Varese. He is an industrialist and an active sailplane pilot. I regretted missing them at the time of my visit as they were in England participating in the national soaring contest there.



Dr. Wolfgang B. Klemperer, Honorary Vice-President of SSA, in the cockpit of the Bocian sailplane which he piloted during his visit to Varese. Standing by rear cockpit is J. V. Kalckreuth, check-pilot.

The club house was scheduled to be completed in time for an inauguration and dedication ceremony in September. Undoubtedly many notables of the international soaring fraternity have gathered there for the occasion, especially since the event was to be followed by a two-week's international Standard Class Sailplane Investigation Course, (*Soaring*, June 1964, page 15.)

The current flight operations at the Calcinate del Pesce are carefully supervised by Plinio Rovesti, my most solicitous host, who is an indefatigable, most knowledgeable meteorologist and an expert in the specialty of predicting soaring weather conditions in this very tricky subalpine Piemontese region. All takeoffs are by airplane tow; training and practice operations are under the direction of experienced instructors. The scene is enlivened by the ever changing

groups of visiting firemen who come to try for Gold distances, altitude or Diamonds when the weather appears favorable. Many impressive distance flights have already been made from Varese and a proud display of them is staked out on the wall map of Northern Italy in the office. A most cordial international and multilingual atmosphere pervades the place. Excellent eating establishments dotting the lake shore and a lovely rustic hostelry, the Hermitage, on a hillside overlooking the lake, complete the picture.

Although clouds kept shrouding the Alpine peaks, the cloudbase lifted enough by Sunday noon to permit slope and ridge soaring along the foothill crests which were adorned by castles, monasteries and hotels. So I could not resist the kind offer of a soaring flight in a very comfortable Polish-made Bocian.

## SKY SAILING AIRPORT

41000 McINERNEY ST., FREMONT, CALIF. 656-9900, 581-1085

**Soaring the year around — Open every day**

- INSTRUCTION
- SHIP RENTAL, 4—1-26's,  
2—2-22E's, 1—2-22C
- 3 TOW PLANES
- F.A.A. GLIDER EXAMINER
- SLOPE, THERMAL & WAVE SOARING
- 25 MILES FROM SAN FRANCISCO
- SCHWEIZER DEALER

While on your Western vacation plan to spend a few days with us.

We have excellent personnel to serve you.