

My Memories of a Lifetime of Soaring

By Dezi Hamvas

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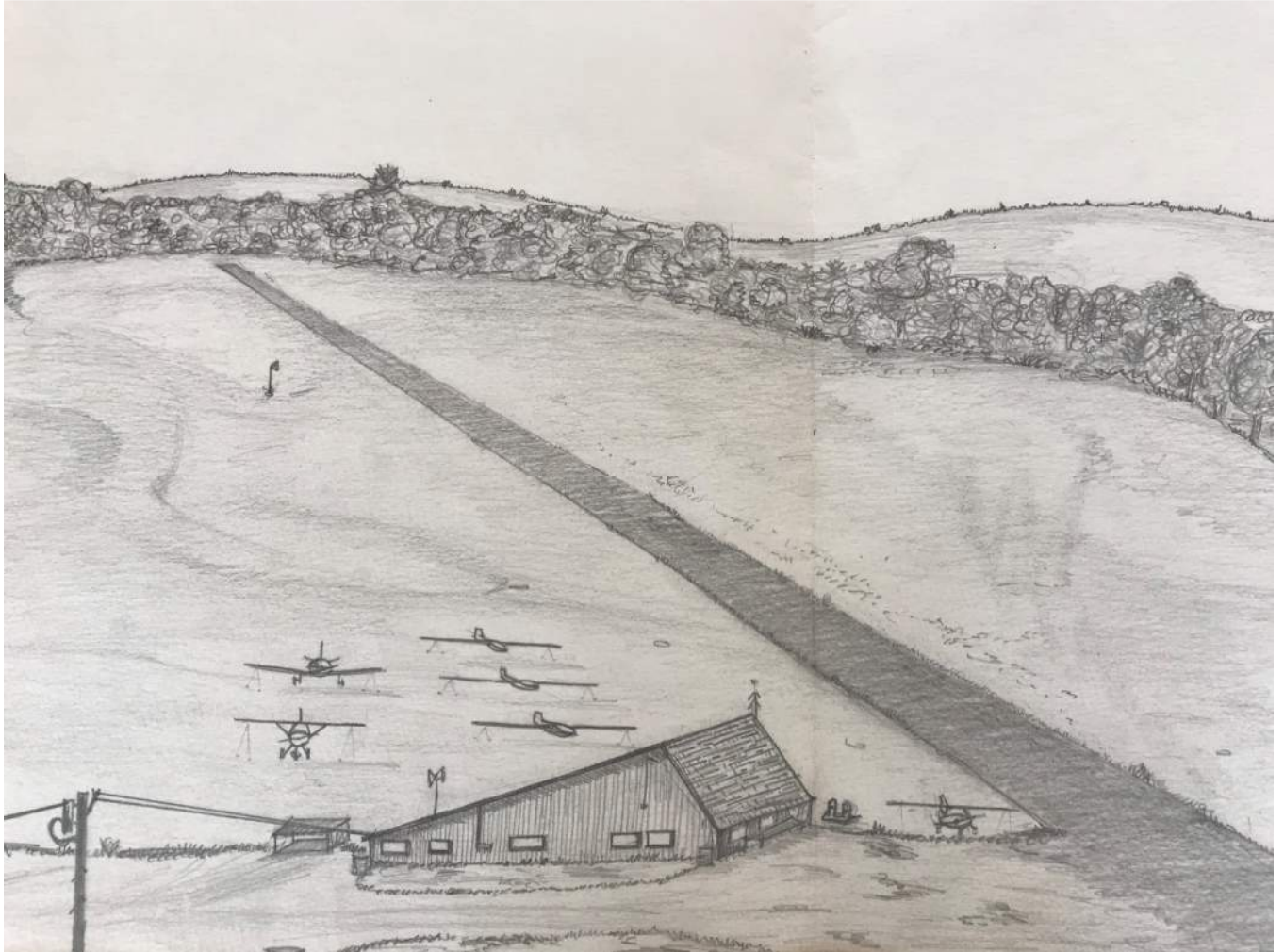


Table of Contents

Chapter 1: My Early Days of Flying Gliders in Hungary	1
Chapter 2: The Birth of the Greater Boston Soaring Club	8
Chapter 3: The Flight Test	12
Chapter 4: In Search of a New Airport	13
Chapter 5: My First Student	16
Chapter 6: Club Turmoil	18
Chapter 7: My Broken 1-26	21
Chapter 8: Click and then We Are Off	23
Chapter 9: Glider Short Stories	25
Chapter 10: Towing Stories	28

Chapter 1

My Early Days of Flying Gliders in Hungary

At the age of 14, after the war in 1947, I joined a government sponsored soaring club in Hungary. The purpose of the club, which had approximately 30 junior members, was to train young people for the aviation carriers. Almost all gliders were destroyed during the war and therefore the government built some primary gliders for basic training.

Hamas Dezső.

Sz. Dát.	g. típus	idő	Sz. ó.	Sz. ir.	Oktafó.
1 V. 22	vöcsök 2229.	cs.	k-dk.	4-5	Lothig el. A.
2	"	cs.			
3	"	cs.			
4 V. 10.	vöcsök 2230.	cs.	E-ény	6-8	Schlett.
5	"	cs.			
6	"	cs.			
7	"	cs.			
8	cimbora (Kerecs)	29'	E-	0-4	Schlett.
9 V. 13	vöcsök 2230	cs.			
10	"	cs.			
11	"	4"			
12 V. 17	cimbora (Kerecs)	4'3"	My-Dny	0-2	Schlett.
13	cimbora (+-)	3'25"			
14 V. 22	cimbora (Kerecs)	26'	Ény-	10-12	Schlett.
15 V. 24	vöcsök 2229.	6'	Ény-	0-4	Schlett.
16	"	9'			
17	"	12'			
18	cimbora (Kerecs)	4'7"			
19 V. 31	vöcsök 2230.	15'	My-Ény	0-4	Schlett. A repüléssel kapcsolatosan 1949. máj. felvételeim
20	"	14'			
21	"	16"			

29
4
3
26
4
117
10 7/7

Exhibit A: My Logbook in Hungary when I Started Flying Gliders

Students started their training in single seat gliders that were pulled by a cable tied to a winch. Exhibit A is a copy of the first page of my logbook. "Cs" represents "sliding on the ground." This is a maneuver where the winch pulls you on the ground without getting airborne. The goal was for the student to keep the wings level and to travel in a straight line. A straight thirty second flight earned you an "A" badge. After the straight flights, the student was asked to make a left turn at approximately 15 degrees and land. Then the student made a right turn and landed. The big milestone for students was when they were asked to make an "S" turn. Successfully completing these maneuvers earned you a "B" badge. Photo 1 shows the result of a student not being able to successfully complete this maneuver.



Photo 1: Result of an Unsuccessful "S" Turn Maneuver

Instructing with winch towing required careful coordination between the winch operator and the instructor. The winch operator was assigned a person with a white flag. This person communicated with the glider instructor, who also had a white flag. I remember one time when a beginning student was pulled airborne before this student was ready to fly due to a breakdown in communications between the winch assistant and the glider instructor.

I attended a 10-day bungee training camp on the hillside of Budapest. Most of the time was spent on political indoctrination, but it gave me a chance to have three bungee launches with flights lasting a little over 30 seconds. The glider was anchored to the launching platform with a release mechanism on the end of the glider's skid. A "V" shape bungee with a steel ring was attached to a hook at the front of the glider. Four members on each side of the bungee supplied the power for the launch. They waited for the instructor to give the command "Ready, run." The instructor was able to judge the required force on the bungee from outside of the glider and released the glider from the platform by pulling on a chord. Exhibits B and C are articles from Hungarian magazines on bungee launches. It felt like you were shot from a slingshot. It was fun to watch the guys tumbling on each other now of release.



Exhibit B: Hungarian Flying Newsletter with Photos of a Bungee Launch

PILÓTAISKOLA

KILENCEDIK LECKE



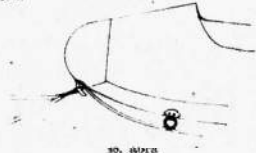
A vitorlázógép a földön lehetetlen jöszeg. Önerőjéből — motorja nem lévén — sem felszállni, sem mozogni nem tud. A földön való mozgására csak valamilyen külső erő segítségével lehetőséges. Alapában kétféleképp úgynevezett torpókocsit használnak, amire rátelepítve a gépet vagy emberi erővel, vagy traktor, vagy más jármű segítségével szállítják egyik helyről a másikra. Ez a megoldás nem alkalmas hosszabb távú szállításra, pl. egyik városból a másikba. Erre a célra külön repülő „szállítókoszt” használnak, melyben szűkített állapotban szállítják a vitorlázógépet. Ezt minden esetben gép-jármű vonatja.

Ha nem tud a vitorlázógép önerőjéből mozogni, hogy tud mégis felemelkedni a földről? Már tudjuk, hogy a motorkocsitól gép számára felhajtóerő csak akkor termelődik, ha egy — gép-típusok szerint változó — mozgató sebességgel halad a levegőben. Szükséges egy olyan külső erő létrehozása, aminek segítségével elnyerji a gép azt a kezdő sebességet, melyről már elszándék felhajtóerő termelődik ahhoz, hogy felemelkedjék és a már ismert törvények alapján előrepörögésbe menjen át. Ezt a célt szolgálják a különböző indítási módok. Így megkülönböztetünk:

1. gumikötéles indítást,
2. esőrlőindítást,
3. motoros vontatást.

Gumikötéles indítás. Mint neve is mutatja, gumikötél segítségével jön létre. A gumikötél nem tömör, hanem igen vékony gumiszálakból áll, melyet kétszeres sebességű textilhurok borít. Általában 600—800 gumiszál van egy ilyen kötélen. A gumikötélet „V” alakban használják, úgy, hogy a csőcsőnél erre a célra készített acélkarika van, a két szárnny pedig erős kenderkötélben végződik. Nézzük meg, hogy történik az indítás! A vitorlázógépet a domb tetejére helyezzük. Gumikötéles indítást eredményesen csak dombos, hegyes terepen lehet alkalmazni. A gép farokrészt egy erre alkalmasan készített „startolódob” kapcsolják és ezzel a gépet a földhöz rögzítettük úgy, hogy szárnnyak „kötődés” nélkül elszakadhatni képtelen. Az indítás természetesen mindig széllel

szemben történik. Ebben az esetben is így helyezik a gépet. A gumikötél fentebb már említett acélkarikáját a gép orrán lévő „indítóhorog”-ba akasztják.



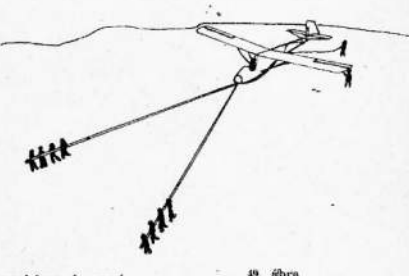
30. ábra

A gumikötélet „V” alakba feszítik ki, úgy, hogy annak felsőszőnyege a gép indítási egyenesébe essen. A kötélt végére erősített kenderkötélhez az indítás erősségétől függően 4—8, 4—8 sportrepülővel vezényelünk, akik megragadva a kötelet, adott vezényszóra azt ki fogják húzni.

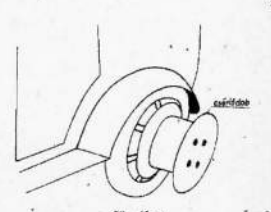
A gép szárnyvégét egy fő tartja, ugyancsak egy fő helyezkedik el a startolódob zsinórjához is, hogy adott utasításra azt meghúzza és ezzel a gép elszakaduljon. Egy fő, rendszerint az oktató pedig vezényli az indítást. A pilóta elhelyezkedett a gépben, minden készen áll az indulásra! KI-HCZNI! vezényszóra a kihűlésigényesség lépésben megindul. FUFNI! elhangzása után pedig az egész hűtőcsőport teljes erejéből fut, előre néz a már korábban megindult irányba fut mindaddig, míg nem érzi, hogy a hűtés mind környezeti a a gép a fejük felett elcsúszott. EL! vezényszóra oldotta ki a startolódob zsinórjának meghúzásával a gépet a farokrésznél elhelyezett indító. A gép a kioldás után előbb lassan, majd igen rövid idő alatt felgyorsulva, rövid esés után felemelkedik. Előbb enyhé

emelkedéssel ivel felfelé, majd egyenletes átmennel siklásba megy át és merkezni kezd a föld felé repülését.

Csőrlő indítás. A gumikötéles indítási mód nem használható sík terepen. Magyarországnak pedig a legtöbb vitorlázóiskolája sík terepen van. A sík terepen való indításra a legelőssőbb és legalkalmasabb mód: a csőrlőindítás. Ehhez kell egy esőrlőautó, vagy esőrlő-agregátum. A különbség a két között az, hogy a csőrlőautó egy normális nagy gépkocsi, melyet erre a célra külön alakítanak, de mint gépjármű továbbra is használható, míg a csőrlő-agregátum külön e célra készített mozdonyal ellátott készülék, mely önmagából mozogni nem tud, ezt vontatni kell egy másik gépjárművel. Vizsgáljuk meg először a csőrlőautót, mert ennek ismeretében a csőrlőagregátum is mindjárt ismeretessé válik. Csőrlőautóknak többhengeres (legalább 6) minimum 4 lóerős motorral rendelkező személygépkocsi alkalmas. Ezeknek a feltételeknek megfelelő gépkocsit alakítják át esőrlőkocsivá. A kormánykerékét a kimentés oldal hátsó kerékére egy dobos kézművel, melynek átmérője nem lehet nagyobb a gumikötény átmérőjénél, szélessége pedig (gépkeszítől függően) elég 20—25 cm. székre lenni. Ezeket a méreteket minden péptípusnak megfelelően külön számmal állapítják meg. A „csőrlődobot” alkalmas megoldással a jelzett hátsó kerékre erősítik. A csőrlőkocsinak ezt a keréket emelő és támasztóba segítségével felemelik, míg a többi három keréket fabakokkal le-
ragasztják.



49. ábra



30. ábra

Exhibit C: Hungarian Flying Newsletter Describing a Bungee Launch

Photo 2 is a picture of me on one of these flights (37 seconds) – you can see the bungee falling off from the hook attached to the front of the glider. In addition to being able to earn “A” and “B” badges, with minimum requirements similar to those for winch tows, you could earn a “C” badge, which required a minimum 10-minute flight. I had earned a “C” badge. Up to this point, I did not have any dual instruction. It was three years later when I began having instruction in a two-seat glider for airplane tows.



Photo 2: Bungee Launch Training on a Hill in Hungary in 1948

During this time in Hungary, the government closely resembled a brutal Stalinist dictatorship. With an uncle who was a Bishop in the Catholic Church, I knew I did not have a chance to survive in the club. At one of our club meetings, two uniformed political officers, who did not know anything about gliders, accused the club of not being vigilant enough and letting the enemy to infiltrate the club for the purposes of sabotaging the superior Soviet training. Exhibit D is a page from a flying-related magazine called "News from Around the Country." The article dated "1951 Nov. 10" described what happened at this meeting. The following is a translation of the article:

- *The Chapter of the Dorog Soaring Club recently held a meeting with the club management in an effort to correct the difficulties that were seen as slowing the progress of the club's future success.*
- *It became clear that the enemy's internal propaganda had an effect on the club.*
- *Some of the comrades tried to make themselves appear as martyrs.*
- *It has become clear that the enemy looks down at the Soviet-type training and is siding with the old and outdated training methods.*
- *The enemy in the organization wanted to drive a wedge between the club management and the instructors.*
- *A large portion of the club membership did not realize that they were under the influence of the enemy.*
- *The Dorog Chapter club members should be more vigilant and not side with the enemy, but fight against them.*

I was formally declared as an "Enemy of the People" and was, with some others, kicked out of the club.

My education at the Technical University of Budapest was also interrupted for the same reason. After we lost the Revolution against the regime, my girlfriend (future wife) and I decided to take a chance and escape to freedom. At the border, we ran across, under gunfire, to the Austrian side. While in a refugee camp in Austria, after interviews with an American delegation, we were able to immigrate to the "good old U.S.A."

"Repülés" 1951 nov. 10.

H I R E K az
O R S Z Á G B Ó L.

A dorogi alapszerv a közelmúltban tartotta meg taggyűlését amelyen a vezetőség felszámolni igyekezett a szervezet fejlődését és egységét akadályozó nehézségeket. Felszínre került a taggyűlésen az ellenség bujtogatása, továbbá az, hogy egyes bajtársak mártírként igyekeztek magukat beállítani. Meglátszott a szovjet - módszeres kiképzés lebeesülése és a régihez, az elavulthoz való ragaszkodás. A szervezetben lévő ellenség szét akarta választani a társadalmi oktatókat a vezetőségtől. A tagság nagy része nem vette észre, hogy az ellenség befolyása alatt van s így helytelen álláspontot foglalt el. - A dorogi alapszerv tagaága sokkal éberebb legyen és ne az ellenség mellett, hanem ellene harcoljon.

1951 nov. 25.

DOROG. A politikai munkatársak nagyobb gondot fordítsanak a növények nevelésére a vasárnapi üzemnapokon. A vörös négyszögben tartózkodó fiatalok ne legyenek magukra hagyva. A híradót rendszeresen használják fel az üzemnap eredményessé tételére. A tagtoborzás segítésére vegyék fel a helyi DISZ-ekkel a kapcsolatot, igyekezzenek minél több röpgyűlést tartani az üzemekben, hogy több jó káderrel erősítsék az alapszervezetet.

1951 dec. 10.

DOROG. Az alapszerv az utolsó taggyűlés óta jelentékeny változáson ment át. A tagság szorgalmas és lendületes munkával vesz részt az üzemnapokon. Hiba, hogy a vezetőség még mindig nem eléggé szervezi és készíti elő a munkát. Ez megmutatkozik a tagtoborzásnál úgy, hogy a harmincas csoportok kialakításánál lemaradás van.

1955 jan. 10.

DOROG. A társadalmi oktató elvtársaknak többet kell foglalkozni a módszeres oktatás anyagával és a szakmai foglalkozásokat jobban össze kell kötniük a napi politikai eseményekkel.

Exhibit D: Flying Magazine – "News from Around the Country"

Chapter 2

The Birth of the Greater Boston Soaring Club

I arrived in the United States as a refugee from Hungary in 1957, not knowing a word of English and with no usable education. I got a job in a machine shop making the minimum wage of \$1.00 per hour. I got married in the first year and had three kids in three years. We lived in an apartment without a shower or a bathtub and the only source of heat was from the Kerosene stove in the kitchen. I was working seven days a week, so flying was out of the question. In doing this for five years, I developed severe stomach ulcers. An Italian doctor, who was also an immigrant, highly recommended that I change my life style. He told me, "Take Sundays off and do something you like to do."

At the Northeastern Gliderport in Salem, New Hampshire, I took a few flights with my student license. But, it was still difficult to balance my fun with family responsibilities. Twice I took the Private glider written test and failed both times. So, I put my flying ambitions on ice for a while. It was frustrating because at Salem they endorsed my student license for the SGS 2-32. I flew in the first Mt. Washington wave camp in 1966, but I couldn't fly with others as pilot in command.

At Pepperell airport, the Boston Center air traffic controllers operated the Monadnock Glider Club. Sandy Hardy's father was an instructor with a Blanik L-13. I was hanging around so much that they accepted me as a member of the club. Sandy's dad signed me off to solo. At the same time, I was recruited by Chris Bolgen for his semi commercial operation. The idea was to consolidate all glider operations close by to one place at Pepperell airport. I joined the group with my student license as an operations helper. The operation was a joke!

The Greater Boston Soaring Council, as the club was called, failed after only one season. However, it gave me a chance to start something with two 2-33's and the Bird Dog. I made the effort to sell the idea of forming a non-commercial club to some pilots. In order to form the club, we had to have new investors, pay off the commercial guys, and incorporate as a non-commercial club.

In 1973, we incorporated as a non-commercial club and changed the name to the Greater Boston Soaring Club (GBSC). Dr. Jose Sigarra, who was a highly regarded professional, was very influential in securing financing at BayBank. Dr. Sigarra was President and I was Vice-President. We inherited Steve Peteranecz from Chris Bolgen's commercial group. Steve was a very experienced instructor with a gold badge with three diamonds and was also a Hungarian refugee. Unfortunately, shortly after we started the club, Steve was transferred to Europe.

The club was required to have a board. The board was made up of the following officers:

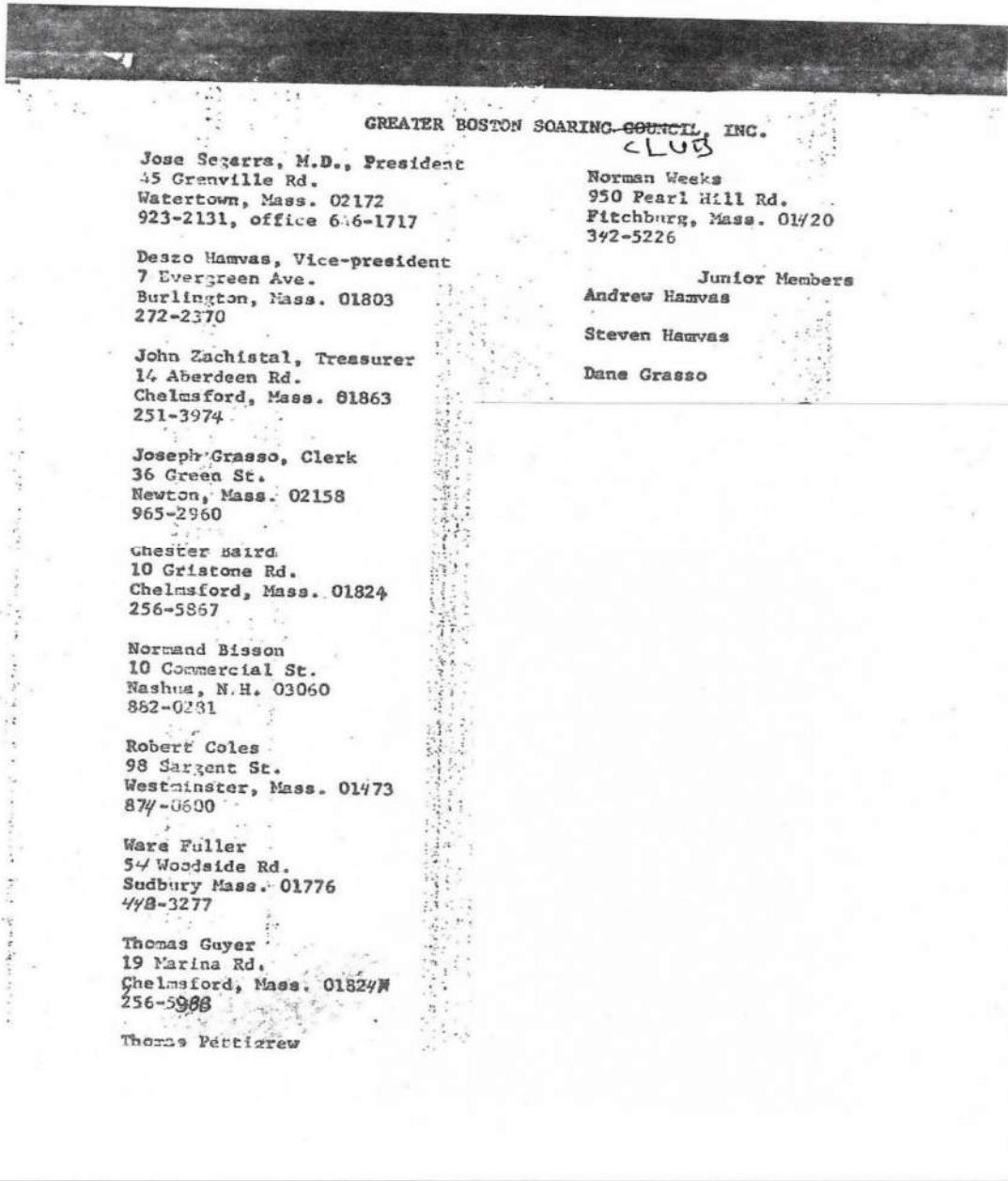
<u>Member</u>	<u>Officer Title</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Qualifications</u>	<u>Bond Investment</u>
Jose Sigarra	President	Physician	Commercial Pilot	unknown
Dezso Hamvas	Vice-President	Machinist	Student Pilot	\$1,500
John Zachistal	Treasurer	Machinist	Student Pilot	\$1,000
Joe Grasso	Clerk	Machinist	Non-pilot	\$1,000

The three machinists were from the same shop. The club had a total of thirteen members, including three junior members. Exhibit E is the first GBSC Membership Roster. I convinced the members to have a junior program, with reduced membership dues for the junior members to encourage young people to join the club. My two sons were junior members. Steve Peteranecz also made a bond investment of \$1,000, but he never claimed his investment after he moved to Europe.

Joe Grasso provided support to make it possible for his son to fly as a junior member. Joe's son stopped flying the following season. Joe became the laughing stock of the shop for belonging to a glider club at a weight of 300 pounds. Joe also became very nervous about his investment. So, I had no choice but to take out a second loan to pay back Joe.

Now I belonged to three different groups, all operating at the same field with little coordination. The Monadnock club did not have a tow plane. The commercial group flew a privately owned Blanik that was towed by a Cessna 210, which was also the plane for the jumpers using the same field. Our new Greater Boston Soaring Club

had the Bird Dog, but did not have a tow pilot. The base operator and his pilot were flying our Bird Dog. One of the first members to join the club was Tom Guyer, who was a pilot for Delta Airlines. Tom towed for us in his spare time.



GREATER BOSTON SOARING COUNCIL, INC.

CLUB

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Junior Members

Andrew Hamvas

Steven Hamvas

Dane Grasso

John Zachistal, Treasurer
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251-3974

Joseph Grasso, Clerk
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965-2960

Chester Baird
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Normand Bisson
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862-0281

Robert Coles
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Westminster, Mass. 01473
874-0600

Ware Fuller
54 Woodside Rd.
Sudbury Mass. 01776
448-3277

Thomas Guyer
19 Marina Rd.
Chelmsford, Mass. 01824
256-5988

Thomas Pettizrew

Exhibit E - The First GBSC Membership Roster

In our first season in 1974, our training capabilities were not strong enough to build up the club's membership. I felt it was essential that I get my instructor license. I took and passed four parts of the written exam in one day: Private, Commercial and the two parts for Instructor. In April of 1974, I passed my commercial flight test, going straight to Commercial, without going for Private. At least now I could give rides.

There was a severe gasoline shortage at that time. The Bird Dog's tanks were siphoned out on two separate occasions. We strongly suspected the airport manager, but were not able to prove it. He ended up later going to jail for stock investment fraud. Despite having to deal with the gasoline issue, we did okay financially.

With my new commercial license, in the five months from June 2 to November 9, 1974, I gave 122 rides. After I took my commercial flight test, I immediately made an appointment with the FAA for a flight test for the instructor license. I felt it was essential to have a committed instructor before the beginning of the next season and therefore I accepted the date of December 3rd for the flight test.

Chapter 3

The Flight Test

December 3, 1974 was a really miserable wet, dark day. The pilot who volunteered to tow us with a Cessna 210, which was used for jumpers, was not a glider tow pilot. I noticed that both the FAA Inspector and the tow pilot did not know too much about soaring. There were only three of us at the field and therefore we had to make an unattended take off. Before the flight, I tried to tell the inspector about my simulated instructor lesson, but he didn't say much and didn't show much interest.

During the flight, I kept talking about safety and anything else that came to mind related to instructing. The Inspector did not say one word. I was worried. The first thing he said after I released was, "I already know you can instruct, so put this mother down, I'm freezing my ass off." After the landing, it was now only the two of us at the airport, so he helped me tie down the 2-33.

After tying down the glider, we got into the Inspector's Ford Pinto. He was doing some paper work and handed me a sheet of paper that had a blank space at the bottom of the sheet. He asked me to write, as best I can remember, "I have no physical or psychological condition that would prevent me from operating an aircraft." I couldn't spell "dog", never mind "psychological." At that moment, I made one of the most important instant decisions of my life. I took the pen and scribbled making believe that I was writing what he had asked me to write – not writing even one legible letter. He took the sheet and folded the sheet in half, never looking at it. He put the letter in his briefcase and issued me a temporary instructor license.

Chapter 4

In Search of a New Airport

The airport manager at Pepperell was in danger of getting evicted for non-payment of rent and taxes. The club and some of the club members loaned the manager money. The deal was that the manager would pay us back by providing \$8 tows with his Cessna 210. One day in August of 1974, in the middle of the night around 2:00 a.m., the hangar was broken into and the Cessna 210 was repossessed. We lost our money, however, we were allowed to still operate at the field with the understanding that we would need to leave soon.

There was a very high possibility that the club would soon not have an airport out of which to operate. So, for the next six months, pretty much alone, I spent all of my available time looking for a suitable place for the club. My two sons, who were junior club members, accompanied me on some of the trips. Fields as far away as Worcester were being considered for a temporary operation. I found a farm in Tyngsborough, which had a field that was being used by a young farmer who owned a Piper Cub. This young farmer was very accommodating, but the owner of the farm turned us down. Also, the town did not want a “carnival atmosphere” on the weekends. I looked at another field close to the Tyngsborough Bridge. The field was parallel and next to Rt. 110 and was used as an airfield in the 1930’s. However, the field was not long enough.

My next stop was at Fitchburg Airport. I talked to the airport manager, who told me he hates gliders. A student of ours, Norm Weeks, who was the owner of the Fitchburg Ford/Fiat dealership and also the President of the Chamber of Commerce, was able to get the town to put pressure on the airport manager to accept the club. However, I didn’t think it would be a good idea to operate in a hostile environment, so I continued my search for an airport.

Finally, Sterling welcomed us with open arms. However, some of the club members were opposed to this airport because it was too far on back roads to most people who would be coming from the Nashua area. It should be noted that Rt. 190 had not been built then.

The next April, a “No Trespassing” sign was placed at the Pepperell airport entrance and a big “X” was placed at both ends of the runway. The skydivers had moved to Shirley. We had to get permission from Mr. Shedock, the owner of the field, to enter the property and fly out our two gliders.

At Sterling, we had the opportunity to increase our fleet. The Monadnock Glider Club had no place to go without a tow plane. So, we made them an offer. Their members would join our club with the initiation fee waived, with the condition that they transfer ownership of the Blanik L-13 to GBSC. They happily accepted our offer. However, in order for the Blanik to pass the annual, the Blanik required a new paint job. We requested that the fuselage be painted red and wings white. We ended up getting the reverse (Photo 3), but we accepted the new color scheme. Only three people joined our club and one of the three was Jim McClintick, who was also an instructor. With an additional instructor, the deal was like winning the jackpot.



Photo 3 - Blanik L-13 Acquired from the Monadnock Glider Club with New Paint Job to Pass the Annual

We started the season with three gliders. Wayne Knapp joined us at this time and soon became an instructor. With three instructors and a new very experienced and dedicated tow pilot, the club was in pretty good shape.

In 1977, Dr. Jose Sigarra, Wayne Knapp, as our president, and I negotiated a deal with BayBank and were able to pay back our bond investors. The club was run successfully with dedicated and professional minded members Bob Schuette, Wayne Knapp, Ritts Howard, Jerry Bell and others, despite some turbulences. The club was forced to move four times: from Pepperell to Sterling, from Sterling to Groton, from Groton to Pepperell, and from Pepperell back to Sterling.

Chapter 5

My First Student

I was very happy to have my instructor license and I ended up successfully teaching many students. However, the very first student I instructed and signed off to solo ended up later crashing one of our 2-33's. Photo 4 shows the aftermath of the crash.



Photo 4 - The Result of My Very First GBSC Student Pilot

Shortly after we moved to Sterling, a gentleman joined our club with 62 previous instruction flights from a commercial operation. He claimed that they were “milking” him because he was a successful businessman. I was suspicious because the first two flights were not only good, but excellent. However, on the third landing, we ballooned up to about 50 feet. He froze on the stick so hard that I had to scream at him to let go. We landed hard, but there was no damage.

I and two other instructors decided that we would give him additional “ballooning and minimum altitude recovery” training. After the two other instructors and I agreed that he is ready to solo, I endorsed his student license. After eleven perfect solo flights, on the next flight he again ballooned on landing. He stalled at 50 feet and hit the ground close to vertical. The force of the impact bent the fuselage and broke the wings. Unfortunately, the student was seriously injured. I felt somewhat responsible because I talked to his previous instructor after the crash and not before. They had detected a serious psychological problem with this student.

Chapter 6

Club Turmoil

During the 1979 season, serious tensions developed between the GBSC Board and the base operator. Mixing a glider operation with an active helicopter school operation was also problematic. The big problem was that our maintenance for the Bird Dog and our gliders was provided by the base operator. The constant delays and overcharges brought us to a breaking point. Exhibit F is a copy of a letter from the Board to the Base Operator.

c/o Sterling Airport
Sterling Jct., MA 01565

June 1, 1979

Sterling Flying School, Inc.
Sterling Airport
Greenland Rd
Sterling Jct., MA 01565

Attention: Howard Fuller

Dear Mr. Fuller:

On or about Feb. 11, 1979, the Greater Boston Soaring Club, Inc., delivered to you our SGS 2-33 glider N1225S for annual inspection, which was to include, on your recommendation, the following:

- Removal of fabric.
- Inspection and repair to airworthy condition.
- Recovering with new fabric and refinishing.
- Necessary endorsement in log book and Form 337.

You expressly represented to us at that time that this work would be completed by April 1, 1979. At the directors' meeting of March 4, 1979, which you attended, you again stated that the glider would be ready about March 31, 1979.

As of this date, and despite repeated verbal requests, the work has not been completed.

If the work is not completed by June 15, 1979, we will have no alternative but to rescind our agreement and remove the glider to have the work done elsewhere and charge you with all costs of completing the work which you agreed to do in addition to the loss of service of the aircraft from April 1, 1979 to the date it is returned to service.

Please reply to Mr. Harold Cabot, Jr., President, Box 306, Princeton, MA 01541, by June 5, 1979.

Under the circumstances, please do not do any work on our L-19 or Blanik without written notice from the club president.

Sincerely,

Secretary
For the Board of Directors
Greater Boston Soaring Club, Inc.

Exhibit F - Letter from the Board to the Base Operator

The base operator responded with a letter to the Board, which included the following:

"In view of the tone of that letter, however, I must reluctantly insist full payment for both the L-19 and 2-33 work performed to date, as well as for past fuel charges, prior to release for service for either aircraft. Subsequent work or fuel will be on a cash basis until such time as I receive a letter of apology from the Board and indication of willingness to resume our previous harmonious relationship.

Let me close with this thought: It is customary among reasonable men to declare war after the breaking of diplomatic relations, not before. Remember Pearl Harbor? Fondly?

*Sincerely,
Howard J. Fuller, Jr., President
STERLING FLYING SCHOOL, INC."*

This tension was one of the main reasons why the club decided to move to Groton. Also, a lack of diplomacy of the board of directors created infighting within GBSC.

There was a lot of friction between the GBSC Board and some of us in the club. The President with his close friend, who was a very experienced pilot but not an instructor, were putting pressure on instructors on the method of training, to the extent of trying to influence instructors to determine whether or not students were qualified to solo. One memorable incident was when the President questioned the readiness of a student to fly solo while the student was sitting in the cockpit. The student said, "Wayne Knapp signed me off to solo." The President remarked in front of everyone, "Wayne Knapp will solo anybody." In retrospect, I should have stopped the flight right there and then. I thought about how I would have felt if I were this student and how this remark from a person of authority would have caused me to lose confidence and have self-doubt. I was told by the student later that this is exactly what happened.

In a restaurant, we were discussing our disagreements in a friendly but heated, intensive manner. We couldn't agree, so we challenged each other to campaign for the next election of the Board of Directors. The next election for club officers was the only time in the history of the club when campaigning for specific candidates took place. There was a fight to win votes between rival campaigns. I called the members and strongly encouraged them to vote for Bob Schuette for president. Bob was a newspaper publisher and a low-time pilot, who was very professional and even tempered. He won with a two-vote margin. The opposition claimed that the voting was not legitimate because three members who voted were behind in paying their dues. These members were promptly made aware of this, they paid their dues, and so we were able to claim a legitimate victory. Bob Schuette, as the new president, turned out to be a good and effective leader.

After this time, I was involved only as an instructor and tow pilot, so I have no detailed information on the history of the club for the following years.

Chapter 7

My Broken 1-26

I purchased the first 1-26 in the club and let my friends fly it. Dr. Sexton, A FAA Regional Flight Surgeon with all kinds of ratings, spun in on the downwind leg to 34. He was seriously injured and one wing of the 1-26 was totally destroyed. An Authorized Schweizer mechanic, Bob B., refused the job. The 1-26 was rebuilt at Gardner by a FAA Aviation Maintenance Technician (AMT).

Before towing the 1-26 back to Sterling, the AMT repeatedly assured me that the glider was airworthy. After a thorough pre-flight, at take off I noticed that the stick was about 20 degrees out of center. But, the glider was flyable. When the tow plane accelerated to a Cross Country speed, I was sure the wing was coming off. With the full deflection of the control one way, the glider was turning in the other direction. With full cross controls, somehow I managed to stay on until I got close to Sterling. After release, it was flyable again with the stick out of center.

After tie-down, we couldn't believe what we saw. It was very noticeable that the two wings had different angles of incidence. Schweizer was planning to build an intermediate performance glider and was experimenting with a new wing design. The new design included changing the angle of incidence. My 1-26, stamped as Serial Number 1, was the first glider with this new wing design. Schweizer abandoned the new design and changed the angle of incidence back to the original design. When the mechanic ordered the blueprint for the wing, he was not aware that my 1-26 had the new wing design. Schweizer sent us the blueprint for the wing based on the original design. That is how I ended up with wings with different angles of incidence.

After a few weeks, I got back my 1-26 from the shop. My friend Hank Krejci was flying it while I was giving a ride in the Blanik. My passenger was nervous, but was happy with his new experience. As we were having a pleasant conversation, thermalling at about 5,000 feet over the airport, I was watching my 1-26 on downwind in the pattern. It was a good feeling to see my ship flying again, after all

the problems I had with it. My passenger was not aware that as we were having a conversation, I was watching my glider land.

The next time I looked down, I could not believe my eyes. My heart skipped a beat. I could see my 1-26 on the grass runway with the same wing destroyed. Forgetting that I had a passenger with me, I screamed, "I can't believe it – my wing is broken – God must hate me."

In order to see my glider below, I had to bank the glider very sharply, while all that time I was screaming, "My wing is broken, my wing is broken." In the middle of this, I noticed a weird sound from the front seat. My passenger was shaking his fists in the air. Then I realized that he thinks I was talking about our wing. Now I had two problems; one was the reaction from my passenger and the other was my broken glider, again. I guess I am innocent, but I still feel guilty about it. I hope my passenger got over this experience quickly.

Chapter 8

Click and then We Are Off

This story starts with a single tow in the 2-33 from Pepperell to Franconia. Bob Schuette and I were in the glider and Hank Krejci was in the Bird Dog. In the Lakes Region, we had bad turbulence and poor visibility, which forced us to land in Laconia. We had to wait for conditions to improve.

Two days later, we were on our way knowing there were no fields suitable for landing on this route. Plymouth airport was closed due to construction. Ten miles north of Plymouth at about 7,000 feet, Bob in the front seat decided to put on this coat. As he was struggling with his coat, I heard a click. Then I was looking at the ring on the end of the rope in front of me. I said, "Bob, we are off." He asked, "Off what?" Then both of us watched the Bird Dog disappear on the horizon.

Our only option was to fly back toward Plymouth. This option however quickly became impractical. I calculated that we had enough altitude for the distance, but it would not be possible because there was a high peak in the middle of our glide path. We were stuck over the small town of Campton and were reluctant to leave the area because we felt some sense of security that if we landed onto the top of the trees, at least there was a community nearby.

We spent about five minutes circling and discussing our options. Bob spotted a strip close to a river and a road. The New Hampshire power company previously used it to park construction equipment. The strip was about one thousand feet long. It was not a problem to land.

Hank found us and also landed. Two State Troopers showed up shortly after we landed. Hank and I agreed that there was enough room to take off. One of the Troopers held our wing. The remaining daylight was now our only concern. Take off went smoothly. But, our sweating had just begun. The terrain was rising as fast as we were climbing. It seemed a long time that we were stuck 200 to 300 feet above the trees.

Finally we got up to altitude. But, then Hank started to follow the Kancamagus Highway, which was the wrong road. Hank became confused with the multiple turns following the terrain. I was pulling his tail violently to make him realize he was flying in the wrong direction. Finally, we were on our way. When we arrived at Cannon Mountain, the sun was on the horizon and Hank waved us off. Below us, the mountain appeared to be in total darkness. We had no idea how much clearance we had to fly over the top. Flying toward the airport, directly into the sun, Sugar Hill cast a shadow on the valley, making the airport not visible. When we touched down, the sun was below the horizon. Nobody was left at the airport to welcome us. We tied down the two aircrafts in darkness with the help from lights coming from the Franconia Inn across the street. What a day it was.

Chapter 9

Glider Short Stories

Lock the Canopy Before Taking Off:

One day I rented a SGS 1-34 at Ridge Soaring Gliderport, Pennsylvania and signed an insurance waiver with a canopy deductible. At take-off at an altitude of about 400 feet, the canopy blew open. Only the frame stayed intact. Ironically, this had happened to me before in the 2-33, but fortunately my hand was on the crossbar, so I was able to prevent the damage to the canopy. After that incident, I made sure the canopy was locked and secured with every flight. Except for this one! They charged \$600 to my credit card for the deductible. My wife use to complain that I'm spending too much on flying. My response was that I was receiving credit for towing and instructing. Actually, my bigger mistake was that I let my wife get the mail before I did - the mail with the credit card bill.

The Blanik and the Ridge is Not a Good Match:

Wayne Knapp and others used to go down to Ridge Soaring Gliderport to fly the ridge. Before I owned the ASW-19, I would tow the Blanik L-13 with my VW Rabbit. Wayne also had a hard time towing his glider with a diesel VW Rabbit. Flying the ridge with the L-13 was not a good idea and Tom Knauff, the base operator, was not shy in letting me know that. Well, he was right. I ended up landing 21 miles from the airport on a potato field. I lost friends that day trying to recruit five pilots to retrieve me and disassemble the ship covered in thick frost. I'm still grateful to our instructor, Mike Newman, who was part of that group.

An Adventure in a Double Tow:

We were doing an uneventful dual tow until we got to the Lakes Region. Ritts was towing and I was flying the 2-33 on the long rope, low left. The B-4 was on the short rope, high right. The mountains were covered with a solid overcast. Ritts wanted to fly over the top and look for a hole in the overcast. I did not feel very good about this suggestion because of the huge boulders embedded in the clouds. So, we made

the decision to descend. Any glider pilot who descends on a tow knows that this procedure requires all of your attention. Descending with 2 gliders on tow is exponentially more difficult – it makes you want to push the panic button.

Descending 3,000 feet with two gliders on tow, even with my full effort, I was not able to keep my long rope away from the B-4. I was concerned he might end up being towed by his tail. In retrospect, what we should have done while descending is circle in the direction of the short rope – the long rope will loop away from the other glider. After we got below the cloud deck, we followed the road to Franconia. At Franconia Notch, both sides of the mountain peaks were in the clouds. It must have been a beautiful sight for people driving a few hundred feet below us.

Inadequate Tow Plane:

The Sterling airport base operator, Howie Fuller, was very convincing that his 65 horse power airplane, equipped with a tow release, would work as a back-up tow plane. He towed me in the 2-33. The only thing successful about that tow was that I survived.

Airplane Tows are Good Enough:

Wayne Knapp and I, as instructors, wanted to remove the limitation of “Airplane Tows Only” from our licenses. Ms. Heller, a FAA examiner, was there to witness our flights. Being towed straight down the runway with a powerful convertible with a 200-foot long rope, all I remember was thinking about how not to land on top of the car. The guy in the back seat of the car was worried too – I could see it in his face. As it turns out, the regulations calls out a required 360 degree turn. So, after all that, we ended up with “No Cigar!”

Landing a Glider Still on Tow:

One day we decided to, just for the fun of it, land with a glider still attached to the tow plane. At 2,000 feet, we started to descend. We learned that it is not too difficult to land with the glider attached to the tow plane, as long as the tow plane

does not descend too fast. Basically, the tow pilot can control whether or not this experiment ends up in success.

The Wrong Time for the Rope to Break:

At Pepperell, the weather was too rough to fly, so I decided to go parasailing with an open parachute. A 200-foot long rope was attached to the parachute gear on my chest. I took off immediately behind a moving car as the rope got tight. Two guys behind me held my parachute above the ground. The takeoff was a real rush. But, at about 50 feet up, my rope broke. My chute was behind me and not above me, so I fell straight down, landing directly on my heels. When I regained consciousness, the first thing I saw were five worried faces.

At Nashua Hospital, the orthopedic doctor had to leave a family cookout to see me, and so he was not very happy. The real pain for me was the embarrassment I felt when I told him what happened. He told me that it is extremely rare for someone to break a heel bone, because the heel bone is very strong. As it turns out, I was extremely lucky. My heel took the brunt of the impact, instead of my back, which probably prevented me from becoming paralyzed. The following weekend, with a cast on my foot, I was instructing from the back seat of the 2-33.

Chapter 10

Towing Stories

The Exploding Battery:

On a very hot day, the Bird Dog refused to start after a long cranking. After it finally started, I made the first uneventful tow. At touchdown, the 24-volt military battery exploded between my legs right into my face. The cockpit instantly filled with white, very sour tasting, burning smoke. In a panic, I turned off the magneto and rolled out of the Bird Dog while it was still rolling. I ran to the hangar and washed my face and arms, ending up with only a minor skin rash.

While the battery was recharging, it accumulated Hydrogen gas in its chambers. The gas vented out with a ¼" tube to the bottom of the Bird Dog. The engine exhaust pipe was pointing right to the end of the Hydrogen exhaust tube. The spark from the backfiring engine ignited the gas, and burned all the way back to the battery. After this episode, we moved the battery to the back seat and rerouted the Hydrogen exhaust. Think about this when you have a ride in the back seat.

Black Smoke from the Bird Dog:

While I was towing the 2-33 to Haverhill with the Bird Dog, the engine developed a severe vibration over Lawrence airport. The Bird Dog was still running with limited power, so I decided not to land and continue to Haverhill. After touchdown and while taxiing toward the office, I notice several people running toward me. It looked like the Bird Dog was on fire because it was trailing a huge column of black smoke. What happened was that the original military diaphragm system carburetor failed. We ended up changing it to a presently used standard venturi unit.

Close Call with the Jump Plane:

When the club was at Pepperell, the skydiving operation was very active. The jump plane (1-82) used to spiral down from an altitude of 11,000 feet at a high speed and at a high rate of descent. While towing Ritts in the Blanik, at around an altitude of

2,500 feet, a big flash from in front of my cockpit surprised the hell out of me. The next moment I noticed the jump plane was already 500 feet below us going very fast. I do not know by how much he missed us, but to Ritts it looked like the 1-82 came right between the Bird Dog and the Blanik. He couldn't believe the rope was still on. When we talked to the jump plane pilot about this incident, he did not have a clue of what we were talking about. It is good thing we did not collide. He was another Hungarian – our reputation as Hungarians would have been ruined.

No Power and then Too Much Power:

After a normal tow and just before entering the pattern, the Bird Dog's engine quit on me. I repeatedly pumped the throttle with no success. No problem – I was in a perfect position for a dead-stick landing. At touchdown, the engine cut on with full power. I gained some altitude, but I had no chance to go around. Luckily with full flaps and extreme slipping, I managed to stop around a hundred feet from the end of runway 16.

At nose down, the line was out of fuel, but it was reverse at flair-out, cutting on the engine while the propeller was windmilling. Like an idiot, I left the power in the full throttle position.

The End