

This is the second DGC.

The first was formed in 1929 following a demonstration of ridge soaring at Maiden Newton, close to where 'Hardy's Monument' now stands. This was done by a group of German pilots who toured the country doing demonstration flights.

The Club's first flights were done there, then later from the cliff top West of Lulworth. All launches were by bunjy, landings were usually at the bottom of the slope where the gliders had to be derigged, carried back up and rigged for the next victim.

The early gliders were German stringbags but a couple of 'Wrens' found their way into the Club in the late 1930's.

The Club was disbanded at the outbreak of war in September 1939 and the gliders stored in a garage locally but later requisitioned for flying training.

The present Club was formed after a number of meetings of like minded people about 1960 using the same field we now use. This was lost when the owners decided to extract the gravel. A move was eventually made to Cdr.Kidston's private airstrip, but this didn't work as it was too small and resulted in our only two seater in the hedge. In time, a move was made into Henstridge which proved successful until we had to move on due to a disagreement with the farmer.

Cdr.Kidston again came to our rescue by persuading the tenants to permit us to fly from Tarrant Rushton in late 1965 or early 1966. This was a remarkable period in our history and the Club developed rapidly there with the aid of Sports Council grants.

Sadly we lost the use of TR when the runways were dug up and the rubble used as a base for the Wimborne By-Pass. We left in 1980. Gliders and equipment were stored all over the place and we continued a limited operation at Yeovilton thanks to the RN Gliding Club. Eventually we had an aerotow only operation from Henstridge togetherwith a winch on operation from Old Sarum. Not the best solution but it kept us flying.

We were eventually invited to move everything to Old Sarum and were there from 1981 to 1992. A glorious time in our history and our most successful in terms of membership growth. We had to put a cap on numbers and were limited to 140 full flying with a long waiting list.

In 1992 we made it back to our original home now known as Eyres Field after one of our founder members, Norman Eyres, who paved the way for us getting back after much effort and negotiation by Bryan Stobart and Ray Witheridge.

Today's Club is very different from the early days but it is still a Club to be respected in the Gliding movement.

In my days as Hon Sec, I got hold of a number of press cuttings and photographs from the 1930's which were with the Club archives when I handed them over, but, no doubt they have been lost in the great nowhere.

Keep flying and happy landings.

Dennis Neal