

# Letters

## Wills on the Midwest

Dear Lloyd:

Thanks indeed for your recent card and the two copies of the January *Soaring* which have just arrived. I hope your readers like my effort, certainly it was one of the most memorable flights I have had.

I see that your 1961 Championships are to be in Kansas, I only wish I could be there. I see Harner Selvidge reports me as saying that Odessa is a very poor place for any competition — this was certainly more than I intended to convey. I think it is a wonderful one for the occasional Nationals, but would not be suitable for a World Championship as it does not supply a sufficiently wide spectrum of conditions.

PHILLIP A. WILLS  
Fowle, Reid & Wills, Ltd., 25-35  
City Rd., London E. C. 1, England

## A Word of Caution

Dear Lloyd:

I would like to make a short comment on Bob Pfeiff's article in the December *Soaring*. After reading his experiences on this memorable flight it seems to me he left the impression that the Diamonds in the sky are easy to reach — just by flying needle, ball and airspeed in some big boomer or what have you.

Surely Bob spends many hours to stay sharp and proficient on IFR flights and under the hood, therefore in his interesting and to Diamond altitude inviting flight report, he forgot to mention two important factors, first that such a flight should not be attempted unprepared, un-equipped, and by pilots who are not properly rated and proficient on instruments, secondly the legal aspects of IFR soaring flights in general.

It is a mistake to omit these items and would mean an invitation for additions to the already ugly statistics in Joe Robertson's files. I do not want to criticize Bob's splendid account of his flight, but I like to see the safety aspect stressed more in all these fine flight reports by many pilots, as it is difficult for the less experienced to read of the ever present dangers between the lines. This point I am trying to bring out; also it would be a valuable supplement of Joe Robertson's lectures on how to make our sport safer.

SIEGFRIED FEUERSANGER  
48-14 Kissena Blvd., Flushing 55,  
L. I., N. Y.

## Winch Training Operation

Dear Lloyd:

About six months ago, during "coffee break" at work, I discovered that Max Dreher was a glider pilot and he invited me to join him in a flight at El Mirage — it was a

good day for soaring and we had a late afternoon flight of about thirty minutes. Shortly after this I had the good fortune to become a member of a local flight training group and participated in as much of the activity as my work would allow.

However, it wasn't until January 8, 1961, that I had the opportunity of spending a day in flight training at San Bernardino with a crew.

The weather was good, particularly good for the area and within an hour after arrival at the site, I found myself enjoying the camaraderie of more experienced members and actually contributing effort of my own to the operation.

We accomplished 21 flights before the shadows got long and experienced the gamut of events associated with a training operation: rope break (not wire this time), accidental disconnect on take-off, spectator enthusiasm which was translated into a problem in diplomacy for the training crew and four very rewarding flights for each member of the crew.

My personal reaction: a large measure of admiration for the stamina and skill of the instructor. A sense of satisfaction at having been given the opportunity of working with some very fine men and the awakening of something within me which is a valuable contribution to my sense of "the joy of living."

J. R. SCHMIDT  
2545 Stoner Ave., Apt. 1, Los Angeles  
64, California.

## Dangerous Parachutes

Dear Lloyd:

At the insistence of some of our very good SSA members I'm writing about a very serious matter that they feel should be called to the attention of all our fellow members thru *Soaring* magazine.

Some time ago the NAVY released a quantity of 26 foot diameter, chain opening (zipper) back type parachutes which we understand was through error since all of this type chute was supposed to have been demilitarized (lines cut). Some of the parachute and surplus dealers are selling these as is without modification. This zipper opening pack is DANGEROUS. One jumper lost his life and another nearly "clobbered in" with one of these chutes. We absolutely refuse to pack one of these zipper packs unless modified and made airworthy in accordance with FAA TSO C-23. We sell them here, at \$69.50 list or \$49.50 to SSA members and we pay shipping costs when payment accompanies the order. They are certified TSO C-23 and packed for service use. Our fellow members should know what they are wearing — some lives are depending upon a plain old zipper opener for their chutes and we all know what zippers are like. Anything you can do will be appreciated, Lloyd.

C. HAROLD McELFISH  
McElfish Parachute Service  
2615 Love Field Dr., Dallas, Texas

## The Part Clubs Could Play

Gentlemen:

May we respectfully suggest that the Soaring Society of America make a stronger effort to (1) make all local soaring groups Chapters of S.S.A. and (2) encourage all Chapters to double their memberships during 1961. Working exclusively with these two groups could easily result in doubling S.S.A. memberships during the next twelve months.

Best wishes for a successful 1961, and for a steady growth throughout the SOARING '60s.

RAY E. BARRETT, Treasurer  
Soaring Society of Dayton, Inc.  
800 Huron Ave., Dayton 7, Ohio.

## Citizen's Band Radios

Dear Lloyd:

The Mohawk Soaring Club, Inc., normally makes 500 winch towns or more each year at the Ballston Spa airport. We have evolved a visual set of signals which are basically the same as those suggested in Chapter 4 of the "American Soaring Handbook."

Unfortunately, there have been many times when the signals have been inadequate and radio or voice communications would have been a great aid between the winch and glider on the ground. Hitherto radio has been impractical because dry cell power packs are too expensive to operate the filaments of tubes; storage batteries too heavy and bothersome, and transistors too expensive, etc.

Heathkit has recently come out with a hand-held transceiver Model GW-30 which may be the answer to many of our problems. It costs less than \$70 a pair and they have a range of up to a mile according to Heath when operated away from buildings or obstacles. (Airports are obviously ideal line of sight communication.)

OST Magazine 44, 11, 46 (Nov., 1960) has an evaluation of this new equipment which seems fairly optimistic, at least from our point of view.

The power input to the crystal controlled oscillator is reported to be about 90 milliwatts. The 9 volt battery powers four transistors for up to 75 hours (intermittent use). The receiver sensitivity is reported to be "4 microvolts or so" which is excellent.

We have ordered a pair for use on our air field and have arbitrarily chosen channel 18 or 27.175 mc/sec. We would be interested in hearing what channels other soaring groups are using. This might be useful at a meet if we all chose the same frequency.

There are several other hand-held transceivers now on the market for citizen's band operation: RCA's RME 4305 @ approx. \$100; Cadre Industries' Transifone 100 @ \$100 ea., 100 milliwatts; Globe Industries' "Pocketphone" @ \$125 ea.; and Heath's GW-30 @ \$32.95 ea., 90 Milliwatts (input).

JAMES F. NORTON  
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