

# **Charles Trumble – APFC Scholarship**

I had the pleasure of spending a week at the Cotswolds Gliding Club (CGC) in Aston Down this summer. The club is located at a fantastic, retired RAF airfield. CGC has a lovely team on site who were very accommodating and knowledgeable. Unfortunately, due to bad weather we were unable to fly for just under 3 of the 5 days. The club intends to make up for this lost time at a later date and is already communicating with us about booking this. However, on the days where we were not flying, we had the awesome opportunity to see the gliders in the hangers and talk to some of the members of the club.

One of the main things I have discovered about the aviation community is that everyone, without fail, has a decently sizable bank of interesting stories to tell. The other course members and I had the opportunity to talk to ex-airline pilots, individuals who flew in Phantoms and other fast jets, pilots who flew cargo planes and even one gentleman who taught himself how to glide by getting a local farmer to ping his wood and fabric glider off a hill with a bungee cord!

The hangers were full of fascinating aircraft including more vintage gliders that were lacking canopies or, in one case, lacking everything but the wings, a wooden frame, a seat and basic controls. The private gliders on site also exposed us to a range of very high-performance gliders equipped with negative flaps and advanced avionics. The course members and I spent a reasonable amount of time staring in fascination at these aircraft when we were on the ground!

When we were airborne, we were given many opportunities to familiarise ourselves with the characteristics of the gliders and to do upper-air exercises. One of my favourites was the spiral dive recovery exercise. This was both exhilarating to experience and satisfying to resolve. Having gone into the course with some gliding experience already, I was able to fly my first aerotows and have left the course already feeling much more confident in my skills as a glider pilot and my ability to control the aircraft.

I am very keen to return to the club to complete the course and look forward to gliding more in the future. I would like to thank the CGC for their hospitality and expertise. The club had a wonderful environment, and I very much enjoyed my week there. I would also like to thank the sponsors of the Air Pilots Flying Club who have made this opportunity possible for me and have helped to get me up in the air after spending years on the ground!