

SEATTLE GLIDER COUNCIL - MEMBER INFORMATION

THE SEATTLE GLIDER COUNCIL ORGANIZATION

Published September 1970

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ORIGIN AND BASIS OF THE SEATTLE GLIDER COUNCIL

Prologue

To understand what the Seattle Glider Council was founded to be and do requires some information on the Pacific Northwest soaring situation that led up to the Council's formation.

Prior to the Seattle Glider Council, the need for coordination among Pacific Northwest glider enthusiasts was accomplished by an organization known as the Pacific Northwest Soaring Association (PNSA). PNSA was formed in the early 1940's and re-formed shortly after World War II for: "The purpose of promoting and coordinating glider flying in the Pacific Northwest; i.e., Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and British Columbia." After World War II it was a non-membership, no income, promotional organization sponsored and financially supported in Spartan circumstances by dedicated volunteers who believed soaring could and should be expanded in the area. Three individuals were selected annually by vote of active glider enthusiasts to represent them in working with a few volunteer workers on matters of coordinating gliding and soaring interests in the area, and to lead the promotion of gliding and soaring in their geographic sections of the PNSA territory. It was a rule that one individual would be selected from among the residents of each of the following geographic areas: British Columbia, U.S. Pacific Northwest west of the Cascade Mountains, and U.S. Pacific Northwest east of the Cascade Mountains. Costs of the organization were paid by these elected members and the other volunteer workers.

PNSA started and published "Towline," obtained, and as custodian, administered several trophies and awards. PNSA coordinated an annual "awards dinner" and conducted an annual regional gliding and soaring meet planning activity in conjunction with the dinner. It also did the work of conducting glider meets and contests at various locations throughout the area. Booths were set up at sports shows and other public gatherings, and the "message" of gliding and soaring was carried to the public and into the schools through lectures and displays of photographs and equipment.

The organization was loosely knit and directed by the three representatives and the volunteer workers. It confined itself to promoting gliding and soaring and, where possible, helped individuals or groups solve some glider operations problems. H. Prater Hogue, Amos L. Wood, Harold (Kit) Carson, R. L. (Bob) Moore, A. Dean Reynolds, R. G. (Bob) Joppa, and P. Heasley Entz were among those who kept the function working. Carson originated the publication, "Towline" and did much of the organization's secretarial work. Carson, Entz, Hogue, and a few other individuals had acquired experience with gliders during the 1930's and early 1940's and made that experience available throughout the PNSA area after the war.

By 1950 gliding and soaring interest and activity had progressed to the point that the Seattle area needed more than administrative coordination and loose-knit interest to solve airport and operations problems. The other Pacific Northwest areas were not concerned with these "localized" problems. The regional function of the PNSA was needed, but another function was needed to work on the Seattle area problems. It was decided the local function should be separate from PNSA and only be representative of the total Seattle metropolitan area's interests. Accordingly the Seattle Glider Council (SGC) was organized. SGC solved the Seattle area problems and, as it gained strength

and solved the problem of a site for soaring east of the Cascade Mountains, it became apparent that SGC had some excess capability and could also perform the PNSA function as long as there were no significant conflicts of interest. Arrangements were made to transfer the functions and responsibilities of PNSA to SGC with the understanding that if future circumstances should make re-separation of the two functions desirable, the last workers on PNSA would re-institute PNSA; and SGC, when requested by them, would return the functions, trophies, awards, and other Pacific Northwest regional matters to the re-instated organization. PNSA made special arrangements with the donors of each of the trophies and awards administered by PNSA for this transfer of administration. All donors agreed to the transfer and participated in defining its conditions, and possible future reversal. Each donor specified that his stipulations controlling annual award of his trophy were to remain unchanged. The last of the arrangements and transfers was accomplished by the end of 1954 and the Seattle Glider Council then became an organization with the functions of: (1) coordinating and representing the Seattle area; and (2) coordinating the Pacific Northwest region.

The Seattle Glider Council

The Seattle Glider Council came into existence because of the need for acquiring the strength and unity in the Seattle area not possible by unorganized individuals and separated groups. This was required to solve the problems of the time which threatened to abolish and prohibit motorless flight in the Pacific Northwest. These problems were: governmental restrictions - particularly the Air Defense Identification Zone regulations, the hostile attitude held by some of the portions of the public and government who were in position to control or interfere with motorless flight, need for development of workable relations with governmental organizations and regulatory agencies, an airport to fly from, and improving the almost intolerable launching problem when more than one sailplane and group operated simultaneously on one airport.

The District and Regional Safety Offices of the then Civil Aeronautics Administration - now FAA - and the Director of the Washington State Aeronautics Commission strongly encouraged the organization and development of the collective action capability of the individuals, groups, and clubs engaged in motorless heavier-than-air flight activities in the Pacific Northwest. They suggested organizing to simplify the points of contact and coordinate the voices they were hearing.

The Seattle Glider Council was founded in October, 1950, with the purpose:

"To encourage and foster glider and sailplane flying in the area by Seattle pilots; to provide for exchange of information and experience and ideas; to act in an advisory capacity on matters of safety and operation; and to act in behalf of the group where cooperative action is desired."

It operated as a coalition, representing all persons interested in motorless flight whether they owned or operated gliders or not. It was successful in achieving workable solutions for the problems. Extensive contributions of talent, effort, time, and - as necessary - money were made by the individuals in their collective task.

In many cases the people who were interested in gliding but did not fly were as dedicated, helpful, and effective as the glider owners and operators. The area and activity benefited greatly from their efforts. The urgency and the

critical nature of the situation demanded and received the unified attention and support of every individual. As is always the case, some contributed more than others, but each contributed in accord with his ability, desire, and conscience. Many of those who contributed generously are no longer active and, in some cases, no longer affiliated with either SGC, SSA, or glider clubs, and some never flew a glider or airplane. However, without their contribution, many of the things of significance today that are unrecognized or little thought about would have been delayed or might not be in existence at all. Without the contributions made by those who initially banded together to form SGC, motorless flight development in Washington State would have been delayed several years and today's participants would probably have more problems of consequence than they now have.

Among the things accomplished in the early period of SGC was: development of a mutually beneficial working relationship with the State Aeronautics Commission and the Regional CAA (now FAA) which resulted in an understanding and helpful attitude toward gliding and glider pilots by both agencies; assignment by the CAA (predecessor of FAA) of a designee Pilot License Examiner within the SGC membership; approval by CAA of areas and procedures whereby gliders could be operated in the post war Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) without adherence to the IFR type rules and regulations then governing all aircraft flights in the ADIZ; arrangement with the Air Force in the 1950's for the first high altitude indoctrination course and high altitude chamber experience; owned and operated a tow car for auto towing; obtained the use of Arlington and Fancher Air Fields; arranged for airplane towing; assisted in the development of the Boy Scouts Air Explorer Post A-299 program and flight instruction activity; arranged for gliders and pilots to participate in air shows to advertise gliding; developed "Towline" from a quarterly to a monthly publication and accepted responsibility for administering annually the trophies and awards for which all glider enthusiasts are eligible within the Pacific Northwest area.

Early in SGC's history, it became apparent some of the needs made courses of action necessary which were possible only by group action, but which incurred risk of both group and individual liability for every SGC member. Incorporation under appropriate Washington State regulations was the only practical solution for providing an acceptable legal limit to the personal liability of each member and to enable the group to achieve some of its objectives that could not otherwise be accomplished.

The Seattle Glider Council was incorporated as a non-profit corporation January 11, 1954, with the objects and purposes of:

- "(a) To foster, promote, engage in and conduct all phases of motorless flight. To foster, promote, engage in and conduct related social, business and recreational activities of every type, kind, and description.
- "(b) To receive, hold, conserve, administer, use and disburse the properties and income of the corporation for the purposes expressed herein.
- "(c) To have all other powers granted non-profit corporations by the laws of the State of Washington, or the state in which this corporation is active."

The charter was implemented on February 4, 1954. It was based on the policy that SGC should continue: to be the central clearing house for gliding and soaring in the western Washington State area, principally the Arlington, Seattle, Tacoma, Olympia area, and at Wenatchee; to provide the central focus for collective action on matters requiring such action; to function in behalf of all persons interested in or participating in gliding and soaring but with the least possible constraint on the interests, desires, and actions of each individual; and continue to promote the growth of gliding and soaring interest. As a part of the policy it was reaffirmed that the objective of "fostering and promoting heavier-than-air motorless flight" would be best served if there were a way for all individuals and groups (partnerships and clubs) to have their say without being forced to belong to and support the cost of an operating flying club they neither needed nor wanted. In addition there must be a place where curious individuals can learn more about the sport and be some part of it without becoming prematurely committed to the cost of owning and operating gliders. The cost of belonging to a flying club has and does frequently eliminate persons who, if given time and a less expensive way to get acquainted with gliding and soaring, will come to understand and accept the cost and become strong advocates of the sport rather than impediments to its growth and progress. SGC membership, "Towline," and the SGC meetings have been proven effective in doing this. This SGC approach also helped reduce non-productive membership turnover in the clubs. However, the position required that SGC membership fees be kept in proper relation between the SGC function and the operating clubs themselves to preclude the automatic elimination of some people from SGC membership. Some people won't and others can't pay high fees to a club and to SGC. Many people curious about soaring won't pay high fees to learn more about soaring. A basic purpose of SGC was to provide a way to attract such persons and attempt to develop their interest in soaring.

The SGC function and policy dictated that SGC should not be an operating club and compete with the people and organizations it was intended to help. This is fundamental to the "area council" concept of organization and representation. It further required that the members rather than the officers control the organization. For this reason, the members control the SGC Bylaws and the officers administer SGC operation in accordance with the bylaws.

It was and is believed the successful accomplishment of the SGC function and objectives is largely dependent upon the degree to which the members understand and support them. It is a policy of SGC that each member shall determine for himself how much time, effort, and, beyond a nominal membership/Towline subscription fee, money he can and should contribute to SGC. To avoid the problem of continually measuring and handling transfers of membership equity and the associated financial record and reporting requirements, a policy was established that: users would pay the total cost of services they used; SGC assets (net worth) would be acquired from charges for the services as appropriate to a non-profit organization, membership fees should not generate SGC financial worth, that membership assessments should not be used in the SGC to raise money but rather assessments be restricted to those cases where income failed to balance cost on a specific service and then only those persons who used that particular service during the period the deficit was developed would be assessed the unbalanced cost; money needed to start a new service or to expand an existing service would be borrowed from existing service accounts or from SGC members or from commercial lending agencies (banks, etc.) and repaid out of charges made for the service; and that each financial or service account would in itself

be managed to be self-supporting and non-profit. It was understood that income in excess of costs must be proven to be a surplus and must satisfy legal requirements to qualify as non-profit results of the organization's activities and that use or disposition of the surplus must satisfy non-profit corporate and tax laws and regulations.

The bylaws were drafted on the basis of the above views and policies and were specifically assembled to maintain the appropriate and necessary separation of SGC from the individual and club ownership and operation of gliders. SGC would not own or operate gliders. Therefore, the charter implementation has been properly limited by the SGC functional policy and reaffirmed the objectives originally established in 1950.

The position taken on financing SGC activities and on member equity transfers dictated that member's initiation fees be zero and that membership be validated by payment of a minimum amount of dues annually.

Since its incorporation, the SGC has continued to accomplish, as best it could, solutions to the Seattle area gliding and soaring problems. Arrangements were made in 1948 for the use of Arlington Airport for glider activity. This was terminated in April, 1959, by growth of powered aircraft interests. A tow plane was acquired, operated at less than commercial rates, and was subsequently replaced by a newer, more powerful airplane. The Enumclaw airport was operated by SGC from 1960 to 1966. High altitude zones in the positive control air space area have been acquired following the concept and pattern pioneered by the earlier ADIZ exception example. In 1968 the administrative responsibility for the high altitude zones was transferred to SGC from the FAA. In 1966 arrangements for the use of Fancher Field were reaffirmed and necessary revisions in the rules and regulations made which have continued to make that field available to glider operations and have clarified the basis for the operation and continuing availability of the airport. In 1970 the Fancher Field owner (Wen-Air-Co) made further changes in the arrangements under which glider operations can be conducted there. Assistance has been obtained from the Air Force in high altitude operations indoctrination by the SSA and SGC following the example pioneered by SGC in the 1950's.

Repeatedly it has been shown that the successful existence and prosperous operation of an organization is greatly dependent on the manner and extent to which sound principles are used in conducting the organization's affairs. These principles have served SGC well. Whenever application has lagged, SGC has had difficulties. The following statement of the principles contains basic truths that are of continuing significance to the vitality and success of the SGC.

- The bylaws establish a sound basis for the SGC's intended operation.
- The organization must operate by the rules established and, when necessary, the rules should be revised to maintain a proper foundation for its operations.
- SGC operations and the business of the Directors, membership, and committees should always be conducted in a businesslike manner.
- It is necessary that accurate, timely records of operations and minutes of all official business meetings be kept and properly certified to provide the information and records needed to satisfy SGC needs and legal requirements.

- Complete records must be kept and be readily available at all times.
- Actions involving money, property, legal, and ethical commitments should be fully supported by adequate documentation of the circumstances, people involved, aims and intentions. Proper records and legal instruments are necessary to the business and operational security of the organization.
- Sound advice should be obtained on all significant business matters, especially those involving money and property, to assure that proper financial and legal actions are taken.
- Obtain and follow legal advice as the basis of prudent business actions.
- When disagreement does occur, get it settled quickly and without adjudication. Don't hesitate to use arbitration if ordinary actions do not bring settlements.

It continues to be the intent of the SGC to conduct its affairs in accord with these concepts and in such manner that necessary legal and ethical requirements are adequately satisfied and maximum clarity of communication is maintained at all times in the best interests of the SGC objectives and the SGC members. It is recognized that most troubles originate in poor or unclear communications, incomplete or inadequate records, and failure to comply with the bylaws and necessary legal requirements. It is believed that proper handling of all these matters is the foundation of wise, trouble-free decisions and is the best way to avoid unnecessary trouble in the conduct of SGC operations and business.