

Insurance Director's Report

We are now into the BHPA's second year with our new insurer, Hiscox, and Brokers, Jelf Manson based in Manchester. Things have been running reasonably smoothly, although I must apologise to members for the late arrival of proper documentation from the underwriters. This has now been rectified and there is now a keyfacts document, which will be returned with your new membership card, at renewal. Although there are no dates of operation on the keyfacts document, the applicable dates are simply your membership year stated on your card. Amendments to the policy terms each year will come through to you when you renew.

There is other good news, in that the £25,000 cap which existed on tandem pilots in respect of the passenger, and for instructors in respect of the student under training is now raised to £50,000. We hope this will give these licence holders a little more peace of mind, and that the good news in respect of our current low claims history continues and that there may be a little more for us in future years.

Please note that you will only be on this new level of cover when you renew in 2011. In addition, the landowner clause which gives the take off and landing sites' landowner £5m cover in the event of a claim arising from our flying activity seems to have had a beneficial effect. I have noticed that I'm getting many fewer enquiries from clubs about problems with site access where the landowners demand high levels of cover and block flying. Generally things seem to be moving slowly in a improved direction from the bad old days of the late 1990s and hopefully this trend can be maintained.

Regards to all.

Martin Heywood
Chairman
Insurance Officer

BHPA Financial Report

In the year to 31st March 2010 we made a loss of £23,205 following a loss in 2009 of £22,009. The BHPA Exec took action early in 2010 to return the association to surplus in the current year and the overall financial position of the BHPA remains sound with reserves at the end of March 2010 standing at £425,425.

Subscription income remained steady during the year but the effects of the recession were apparent in a 16% decline in shop sales whilst low interest rates cut 57% from the income we received from our funds on deposit. Our sports council grant, which was reduced from £34,000 to £17,000 last year fell to £1,300.

The costs of producing Skywings are partly subsidised by the revenue from sales of advertisements. In common with other print media we experienced a large fall in our advertising income over the past few years but this has stabilised and the net cost to the Association of producing Skywings remained more or less unchanged at £96,586.

Insurance costs in the year to March 2010 were based on our old insurance contract and so were broadly similar to the previous year at £230,370 but FSC costs fell by 17% on the previous year and non staff administration cost were reduced by 8%.

We have a long term objective to maintain the real value of our reserves. The reserves provide us, as we have seen, with a buffer in difficult economic times and also provide us with a fund so that we can, if necessary, fight existential regulatory threats to our sport. To stem our losses and return the BHPA to surplus the BHPA Exec took a number of steps earlier this year. Economies were made at the BHPA offices and unfortunately this meant that we were obliged to reduce staffing numbers. A major saving was realised through changing the providers of our public liability insurance and we elected, albeit reluctantly and after much debate, to increase membership fees at the beginning of the year. These steps will ensure that the BHPA returns a modest surplus in the current year.

In the summer, with the lease on our offices running out, the opportunity arose to acquire our own office space in conjunction with the British Gliding Association. The BHPA Exec took the view that acquiring our own office space offered a good return on the funds invested and would open up the possibility of future savings through sharing resources with the BGA.

Carolyn Childs who ran the BHPA accounts and shop retired earlier this year with our grateful thanks for many years of unstinting service. The accounts and shop have been taken over by Michelle Lanman who is already bringing her broad experience in accounts to bear. I am grateful to her and the rest of the team in Leicester for making the Association run so smoothly.

Angus Langford
Treasurer

BHPA Flying and Safety Committee.

Report to the 2010 AGM



The current FSC membership is:

Angus Pinkerton (FSC Chairman)
John Lovell (Accident Investigation Panel)
Trevor McLaughlin (Instructor and Coach Training Panel)
Chris Dawes (Development Panel)
Paul Mahoney (SPHG Panel)
Michel Carnet (Pilot Training Panel)
Ken Raines (Chief Examiner and Examination & Inspections Panel)
Joe Schofield (Publications Panel)
Russ Hicks (Towing Panel)
Mark Dale (BHPA Technical Manager)
Dave Thompson (BHPA Senior Technical Officer)

After a very good year of flying weather in 2009, last year didn't bring such good conditions; and this wasn't restricted to the UK with much of Europe similarly affected. Whilst this clearly has a significant effect, it is hard to know exactly how much difference this makes to accident statistics, but 2010 was close to being only the second year ever without a UK hang gliding or paragliding fatality (and indeed no BHPA members died in flying accidents). There was, however, one PG fatality in England involving a non-member, caused by a paraglider collapse at low level in turbulent conditions.

Of the 126 reported incidents in 2010, 52 resulted in serious injury (and a further 27 caused minor injuries) so there is no reason for complacency. Many of the injured pilots were lucky that their injuries weren't much more severe. Most of the damage was broken ankles, wrists or arms, but nearly a third were lower back compression fractures. This represents a small drop in the proportion of spinal injuries in recent years, but still suggests that paraglider pilots in particular should be making even greater efforts to use their legs as their primary landing gear. A summary and analysis of the Accident and Incident reports received in 2010 will be published in Skywings in the next few months.

I would like to re-emphasise the value to all of our flying community of completing Incident Report forms. The "one-off" incident or near-miss that affected you (or one of your flying friends) might not be as rare as you think. Without reports we can't investigate, and without investigations we can't provide timely advice and guidance to pilots or manufacturers.

Although it seemed that we had achieved a single Paragliding Certification standard in 2009, in fact we still have two (slightly) different ones; the German LTF, and the EN. Work began this winter through the CEN WG6 Committee to iron out the remaining differences, and it is to be hoped that by 2012 the two standards (while likely to remain legally distinct) will in future involve exactly the same flight tests and results. During 2011 the same committee will begin a review of the Emergency Parachute standard.

Following the changes to the Pilot Rating system we introduced last year (where the concept of "environments" was introduced to replace the mixture of rating types and "endorsements") a new set of written exams will shortly be introduced, harmonised to fit with the new terminology.

Training Wings was been launched on-line as the Elementary Pilot Training Guide, and is made freely available in print form for distribution to students through all our schools. The Pilot Handbook continues to sell well (getting on for 10,000 copies have been sold) and a new edition is scheduled for 2012 when the revised European Rules of the Air may result in significant changes to the Airlaw section.

FSC have several items of work lined up for 2011, starting with a campaign to emphasise and standardise pre-flight checks, beginning within our schools. Geordie will definitely need to have his cat aboard in 2011! We will also be moving forward on the development of a training programme for speed flying. On post-school Coaching, we will be working to expand on and spread more widely the good practice that exists in some of our clubs.

As always I would like to say "thank you" to all the people who have volunteered to work on FSC, we are all passionate about our sport and I feel privileged that such a skilled and experienced group of people are willing to give up their valuable time to contribute to its safe development.

Angus Pinkerton, Chairman BHPA Flying and Safety Committee, February 2011.



Unfortunately the ongoing problems within the UK economy as a whole continue to impact on Skywings' advertising income. This slipped again during 2009/10, but fortunately at a much gentler rate than in the previous year.

The final Skywings management figures for 2007/8, 2008/9 and 2009/10 are shown below for comparison. The final column, shown in italics, is my current prediction for the year end result for 2010/11, but as we are still some way off this could change so should only be treated as a guide to the likely outcome.

	Final Figures			<i>Estimated figure</i>
	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	<i>2010/11</i>
Expenditure	£162,001	£148,339	£149,282	<i>£144,991</i>
Revenue	£82,198	£60,698	£55,733	<i>£51,692</i>
Net cost	£79,803	£87,641	£93,549	<i>£93,299</i>
Average net cost per magazine	£0.92	£1.06	£1.15	<i>£1.15</i>
Copies ordered	86,666	82,420	81,677	<i>80,879</i>
Pages printed	648	552	564	<i>600</i>

The Skywings budget for 2009/10 was increased by Exec to help see the magazine through difficult economic times, hence the increase in net cost compared to the previous year. Unfortunately the number of magazines printed during 2009/10 fell once more, reflecting the current membership trend, but again this was a much smaller drop than in the previous year.

Some of the issues published in 2009/10 did however benefit from reduced print costs, as a result of the revised print contract negotiated towards the end of 2009. This meant that we were able to reinstate a few of the pages that had been cut in 2008/9 to stay within budget.

As this year the AGM is being held much closer to the end of the current financial year, I've also included a prediction for the year end results for 2010/11. But these should be treated with caution as we are still some way off the end of the year. They do however suggest that the fall in advertising income and the number of issues printed is likely to broadly be the same as in 2009/10, whilst the pages printed are likely to be up by around 36 and expenditure down by several thousand pounds (this is the first full year to benefit from reduced print costs). The net result should therefore be a slightly thicker magazine for the same unit cost (£1.15).

Whilst this is slightly more encouraging news, it's hard to predict how the impending government cuts and tax increases will impact upon both the trade and BHPA membership, and therefore upon the performance of Skywings magazine during 2011/12. The Skywings team will however continue to explore any possible cost savings, or ways to improve income.

During my time at Skywings it has been my pleasure to work with a dedicated and hard working team, comprising designer and advertising agent Colin Fargher and editor Joe Schofield. But of course what really makes Skywings such a good read are the articles and stories sent in by countless contributors. My thanks to all concerned.

Paul Dancey,
Corporate Communications Director, January 2011



Website Report – 2011

The clubs and schools pages have now been extensively re-written, and now make use of the Google API to display the approximate location of all BHPA clubs and schools on a map of the UK. This is written on the fly from the schools and clubs info pulled from the office database, so can be updated automatically by the office.

By default, the location shown is calculated from the first part of the post code of the club contact or school's address. As its likely that this won't always truly reflect the operational area of a school or club, a system is in place that allows schools and clubs to provide the office with the latitude and longitude of what they consider to be more representative of the true centre of their operations.

However, since this offer was first publicised in the Monthly Bulletin only a small number of clubs and schools have availed themselves of this option, so most map pins on the web site schools and clubs location map simply use their default postcode.

The latest version of Training Wings can now be downloaded from the web site. This is no longer supported by advertising.

An online submission system for incident reports is currently in development, and when completed we hope the system will automatically update the office database from information submitted through the web site, and so streamline current procedures. Whilst there are a number of technical and security issues that need to be addressed, we hope to have this fully or at least partly operational before the end of March.

The online shop software will also need to be upgraded within the next few months. As we use a heavily customized version of the software, this may take several days to complete. But I will try to keep any disruption to a minimum.

As the last post to the "instructor's forum" was in January 2008, this has now been removed from the web site. This has increased the available free disk space, but more importantly has helped with web site maintenance by cutting out the work required to keep underused software secure and up to date.

I'm very pleased to be able to report that the new IT systems installed following the office move have passed their port scan tests and we therefore remain PCI compliant. This is a requirement of our Bank to enable us to continue to take credit and debit card payments, so is very welcome news.

Finally, I'd just like to thank Kriss Burdett and Andrew Wakelin for their continued work on the technical side of the Association's IT systems, and for helping to ensure the security of our systems.

Paul Dancey
Corporate Communications Director
January 2011

BHPA Competitions Report – AGM 2010/11

This will be my last report to the membership as a board member of the BHPA. Competitions continue to be popular, partly as social gatherings of like minded individuals but also as a way to improve and measure achievement. All disciplines continued to attract a solid following with an encouraging number of newcomers.

National level competitions in all disciplines are well organised with due regard given to safety issues.

On the international front we have had less success than we wished for this year but our national teams are preparing well for the 2011 season where they will contest world championships in all disciplines.

Report by the Hang Gliding Competitions Panel

2010 has been a year to consolidate the changes made after the Panel's composition changed so markedly in 2009. Emphasis has been placed in two areas; greater involvement at the entry level and more careful control of costs. A comparison of expenditure will be possible at the forthcoming planning meeting.

The highlight of the competition calendar was the European Championships in Ager, Spain. Blessed with good weather the 8 tasks totalled nearly 1000km of racing. The Team fought a long and hard battle but just lost out to the Swiss Team for the final position on the podium. The difference was less than 0.5% of the overall score, bitterly disappointing for all.

Nevertheless, it ensured that Team GB continue to show themselves to be worthy opponents at the highest levels of Hang Gliding. Creditable performances in individual tasks topped by a consistently fast Grant Crossingham finishing 7th overall with Carl Wallbank 13th, Gordon Rigg 17th and Dave Matthews 20th. Pete Coad added another string to his bow by utilising his growing competition knowledge to gain universal praise as Team Manager.

The Women's Worlds in Tegelberg were sadly the complete opposite of Ager without a valid task being flown due to the poor weather. Snow on take-off didn't stop them rigging but low cloud and poor conditions stifled any chance of a meaningful competition.

The Pre World Championships held in Monte Cucco, Italy was attended by some of the hopefuls for the Team in 2011. The competition results were skewed by airspace issues that have been resolved for the event proper. Carl Wallbank flew well again to finish 4th in the individual standings, mirroring the result of the unofficial team.

The British Nationals, held at Laragne in France, was once again a popular choice with foreign and UK pilots alike. Although hampered somewhat by the weather the event was a successful debut for Pete Coad as Meet Director at this level. Several difficult decisions added to the credibility of the competition organisers and helped to reinforce the recent changes in attitude towards safety. The competition produced a new British Champion – Dave Matthews who prevailed after 3 tasks from Malcolm Brown (2nd) and Gary Wirdnam (3rd).

The British Open Series continues to be very popular with the pilots and a useful arena for their development. 3 rounds culminated with several good weather days in the final round and a closely fought battle for the podium. The victor was the now "up and come" Tony Stephens showing how well he has progressed in the last few years. Flying alongside the flex wings in the Open Series were 5 rigid wings. We had hoped to get a valid Cat 2 event for them this year but needed 1 more pilot to gain that validity. The Class 5 winner was Paul Harvey.

The weather during the BOS did provide ample opportunity for the continuation of last year's Q&A sessions about competition flying and these were particularly useful for entrants to the newly named Club Class. The Club Class was revised slightly for 2010 and we were encouraged by the increased number of entries. For those involved it has been a step up for their aspirations and abilities as XC pilots, for the organisers it was a joy to behold as personal bests tumbled and the spirit of friendly competition took hold. The eventual winner, Rob Gregg, will be promoted to the Open Series in 2011.

Report by Paragliding Competitions Panel

The British Paragliding Championships, currently consisting of two separate FAI Cat 2 "International Open" events, continue to be popular with both UK and international guest pilots. This means they can operate as financially independent events allowing us to use BHPA funding exclusively for funding our Cat 1 (world and continental championship) national teams. Thanks to the BHPA and our sponsors, we are able to cover the entry fees, transport and accommodation costs of our pilots selected for these major events.

The PG Championships are currently rebuilding their reserves following some unpleasant surprises that all but eliminated our margin a few years ago. Our goal is to hold reserves roughly equalling the turnover of one event (i.e. approximately 20K GBP). Thanks to a fantastic year in 2010 due to an experienced team, careful planning, kindly weather gods and shedloads of hard work by everyone on the ground at each event, we're on track for rebuilding these reserves, but we're not there yet.

There were three brilliant paragliding competitions in 2010. These were the British Open in Slovenia, the Paragliding World Cup in Chelan, and the British Open in St André les Alpes. We ran two out of these three and we are delighted to have prioritised British pilots at both events - every British pilot who registered was offered a place, space was made available even if the pilot first contacted us long after the event was full. We ran training events before both competitions and are actively supporting our future talent. This was our most successful year in terms of great flying, pilot participation and well-fought competition for several years. Right now we have seven pilots in the World top 100, including Jamie Messenger who has joined Russel Ogden as a regular member of the top ten very best pilots in the World. The battle for 10th British place is equally hard fought, with a large, healthy, motivated squad all looking for the opportunity to prove themselves on the world stage.

Looking forward to 2011, we have a deep pool of talented pilots, we're actively seeking out and nurturing future talent (see X-Alps competitor Aidan Toase's recent Attitude column in Skywings), and I do hope that the BHPA will continue to support this international British excellence in a way which reflects both the international success that British pilots and British-organised competitions are achieving right now and the interest and activities of the BHPA membership.

Report by Paragliding Accuracy Competitions Panel

Classic Accuracy

The Classic Accuracy Nationals were eventually validated at the third attempt in November following bad weather at the traditional August Bank Holiday fixture and at an October re-run. Many thanks go to Green Dragons for hosting the event and to sponsors Thermal Chasers, UP and FreeX. Derek Godfrey became National Champion for a fourth time and Icarus Wings (Derek Godfrey, Andy Webster, John Lawrence) won the team trophy also for a fourth time.

The European Grand Prix was validated on just the French and Dutch legs following the blown out UK event. French pilot Jacques Lecamus became European Champion with UK pilots Arthur Bentley and Martin Robe taking creditable second and third places respectively. Arthur Bentley's consistent flying through the year saw him take the classic accuracy league for a record fourth time.

2011 is expected to see the usual domestic and European events, with Arthur Bentley representing the BHPA Accuracy panel on European Grand Prix matters.

Paragliding Accuracy

The Paragliding Accuracy Nationals took place on the Long Mynd, and thanks go to Beyond Extreme and Chris Haynes for running a successful event. Andy Shaw became National Champion for a fourth time and Green Dragons (Billy Elliston, Simon Sykes, John Lawrence) won the team trophy for the third time.

Turkey hosted the second European Paragliding Accuracy Championships, and the UK claimed a creditable fifth place behind Czech Republic, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Serbia. The performance of the UK team in Turkey

was probably the best to date, however, the fifth place reflects how competitive the sport is becoming as more countries become involved. The UK was represented by Andy Shaw, Andy Webster, Simon Sykes, Don Bodill, Eva Csiki Szasz and John Lawrence, with Andy Shaw making it into the top ten to claim an FAI diploma. Thanks go to Chris Haynes who organised a series of training camps in the run up to the European Championships, and it is encouraging to see young pilots Simon Sykes, Billy Elliston and Eva Csiki Szasz rising through the ranks. Also worthy of note was a first team place by an advanced party of the UK Team in the Turkish Open prior to the European Championships.

A busy year meant that British pilot participation in the Paragliding Accuracy World Cup series was low, with Nick Simmons being the highest placed Brit in 14th position. Andy Shaw's consistent flying over the season saw him win the 2010 Airways Accuracy League. As 2010 ended there were four UK pilots in the top 50 of the WRPS, and the UK as a nation maintained sixth position.

The big event in 2011 will be the World Championships to be held in the Czech Republic where UK's Nikki Spence will be Chief Judge and Andy Cowley will be a Jury member. Squad Manager Chris Haynes is running a series of training camps leading up the World Championships and will be actively recruiting more new pilots into the squad. The selection process for the British team has already started with a performance based selection criteria using training camp and competition results from a 12 month period prior to the event.

A venue for the 2011 Paragliding Nationals is still to be determined. 2011 will also see a pre-European Championship in FYR Macedonia and six World Cup events in Lithuania, Austria, Serbia, Indonesia, Malaysia and Germany.

February 2011

John Aldridge
Competition Director

External Representation Report to AGM

The BHPA continues to be formally represented on a number of external bodies relevant to our interests.

In the UK we have had BHPA director Marc Asquith as Vice President of the Royal Aero Club (RAeC) and myself on the council of that body this year, although I will stand down from that when my term as a Director of the BHPA expires at this AGM. Our aviation legislation officer (Tom Hardie) is an executive of the GA Alliance.

In Europe we are represented at a number of levels at the European Hang Gliding and Paragliding Union (EHPU). Our Chairman (Martin Heywood) is, by virtue of his position, UK Delegate. Our Senior Technical Officer (Mark Dale) is currently General Secretary and other FSC members are involved with the Airworthiness and the Safety and Training Committee. I shall leave any reporting on these activities to the FSC.

Internationally we are represented in CIVL, the hang gliding and paragliding commission of the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale. When I was elected President of CIVL last February Chris (Calvo) Burns took over from me as the UK Delegate and Pete Coad has now taken up the appointment of Alternate Delegate so that both of the main BHPA flying disciplines continue to be represented.

John Aldridge

January 2011

ADMIN DIRECTOR'S REPORT TO THE AGM – FEBRUARY 2011

This year has been one of considerable change within the Admin Function.

As reported last year, we have now run on 4 full time staff for some time and appear to be able to cope at this level.

Happily or sadly, depending on your point of view (happily for Carolyn and sadly for us), our Accounts Clerk, Carolyn retired in May after eighteen years. Her replacement, Michelle Lanman joined with a short overlap and has picked up the threads and created an almost seamless transfer. Michelle works 4 days per week and so our FTE has fallen slightly.

Again, as reported last year, our lease came to an end in September and so, given strained relationships with our landlord it was decided that we should not renew. The search for new premises was underway at the last AGM. We were also aware that the BGA lease came to an end at about the same time and so talks about a co-location had been ongoing for some time.

As a result, the joint purchase of 8 Merus Court took place during June. We have set up a holding company, 8 Merus Court Limited which has 2 shares, one each for BGA and BHPA and that company has granted 999 year leases to the BHPA and BGA of their respective floors. That way either of us can move out or sell should we ever need to.

All this happened as Michelle arrived and so she had to start packing boxes for the move almost as soon as she started the job.

All the arrangements for the move were going on during the summer, not ideal as obviously that is the busiest time for the office staff.

Since the office is a new build, we have had to go through the process of design, partitioning and cabling for our IT. Each step has been fraught with difficulty such that, for instance we have had to lease a fibre optic line for our internet feed. The delays introduced by such process are phenomenal and have had to be managed carefully.

It seems a good point here to thank Chris, our IT trouble shooter, for all his work during the move. The complete re-installation of our IT was completed in the face of considerable difficulty without any obvious loss of service to members.

Chris has been the lower half of our swan - paddling furiously to keep us afloat whilst above the surface we looked serene and calm!

Nevertheless, we moved without too many problems and are now happily settled into Merus Court. Sharing facilities with the BGA is working well and the meeting room has already been used for several meetings by both associations and the RAeC. Some of the concerns we had about a large boardroom and canteen have evaporated with use and we now realise what a good idea they were. We now look to find costs savings arising from the co-location and expect that these will emerge over time.

At the end of the year, the Office Manager, Jennie, had to take some sick leave. We were lucky that it fell at the quiet time of the year and after the move had been completed. Jennie is now in the process of a managed return to work and we wish her a speedy recovery.

Membership levels have continued to remain broadly stable, perhaps falling slowly. The introduction of the 2 year membership for new members has been taken up by 81 members. This is fewer than we had hoped but with luck with ensure that we get a proportion of a second years subscription from members who might otherwise have lapsed after the first year.

In conclusion, I must proffer my thanks to the 4 office staff who have experienced a stressful year. Jennie, Ruth, Stef and Michelle have worked tirelessly in this year of significant change and I hope that from a members point of view, the office has not missed a beat.

Marc Asquith
Admin Director

AGM Sites Director Report

Summary for 2009 - 2010

Site Purchase Fund

The voluntary contributions to this fund are still coming in and it currently stands at £8633. This is some £1400 increase on last year and is slowly becoming a significant amount in relation to buying a small site. The increasing use of direct debit payments is probably reducing the payments to this as more people no longer required to do anything to renew their subscriptions and may not get nudged into making a donation.

So while the fund is still growing but at a slower rate than previous years. Given the economic climate the suggested donation to the fund has not been increased for the second year running but members may donate any amount they wish to. Against expectation no sites have been bid-for or purchased this year

I am sure that the clubs who have had offers of help from this fund are grateful to the members who feel able to donate. So if you are wavering about making a contribution to the fund then now would be a very good time to help secure another site for free flight.

Site Threats

My in-box has seen 6 different sites threatened with closure or sever restriction on flying in the past year. One of these has been successfully resolved but the other 5 are still on-going. Three are concerned with wildlife conservation the others being wind-farm development and local authority concerns. While this may not seem a large proportion of the 1000 or so sites registered with the BHPA and none of them are receive intensive use they do represent sites that are very important to either local schools or club members.

Concerns over birds are being the most difficult to combat as our conspicuous presence is viewed more critically than other more numerous recreationalists even though our activities may result far less disturbance over the course of a year. So be alert to any complaints from birdwatchers or local authority staff and try and form positive relations before any conflicts arise as it can be very difficult after battle lines are drawn.

Steve Walsh
BHPA Sites Officer
January 2011

Paramotor Liaison Report

BHPA AGM 2011

It's great to see that the numbers of BHPA rated paramotor pilots continues to rise year on year, and the club scene also continues to grow slowly but surely. The club scene is key to bringing new blood into the sport, and to bringing the seasoned independent flyers under the wing of the BHPA.

The competition scene is flourishing too, with the second round of the 2011 League taking place at the end of April at Boston Aeroclub, and the Open taking place in Worcestershire on the 10th to 13th of June.

Happily there have been no fatalities in UK paramotoring this year, long may the trend continue.

Edward Cunliffe

WINGS OVER A CLOUD AWARD

“The Wings Over a Cloud Award, for the best feature article in Skywings magazine for the year 2009 – 2010, is presented to Helen McKerral.

Helen’s article, *Let Nothing Stop You*, is a very important contribution to safety and the enjoyment of free flight. Written in two parts, primarily for women hang glider pilots, it has universal significance for both men and women hang glider and paraglider pilots. It is the sanest and most helpful advice to pilots who don't consider themselves to be sky gods that I have ever read.

Mark Woodhams
(BHPA Wings Over A Cloud Award Adjudicator)”

BHPA AWARD OF MERIT 2011

NIKKI BODILL

Nikki was brought into the paragliding accuracy world about 15 years ago by accuracy pilot Don Bodill, who she later married. As if watching Don ply his trade was not enough, Nikki decided to get involved with judging in the late nineties and became a keen student of Andy Cowley.

Through the years Nikki worked her way up the ranks to become chief judge at the Classic Accuracy National Championships and her services were recognised by the award of the Nigel Legg trophy (services to parascending accuracy) in 2001.

Since then Nikki has been Chief Judge at just about every UK accuracy event that has taken place, which amounts to well over 100 competitions. Nikki's judging career has not been limited to the UK as she has judged at numerous overseas competitions culminating in her being appointed Chief Judge at the 2008 European Paragliding Accuracy Championships in Serbia and the 2009 World Air Games in Italy. In recent years Nikki has also run numerous judging training camps and she will be the Chief Judge at the 2011 World Paragliding Accuracy Championships in the Czech Republic. Nikki's involvement with paragliding accuracy does not stop at judging, as she is also an active member of the BHPA Accuracy Panel and is on the CIVL Paragliding Accuracy Subcommittee.

BHPA AWARD OF MERIT 2011

ANDY WALLIS

Andy has been flying continually since 1985, amassing almost 4500 hours airborne. He has flown hang gliders since 1985, and paragliders since 1992. He also occasionally flies a SPHG (Powered HG).

He has competed at both national and international level, represented the UK in international competition, and has competed regularly and successfully in both HG and PG UK Cross-Country Leagues. Andy has made positive contributions to the sport at club level, serving on his local club committee and being an active club coach to the present day, assisting many pilots to progress safely within the sport.

His ongoing efforts to improve the flying skills of up and coming pilots and his altruistic approach make Andy a hugely popular and respected member of the flying community. Not one to shy away from any lively debate concerning safety and flying techniques, Andy consistently shows a mature, educated and seasoned attitude – a credit to himself and of real proven benefit to his peers and fellow pilots.

In short, Andy is a shining example of what a sport & recreational pilot who is a Club Coach of many years should be – safe, knowledgeable, humble, approachable and tireless in his efforts to help those who are always grateful for his time.

His flying career achievements include:

- Best XC Distance: 245km, Owens Valley USA, 1989
- Best XC Distance: 151km, Eyam Edge to Whitby UK, 2009
- 4th place, UK National XC League 2009