

Elodie Lock

2024 APFC Gliding Scholarship

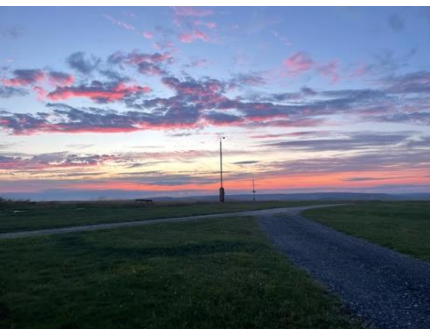


I have dreamed of becoming a commercial pilot and being in control of any aircraft since I was young and so when I found out that I was fortunate enough to be awarded a gliding scholarship by the Honourable Company of Air Pilots I was overjoyed as I knew it would allow me to explore my passion for aviation by giving me the opportunity to take my first ever flight in a glider.



I completed my scholarship at Camphill and it was amazing. I was the last to arrive on the Sunday afternoon and was definitely nervous to meet everyone, however that soon went away after a warm welcome from Sylvia, who was very much our mum for the week. I then spent the rest of the evening playing pool with and getting to know the other scholarship winners whom I quickly became close with and we still keep in touch with plans of meeting up in the future.

The next day we were all up early for breakfast cooked by John (and very much enjoyed by everyone) and excited for the day ahead. The course properly began at 9am when all of us went to help unpack the hanger, which is a lot more complicated than one would think and take the gliders to the launch point. By midday I had gone from never being in a glider before to learning how to adjust the trim, turn the glider using the rudder and aileron, and increase and decrease the speed we were travelling by lifting or dropping the nose slightly.



I'm still not able to explain the joy that came with the first launch which seemed to never wear off and only increased when I was able to do it myself under the guidance of my amazing instructor, Alan, who without I don't think I would've got half as far as I was able to as he explained everything in a way that was easy to understand and helped my confidence to grow massively by the end of the week including the surprise at 2000ft.



I got further than I had ever imagined due to the support of Alan, the other scholars, and all of the club members who were willing to answer all of our questions and help us with



things on the ground. By the end of the week, I was able to fly the take-off, landing and circuit unassisted aside from a few prompts from Alan as to when to put the air brakes on (and occasionally what way left and right were) as well as experiencing a stall, steep stall, thermal soaring and a simulated winch launch failure.



The week wasn't just flying though, we also had to go and collect the gliders after they had landed in either the tractors or the gator (my personal favourite). This was always fun as being all 16 and 17 most of us had never driven before and so we were having to be taught how to drive while also towing a glider on the back which could be interesting as one tractor was very prone to stalling! Despite this, by the end of the week, with the help from club members, we had all figured out how to create a smooth operation and ensure no glider was left waiting for long.



After busy days we all were very grateful for the brilliant dinners cooked by John (who is now all of our favourite chef) and the equally as amazing desserts made by Sylvia.

Finally, I would like to say thank you to John and Sylvia for making all of us feel so at home, to Alan for being such an amazing instructor, to the club members at Camphill for welcoming us into their club and sharing stories and knowledge with us and finally to the Honourable Company of Air Pilots for making this experience possible. This week has solidified to me that I want to pursue a career in aviation and I am now joining a gliding club closer to me so I can continue gliding and hopefully go solo by next summer.

