

Resident enjoys the freedom and challenge of soaring



Sue Eaves of Dorchester prepares for takeoff in her LS4 glider. She is a member of the London Soaring Club.

by Wendy Spence
THE SIGNPOST

Like many things, the soaring season has been delayed

by the cold winter and wet spring. Sue Eaves of Dorchester looks forward to logging many hours catching a ride above the puffy white cumulus clouds this season. She is a member of the London Soaring Club that meets during the winter at Armatec in Dorchester and soars in the spring and summer.

Eaves first boarded a glider in her native England about 30 years ago. She's been interested in airplanes since she was a little girl.

"It's something that has always fascinated me. I like the freedom of it, the challenge of it."

Eaves finds it thrilling to fly alongside birds sometimes.

"It's you and the elements, really; reading the skies."

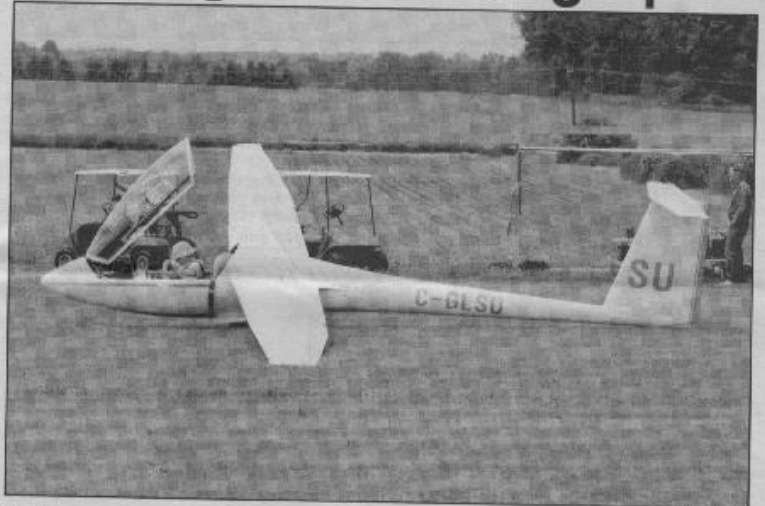
Eaves explains that the sport takes a lot of concentration.

"All the time, every minute, you're making decisions."

A power plane tows the Dorchester resident and her glider to about 2,000 feet and then releases the glider. She starts looking for thermals - columns

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Soaring exhilarating sport



Sue Eaves gets ready to soar above the clouds. In 1995 she set the record for the longest female flight - 500 kilometers - a voyage that took seven-and-a-half hours.

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of warm air that will keep her airborne.

Eaves says it's possible to go great distances using solar energy. She describes her flights as quiet and exhilarating. In 1995, she achieved the longest female flight record - 500 kilometers - a trip that took her seven-and-a-half hours.

The Dorchester resident says she has never been afraid of flying. Eaves enjoys spending about three to four hours a week up in the air during the soaring season. She says

the best months are usually May and June, but September is also beautiful because of the colours at that time of year. The humidity during the summer months tends to reduce visibility.

The Dorchester Library is in the process of getting a copy of the national soaring magazine called Free Flight for patrons to read thanks to Eaves, who is making arrangements with the Soaring Association of Canada.

The London Soaring Club (a non-profit organization) is

the only group of its type in the area and a number of Dorchester residents sign up, including members of the Dorchester Air Cadet squadron.

Transport Canada approved training and a licence are required to operate a glider.

A season opening celebration for the club, which flies out of the Embro airport, is scheduled for May 31. Introductory flights will be available, weather permitting.

For more information about the London Soaring Club, visit londonsoaringclub.ca.

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