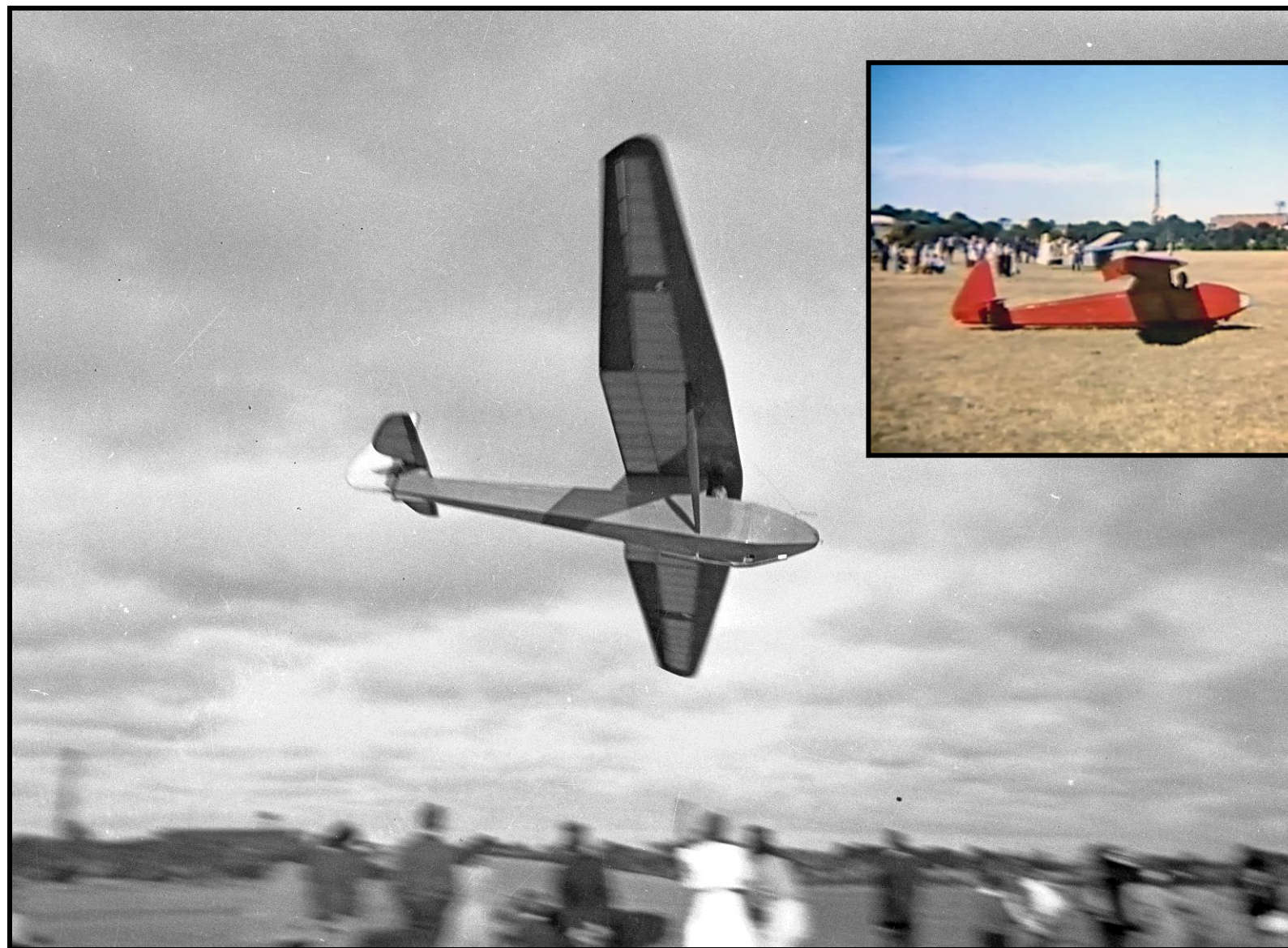




## Percy Pratt's Dunstable Kestrel, c.1937

Cat. No. 0007



[Pratt's Kestrel at AGM, Bacchus Marsh, 2011: photograph – B.Duckworth]

[Above: A Kestrel glider (Balsillie or Pratt?) at Belmont Common, Geelong, probably 1939-1940, photograph - R. N. Duckworth Collection; Inset: Percy Pratt's red Kestrel at Belmont Common, Geelong, c 1940s; photograph from R. N. Duckworth film]

**The Pratt Kestrel** was built in the late 1930s and was flown regularly by Percy Pratt at Geelong, Victoria. At the national rally organized by the Australian Gliding Association in December 1939 – January 1940 at the Belmont Common, Geelong, Pratt in his Kestrel recorded an exceptional 13 mile cross country flight of one hour 43 minutes reaching a height of approximately 5500 feet.

**The Dunstable Kestrel** was designed by W.L. (Bill) Manuel in 1935. It was the final development of the Wren series dating from 1931 by the same designer: in effect, it was a modified “Wren”.

The original Kestrel was built by the Dunstable Sailplane Company established in the United Kingdom by Manuel and C.H. Latimer-Needham. It was destroyed in a crash in 1938. Manuel sold plans for the Kestrel and one was built by W.E. Godson in the United Kingdom. It is understood that the Godson Kestrel has not survived. Three were built in Australia by Ric New, Andrew Balsillie and Percy Pratt. The New and Pratt Kestrels are held by the Australian Gliding Museum. The Balsillie Kestrel is located in the Moorabbin Air Museum, Victoria. One was built in the United States by Leslie Barton, Stanley Hrulinski and Thomas Nilon of Newark, New Jersey. The fate of this aircraft is unknown.