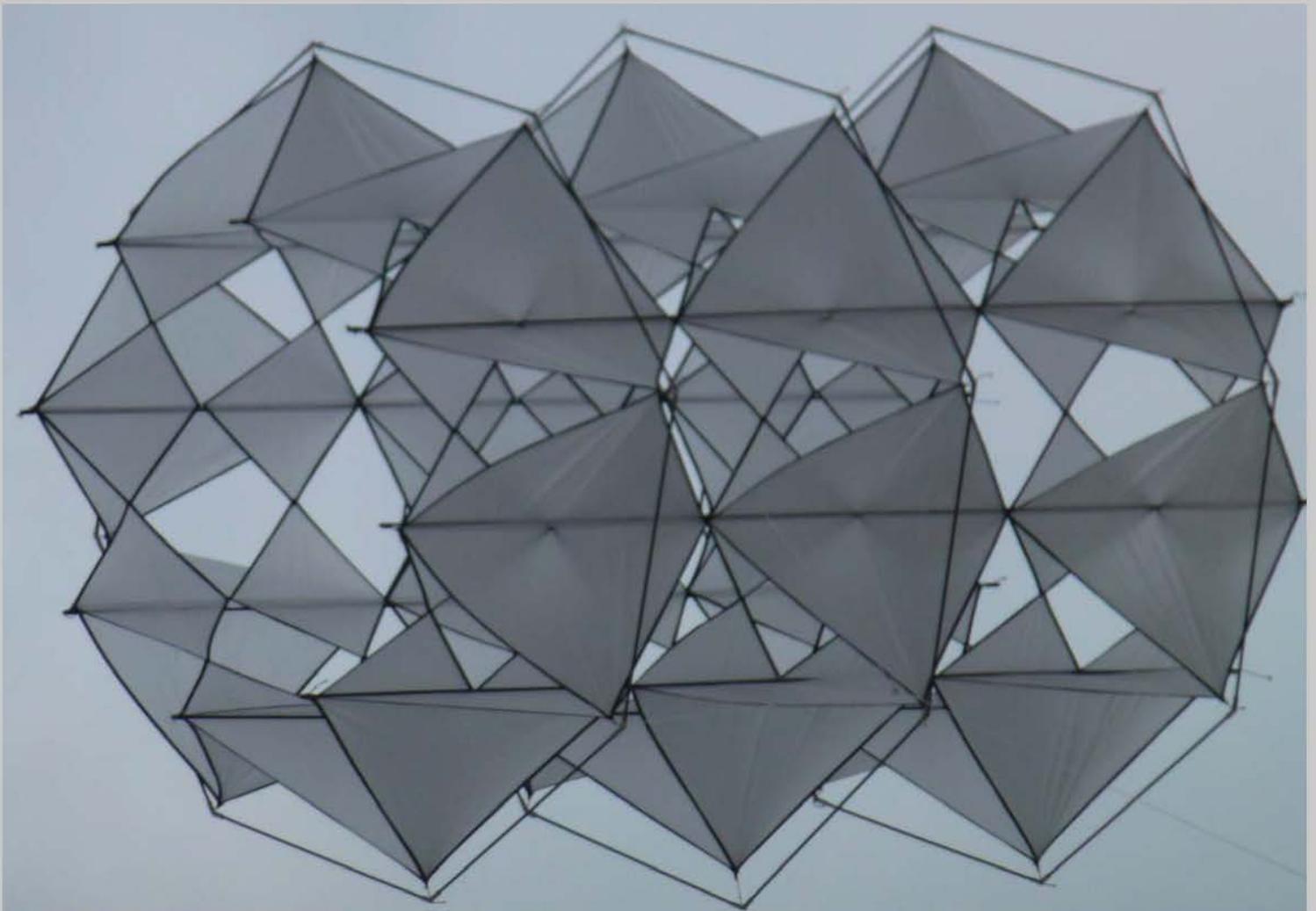


THE KITEFLIER

www.thekitesociety.org.uk



Issue 137

October 2013

£2.50

**Newsletter of the Kite Society of
Great Britain**

KITEWORLD

When The Wind Blows Think Of Us!



*Large Selection
Of Inflatable Kites
Available*



*HQ Flapping
Willie Worm*

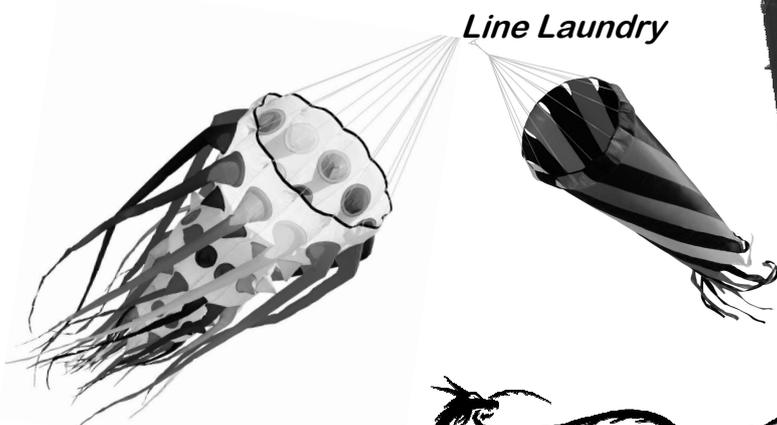


*Lot's Of
Flo Tail
Deltas*

*Keep checking our
website for
everything new in
2013*



*Sky Dog
Sweet Emotion*



Line Laundry



*Kites
For
All Ages*



*Kite
Accessories*



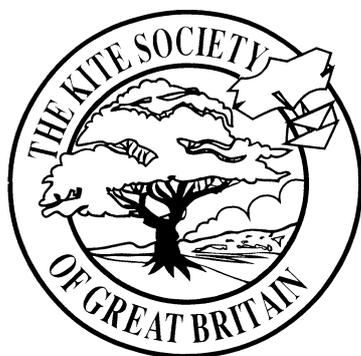
New Rev B2



*Prism
Stowaway
Diamond*

www.kiteworld.co.uk

01255 860041



Pothecary Corner	4
Bedford 2013	8
Llansteffan Fiesta	11
Bits & Pieces	12
Flute Kites of Vietnam	18
Bristol 2013	31
The Bear Facts	34
Portsmouth 2013	35
Future Events	40

Front Cover

**Riks Siemons Rolo 8 flying
at Portsmouth
International Kite Festival**

Photo by A Bloom

Dear Reader

2013 appears to have been a pretty good year for kite flying weather wise and with the return of both Bristol and Weston at least there is hope that large kite festivals can still happen.

Next year is the 35th anniversary of the magazine (in all its' incarnations) and the Kite Society. One of the ideas we had to celebrate this was to create a photo book containing kites, kite festivals and kite fliers from the past 35 years. The idea is to only include those items which have had a major impact on the kite scene during this period. So—thinking caps on and browse those old photos. Send your suggestions and photos (with a few words to explain why) to us either by mail or email.

Editorial

As we normally do around this time we look at the cost of subscription to the magazine. Doing the calculations we are covering the costs—just—for UK members. So no increase there. Unfortunately for our overseas members the postage rates have increased quite a lot since we last changed the rates. So see below for the new rates. But overall—remember—the post office have now gone private, so you can almost guarantee the prices will go up again. Use the electronic method—this will not be affected by postage changes!

As we go to press we see that The White Horse Kite Fliers are another group who are having problems getting enough material for a newsletter (this follows on from the Brighton Kite Fliers). We are going the same way, without the stalwarts who regularly contribute and a lot of time trawling the Internet for kite related information the pages would be rather empty. So—go on—send us something!

Jon and Gill

Membership Type	Fee
Individual	£12.00
Family - all members in the same household.	£13.00
Over 60 - Individual or Family	£11.00
Overseas - Europe and Surface Mail	£20.00
Overseas - Airmail	£25.00
Electronic Subscription (Individual or Family)	£5.00

Whilst every effort is taken to get the details correct The Kite Society cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions that occur. Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Editors or The Kite Society.

Pothecary Corner—Allan Pothecary

Ripping Yarns

Our friend and official photographer, Roger Backhouse, recently had one of his more expensive sport kites redesigned by one of the yapping canine friends we all love on a peaceful kite flying afternoon. When he related the experience down the phone he appeared less phased and far calmer than either Marilyn or I would have been had the same misfortune come our way.



However he had, by then, had the time to calm down; on the day he was reported to have gone through several shades of purple!

Photo by Lex Kraaijeveld

Not a Care!

Apparently, a carefree owner had let the dog run on ahead not bothering to catch up with it for some several minutes later - thank goodness that the mutt had not picked on a young child!!! Obviously, he was treated to a few verbal pleasantries from Roger and his team mates and did say he was sorry - but hey! Who had to pay for the kite? I remember writing here some years back now when Roy Reed similarly had one of his kites attacked and damaged and all the owner of the offending dog could offer was "It's only a kite!"

Lucky?

The fortunate part of Roger's mishap was the damaged kite was an Airdynamics T4 and company boss Peter Taylor takes great pride in the after sales side of the business.

Peter tells me that the majority of repairs he gets sent back are dog related and although none are usually easy jobs he manages to put the smile back on the owner's face.

Roger was inviting friends to say which part of the kite had been repaired and it was only through very close inspection that any sign was found! I know people never seem to get around to writing in to this magazine but I am sure there are many who would like to hear similar

anecdotes and if anyone knows of how to claim back the cost of repairs from these miscreants or, indeed, if anyone has!?

Cuban Lightweight

On more than one occasion at a kite festival I have heard the phrase "The wind has dropped - put on the sport kites!" Quite a few years ago when we were still very much beginners we were at a kiting event in North London when not even the 'Professionals' were able to do anything about that but, to be fair, the current technology meant that only the individual flyers could really do anything and often that meant a hastily organised competition of 360's where the pilot would inhabit the centre part of the arena running around like mad keeping his kite flying in circles no more than a few feet off the ground in circles right around the perimeter (360°) until he dropped from exhaustion or the kite hit the ground (usually both!). At the time we had some Sky Burner Super Ultralight Pro-dancers and with some bits of lightweight ribbon managed to pull off a semblance of a routine to music backing up across the arena and ending just before the wind picked up.

We Like Stable

Those kites do fly in Zero conditions but they are rather twitchy and therefore not too reliable for team or even pairs routines.

However we kept them in our bag for a long time even after we started to find other lightweight kites just to give a bit of variation.

Our search for such lightweight kites still continues right up to present days because we don't like to disappoint those who have taken the trouble to come along to an event and even more so those that have covered our expenses to get there.

Conte

We had discovered Airdynamics' T4 ultralight a few years back and found that the matching yellow and black gave us the ideal opportunity to finish the day with what has been our team and pairs signature tune for nearly twenty years - Conte Partiro discovered after watching the fountains of The Belagio in Vegas, This is exactly the same kite that Roger had butchered by a dog mentioned earlier.

This kite still needed a breath on your back to get a routine out of it and the problem with

Pothecary Corner—Allan Pothecary

windless conditions is that sometimes you will get a faint breeze pick up from the opposite direction for a few seconds and we are not quite as nimble as we used to be to keep ahead of it. So, after enviously watching Peter, Keith and Vee (The Airheads) polish off a ballet in no wind with Peter's latest exhibition kite - The Cuban, and memories of a couple of gigs this summer where we could only fly the T4 UL we decided that we would have to have some.

So called after the material they are made from The Cubans are super light and will give us just that bit more range of no wind where we can still keep to the timing on the music.

We ordered some matching Icarex ripstop for the tails, shortened by a few feet to keep down the weight without losing the spectacle and after I cut them out Marilyn embarked on her favourite job of sewing them together - she hates it really - to save on the complaints I would do them myself but then, I don't do fiddly!



Latest Materials

Peter Taylor is always looking at the latest materials and exploring ways of using them.

He tells me that airflow acts differently as it slips more easily over the material causing less drag making the kite fly a little faster in a little less wind. Cuban material is extremely light being available in 11gsm or 17gsm but is also very strong - it is made from a Mylar®/Dyneema®/Mylar® sandwich. According to Peter it sews like ordinary material but breaks needles more easily. The range of colours is very limited unless you want to buy a LOT of it.

Because of its properties you can't use the same design of another kite made from ripstop or Icarex, swap one for the other and expect it to run. Therefore Peter has made some alteration to the kite by different panelling and more sail area to the rest of the T5 Taipan range but still keeps it as part of that range with its full name of Taipan Cuban Zero.

Zero to Ten?

The Cuban is designed primarily for a wind range of 0 to 5 mph but with the latest SkyShark Zero Air tube for the tips, 2PT for the upper leading edge, 3PT Black Diamond for spreaders, SkyShark Nano for top spreader and P90 for the spine you can still feel safe in a gust of up to 10mph but with the kite generating full power in 3mph you will start to worry. The kite uses the same geometry as the T5 but, as said, with different sail and with a different bridle too.

Stay Up Design

The Cuban is designed so as not to 'flare out' when regaining lost ground from walking back. i.e. taking the kite to the top as high as it will go in front of you, pointing it down the window and walking/running forward.

As is the way, we have not had any absolute zero days since the kites were delivered but we have been near to that and were pleased enough to wish we had decided on owning some earlier in the season when visiting some schools on very hot and windless days. We don't expect to be able to do all of our routines but at least we will be in the air when nothing else will fly and, if nothing else we have learned over the years to adapt!

The Tilt Box

Just when you thought that you had seen all the variations of the simple box kite somebody goes and finds another. I wrote about the Krah Krah in the last edition (we have flown it much during the summer) and Austrian kite enthusiast and designer, Arno Gradwohl working through HQ Invento has come up with this interesting model. Oddly enough I have never owned a simple box kite of this design apart from the more complicated 'F-Box' and was quite pleased to get my hands on this one.

Different Shape

It is a diamond shape rather than square and the sides of each box are not concentric.

Pothecary Corner—Allan Pothecary

I won't go into the launch because everyone reading this will have experience of that already - I can't even compare it all I can say is that it does go up rather well once you get it to catch the wind and floats quite nicely catching the eye of the more experienced flyer once the rather odd shape is noticed.

There are two ways of assembling it but it is much more stable if it is put together with tow point between the long sides.



As I say it does look rather nice in the air but I found it difficult to get a photo showing it off as its best. This is probably due to it being white but that does add to it when the sun catches at different angles. Marilyn said that she would like it better if had more colour but I think that would de-

tract from its mystery.

The tilt box is well thought out and well made, retailing at under fifty pounds.

The Viper

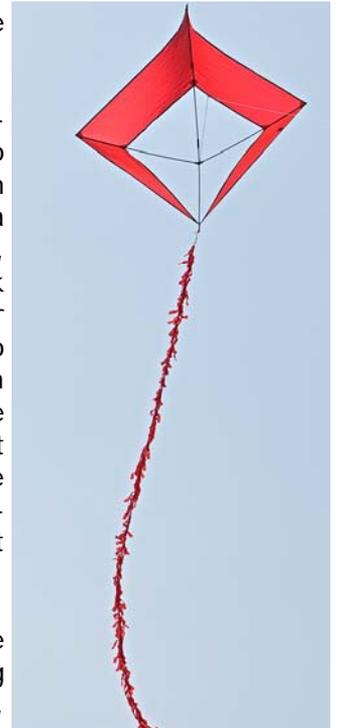
I imagine so called because of the way it snakes in the sky in a gentle wind with its shape reminiscent of the gaping jaws of a viper. Another by Arno Gradwohl this kite just wants to fly.

A sizable kite at around 2mtr x 1.5mtr it can still be flown safely on a light line. Unfortunately mine came with the bridle undone leaving me to spend rather too much time experimenting with different settings and positions. As with all my articles about kites I will, sooner or later, have a video on the "Close Encounters Kites You Tube" channel or through our website. The video, soon to go on as I sit here trying to get this article in on time, shows the re-

sult of a longish launch in a steady 8 to 10 mph breeze. I flew it at the August Jolly Up in a much more gusty wind and I still had people come over full of admiration and wanting to hold the line. I think that it was probably the way I had it set but the viper didn't want to rise to an acute angle but did get high with lots of line played out and it looked just as good up there as it did low and snaking over the ground.

The claim is that the Viper is good for up to twenty-four miles an hour - well it is mega vented I suppose and, as looks, will bend back and self adjust in higher wind, I didn't feel too comfortable with it in the higher gusts of the day. Also claimed is that without the tail the kite will fly upside down - OK but I haven't got that far with it yet.

Again as with any of the kites I review, I do hang on to them for a while, usually donating them to auctions or raffles in the end, but it is always worth asking me if I have one in the bag if you would like to try it or, if you know that Marilyn and I are going to the same event as you then drop me an email through the contacts page on our web-site with some advanced warning.



Weymouth

By the time this goes to print there will be more news.

I have many, many people in a forwarding email list that I give first-hand updates of the unravelling of events so far and I do try to keep a page on the site posted with all the latest news. Let me know if you wish to be included.

Weymouth and Portland Borough Council have been inundated with letters and emails from locals and kite flyers alike - some from as far away as Australia and Canada all extolling the virtues of not only this but any kite festival and the worth they bring to the towns that host them. I have been copied in on many of the

Pothecary Corner—Allan Pothecary

letters which bring home how we all feel about our sport/hobby/passion.

It is very unlikely that funding for future festivals will come from the council coffers but the feeling is that sponsors can be found (I have already seen evidence of that) and WPBC will lend their support and experience in continuing the event.

I should be able to report with greater clarity by the end of October but will gratefully accept offers of help in finding the funds in the meantime. That doesn't mean to say that I intend to run the event, far from it, I have never gone further than helping in a consultative manner with add ons such as running the web-site and vetting out the usual applications for paid travelling expenses with accommodation from the guy with the five quid kite from the Glasgow branch of Asda. Hopefully with Portsmouth and Bristol as strong as they were in the heady days of the nineties if not stronger - and Weston back in the calendar we can hope for a resurgence of events countrywide and I am sure that would have the support of the editors of this magazine.

One of the problems with taking charge of the running of a kite festival is that the people that have the tenacity, courage and capability of running such an event also have the intelligence of just how difficult this job can be and will probably avoid it!...and the very few that already successfully run one festival do not have the time to run two. Those few that do, or have done over the years, should, in my opinion, feature in the honours list! Not enough people appreciate the work and frustrations and therefore not enough gratitude is shown.

Now, if only we could get rid of all that red tape?

Chocolate Roll

Or the Roller Kite "Chocolate" to give its proper name is one of those kites HQ Invento occasionally bring out that is great value for money and so easy to just pick up from your favourite trader and be entirely happy with it.

We took ours to Crete as part of the 20kg bag of kites needed to maintain our kite 'fix' every day on the beach. Of course they did pull quite a crowd each day enabling us to have some interesting conversations or attempted conversa-

tions with those who have not bothered to learn to speak English.

This roller is a reasonable size at around four and a half feet square and is claimed to have a wind range of 3mph to 30mph although the lower would require a long launch and some management whilst it was up there. It is sturdily built simply made with pockets and loops to keep the 6mm carbon fibre rods in place against the rip-stop polyester sail(s).

Safety First

One of the reasons we liked that beach was because of the dependable eight to twelve mph steady breeze each day and a standing launch is quite possible in this, although I would advise gloves to be worn because once she goes - she goes!

Let out some line keeping the kite low to the ground before finally holding it tight and the roller accelerates up the window just like a two line sport kite. Once it reaches the settling point it will sit there, steady as a Rok (no apologies), with sufficient pull to take up all sorts of laundry.

This is one kite we shall be keeping and not passing on for charitable occasions. My opinion? Good VFM at under fifty pounds.

Allan Pothecary - Close Encounters Kite Display Team www.closeencounterskites.co.uk



Blue Skies over Bedford—Hugh Blowers

What a difference a year (or in this case a day) makes? Last year the festival was held over the now infamous Jubilee weekend, and in company with much of the nation, we withdrew with incipient trench foot, rising damp and an awful lot of clothes and kites to dry out. This year did not look much more promising as we left home with the temperature gauge showing a miserable 4.5C and in torrential rain that only began to relent as we drove into Bedford. This year we were all being accommodated at The Park Inn alongside the river, which has a somewhat more pleasant outlook than the landfill site at Elstow. According to the Mayor, the very best view of Bedford is from the Park Inn, primarily because you cannot see the Park Inn! It has to be said that the 60s redevelopment of the south side of the Ouse will not be winning many architectural prizes in years to come.

Bedford Council must be applauded for keeping the festival going in these difficult financial times, but inevitably there was some tightening of the purse strings, which did reduce the number of flyers. There were also some inadvertent savings when, through an administrative cock-up, a number of those meant to be there were not sent invitations, hence no children's workshop. It was therefore a small and select group that set about increasing the profits of the Park Inn bar on Friday evening. During the many conversations it became evident that, with the reduction in festivals and budget cuts for those that are continuing, the heady days are well and truly over and many more people are going back to putting their hands in their own pockets in order to attend festivals.

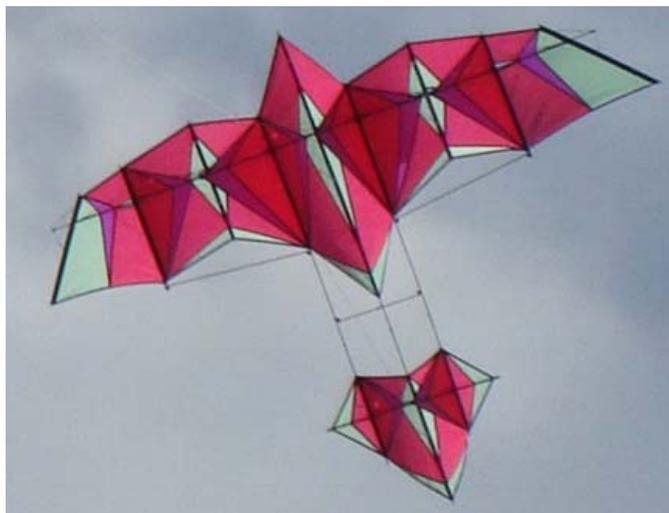


It was something of a novelty, and a most pleasant one, given what we have experienced over the last few weeks to wake up to sun streaming through the east facing hotel room window. Breakfast overlooking the river whilst watching the scullers and rowers go about their training is a lovely way to start the day before heading off to Russell Park. As per usual, the less said about the wind and the direction it was coming from, the better, but there was some, and soon there were kites in the sky. The only inconvenience for us, and it was one we were prepared to put up with was that we had loads of cold weather gear and waterproofs, but no provision for the warm and sunny weekend we were to experience.

Any festival that George Webster has an input into always starts off with an altitude sprint, which at Bedford is never less than a lottery. With little more than a breath anywhere below the trees, many kites did not make it into the air at all in the 70 seconds allowed, but the winner adopted an unusual tactic of 'holding her kite back'? With an ultralight Rok, Karen Gamble had no intention of letting her kite go too high, so allowed it to float off downwind about 15ft off the ground for the entire time (southern rules in operation) so that when it went up to settle she was the winner by considerably more than the proverbial 'country mile'. As well as a great selection of banners and intending to fly all day every day, Karen and Godfrey also have an apparently inexhaustible supply of historic, iconic and original kites that they dig out of their bags. This year it was an exhibition sized Rheims from Robert Brassington along with a smaller multicell box from his early days, a vintage Tri D and one of the legendary Helen Bushell's own kites.

Bedford and large inflatables don't really mix, but it is not for want of trying as Doug and Linda Richardson along with Brynn and Lesley Baggely found. To be effective, a pilot has to be way above the trees, which inevitably means a visit to aforesaid arboreal manifestations as Wolfgang Shimmelpfennig discovered to his cost on more than one occasion. Sadly, the lack of wind low down meant that his magnificent Marlin never really filled properly. Gerard Clement and Dominique Weill managed to find enough breeze to fly Dominique's 'baby', a Cassadio Cherub, which later demonstrated its ethereal origins by flying quite happily with just a headline and no flying line. Jan van Leeuwen had one of his 'Sneakers' flying happily, which was somewhat surprisingly misidentified as looking like an old Green Line London bus, but in his defence, he was at the far end of the arena. Christian Laskowski and Alex

Blue Skies over Bedford—Hugh Blowers



Ruger, who are soon to be married, provided Sum-Sums large and small, although the larger version again suffered from wind shadow from the trees and they, like all the other inflatable flyers, spent large portions of their weekend re-launching pilots, happily not from trees.

Bedford now seems to be the last stronghold of the sparred kite, from the 'bad accident in the kite bag' Hexenvase to the very traditional creations that were being flown by the guest from Vietnam. The Bobby Stanfield 'Celestial Navigator' revelled in the conditions once it was worked up above the trees, as did the numerous Ostende Birds. There was a modicum of trepidation involved in winding Lynn Blowers' 'Misty' up to the same giddy height, but after the serious attention it received at Dieppe from Steve Brockett, it behaved itself perfectly, a veritable transformation from the nervous and unpredictable madam she used to be. Another blast from the past was a Randy Tom original 'Nagel', while a much more modern art kite was the wonderful dragon image painted by Jeltse Bas and flown by Jackie Penney.

Malcolm Goodman, who organised the flyers, had introduced some sports kite flying for the first time in a long while so that the crowd had the opportunity to see some two-line flying from Keith and Vee Griffiths and quad line from The Flying Squad. Saturday it has to be said was not the best conditions for them, although with the aid of immensely long lines and cricks in their collective necks they were able to show off their skills. Even more ambitious was Paul Thoday, who we discovered used to live within a stone's throw of the Park. Trying to fly his stack of Flexis was ambitious as they are longer than the width of the arena so he had to launch them 'off wind' when there wasn't any. He did manage to get the stack into the air after a few attempts, but lack of puff

defeated him in the end.

After last year when we were just willing it to be 5.00pm, it crept up on us painlessly this time, so it was back to the hotel for a wash and brush up before returning to the Park for the evening. There are not many festivals where the entire hospitality package is as good as at Bedford, and this year was no exception. In order to ring the changes, Andy Pidgen had laid on a 'hog roast' this year, which apparently has something of a reputation in the area for its superb quality. I for one am not going to disagree. Perfectly cooked pork (it was pointed out that the hog roast would contain pork????) and unlimited supplies of the sweetest, juiciest, crunchiest crackling imaginable. With strawberries and cream and Austrian chocolates by courtesy of Kurt to finish with it was a contented group of flyers that trogged back to the hotel. Some of us were even more content to avoid the £6.50 for a glass of wine by a bit of surreptitious 'topping up'.

Sunday proved to be even sunnier and warmer with the temperature 15 degrees higher than it had been on Friday leading to the appearance of several pairs of legs (not Martin Lester's either), probably for the first time this year? Malcolm and George made the decision to have a different approach to the day by having themed displays every half hour or so as well as the free flying, after the obligatory sprint of course.

There was to be no repeat for Karen this time as the 'Sprint King' from Great Ouse had arrived. Such was the superiority of Steve that one of the two judges missed his kite completely as it was heading for orbit whilst the others were still struggling. A subtle shift in the wind, more to the length of the arena, allowed plenty of room for long launches and the opportunity for a decent flight when the wind held and a gently saunter when it dropped. No mad running this year thank goodness, unless it was with Iqbal's dragon or the plethora of 'Lester legs' handed out by Gerard Clement and enthusiastically towed by flyers and associated offspring. It was great to see so many youngsters (and a few not so youngsters) having a good time.

Like with the 'Lester legs' the themed flights involve a great number of flyers, some of whom may have an appropriate kite, or more often are just happy to fly one supplied for the occasion. The deltas ranged from the highly sophisticated Dan Leigh design to the totally unsophisticated Ikea rainbow, with every possible variation in between, but a delta is still a delta. 'Bird kites' broadened the horizon somewhat with highly real-

Blue Skies over Bedford—Hugh Blowers

istic forms like those from Martin Lawrence to the vaguely bird like Ostende bird, which bears comparison with the famous quotation that 'a camel is a horse designed by a committee'. Three original George Peters' Cloudbirds were joined by one faux version and several related homebuilds. Two very rare 'birds' that have not been seen in the sky in Britain for many years were Steve Brockett's Blackbirds and No Two Feathers. Oddly they could have been seen for many years suspended in the atrium of the Castle Theatre at Wellingborough, just 20 miles away. Now rescued from decay under the stage, the size of them made a definite statement in the restricted arena space, and all credit to Paul Mellows for recognising and rescuing them.

Now, a question. If asked, who would you suggest is the kitemaker most represented in kitebags at a festival? Judging by the number in the sky, it would be difficult not to put Robert Brassington into top spot. There were more of his kites available than there were people to fly them, with Chris Beal down from the north and the Penneys from the east putting something like a dozen and a half together between them. Birds, fish, cells, angels, batleths, roks, deltas, trains, Bi-d, Tri-D, and the most gorgeous fan, the list just went on, and there were still more waiting on the sidelines.

Another almost 'one man' display was with the Edos. It was lovely to see Baz Vreswijk, who has not been having a great time of it lately, along with several of his superbly crafted kites. Happily there was just enough breeze to keep them in the air with a bit of judicious backward strolling. The Swifts have a wonderful example of his work in the art deco style, which contrasts the vibrancy of red with a range of grey shades that work to perfection. What did not quite work as well was their bear bunging on the Sunday, which suffered again from the fickle Bedford wind, with their rig lifter at

one stage thermalling overhead. Steve Billings dropped his bears from an ancient Morgan Mega delta and on Saturday had the unusual experience of seeing the cunning hang glider he had released fly upwind.

Although the wind was from a more helpful direction it was really mucking about at times, but even so, Paul Thoday managed to get his Flexi stack up and put in a decent flight. Not so lucky were Keith and Vee who had wind, but no music, then after a delay while the CD man plugged in the right leads, music but no wind and no more arena to back up into. Flying Squad, by dint of using long lines again were able to fly several routines. When fed up with trying to fly two and four line kites in the conditions, they were all getting as frustrated as the rest of us with trying to fly single line kites as well. It did not work the other way though, as we are only too aware of our limitations with Revs and sports kites.

Given what we have had so far this year, the day had been relatively hot, so it was appropriate that the final themed fly was for kites of Australian and New Zealand extraction as Karen Gamble reckoned it was still seriously cold! Karen and Godfrey were on hand to provide all manner of decorated Tri-Ds for willing helpers, as well as a selection of other Antipodean kites, including some of Robert's that had not made it first time round. The oddest was the Helen Bushell original, which is so floppy and flexible that it floats, rather than flies, which Godfrey reckoned was a true reflection of Helen's personality.

As usual, the day finished with a 'get it up in the sky' finale for anything and everything, which only left a mammoth packing up session when the festival was wound up. Ignoring the difficulties of flying in the Park, which we all accept, it was a pretty damned good event in all respects. The Mayor is enthusiastic; the crowd come in their thousand, Mrs Pidgen makes exceedingly fine cakes, especially the coffee sponge and we all have a great time, as long as it isn't raining, and it wasn't, so here's to next year.



Llansteffan Fiesta 2013—Neil Little

Llansteffan Fiesta 2013 – Kite Flying Demo held at Llansteffan Beach (The Green) Football Pitch, Carmarthenshire, South West Wales.

The objective was a follow up to The Llansteffan Fiesta 2012 – Kite Flying Demo

Session 1: Sunday 28th July 2013 @ 15:00 – 17:00

The weather was sunny but the southerly wind of 13-22 mph was a bit too strong to demonstrate bamboo and paper kites. My wife Dianne and my daughter Nia helped me.

We put up a couple of decorative single line kites to show where we were flying. The start delayed by a very heavy shower of rain at which we sheltered in the car. A Dutchman, Ben, who was familiar with stunt kites, joined us and he helped us to launch a roller, with a rainbow spinner as line laundry and also a Malvern Square with its long pretty tail.

I then concentrated on Mylar and Ripstop fighter kites:

1. Mylar Tony Slater Fighting Fish – not easy to spin in the strong wind;
2. Mylar Stafford Wallace Indian fighter - this gave the best performance of all the kites in the prevailing conditions;
3. Homemade Mylar bamboo and fibreglass Indian Star – quite good considering;
4. Homemade Mylar bamboo and fibreglass Korean Square - Very fast flying - too fast in the 22mph wind! Needed 2" bowing to fly.

The audience turnout was better than last year, considering the other events in the Fiesta that were held at around the same time.

About five family groups came onto the field and actively participated, while other visitors and locals watched from the gate.

We allowed some of the children to enjoy flying some small single line kites under supervision. I concentrated on demonstrating the fighter kites and a few adults tried flying the Stafford Wallace Indian fighter with some success.

Another observer was a real Red Kite, which flew over to inspect what was going on in his territory. Unfortunately the wind was too strong for me to fly my Karl Longbottom Red Kite kite to keep him company.

All the participants enjoyed their afternoon and expressed their thanks to us.

George, who brought his grandson, who said that he had thoroughly enjoyed flying the kites, made the best comment. He was able to fly the Indian fighter with the minimum of demonstration and instruction. I was delighted to find out that he had recently moved to the village.

Session 2: Sunday 4th August 2013

The weather was heavy rain and strong gusting winds in the morning, so I thought that the session would be abandoned. However the rain stopped at about 15:00 and I rushed off down the road to the football pitch.

My wife and daughter were unable to accompany me and I decided to at least measure the wind speed and to do a test flight with a fighter kite but not put up any other kites. The wind speed at that stage was about 14mph gusting to 30mph and later it peaked at 22mph with gusts over 30mph.

About two minutes after flying the kite two people turned up, so I decided to continue while the rain stopped.

The kites flown were

1. Merlin Kites 'Tyke' – robust and flew OK with good control;
2. Mini Mac - designed for high winds, but too skittish in the gusty wind;
3. Midi Mac – Much better control;
4. Tony Slater Pentagon – too big for wind strength;
5. Homemade Korean (1995) – Fast and quite good. Had to release lots of line to turn it. Got caught up on top of a tree – pulled and flew off ok. The second time (on the same tree) took hard pulling and eventually came off. Surprisingly no damage was done – Mylar, glass fibre and bamboo with freezer tape is very resilient;
6. Tony Slater Chevron – very good control.

The participants were George and his son. George was able to fly the Chevron kite OK. Gavin (12 yrs old) and his mother with a neighbour. Gavin quickly learnt the bridling knot and how to launch a kite. Another observer was the Red Kite, which flew over again.

Everyone enjoyed themselves and thanked me very much.

We finished at 17:05 and the rain returned at 17:25. An Excellent Day!



Bits & Pieces

From The Register:

Base stations get high on helium, ride MUTANT kite-balloons at the football

A team of European boffins has hoisted a mobile network base station into the air from a balloon/kite combination. Yet unlike similar schemes, this one is intended for everyday use, not just for emergencies.

In a paper published by Cornell University, the team demonstrates that modern small cell technology can be combined with existing low altitude platforms (in the shape of a helium balloon with a kite strapped to the bottom) to create a stable radio network to provide extra coverage for special events.

While most schemes have focused on emergency relief and relaying broadband internet, the helikite-based system is intended to supplement existing LTE networks to provide coverage during big events like football matches, music festivals, or even in overcrowded places like London train platforms.

Attaching cellular base stations to balloons was old news way before Google made it trendy.

The Helikite design - a kite strapped to a helium-filled balloon - is owned by Brit Sandy Allsopp and it's not the first time they've been suggested as a communications platform. A Helikite has more lift than its size dictates, and the inventor promotes them as a radio platform among other things. It's the integration with existing networks which makes this development significant.

Everyone seems to be gazing skyward for connectivity these days, given the expense of laying fibre optic cables and the latency inherent in reaching all the way to orbit. But it's hard to see how kites or balloons can be anything but a stop-gap solution while we wait for proper connectivity to arrive.



KiteRight

KiteRight is the world's first charity dedicated to using kite sports in all its formats to help, sup-

port, educate and develop people of all ages with physical, mental health or learning challenges.

Gary Hawkins, 46 years old, Senior Nurse for people with a Learning Disability in the NHS specialising in working with people with complex behaviour problems.

I have been kitesurfing, land kiting and wakeboarding for about 10 years on and off as work allows. I had ADHD as a child and am dyslexic and dyspraxic. I personally suffer from Cyclothemia and therefore have always suffered from frequent bouts of severe depression for which I am on medication and sometimes require treatment from the community mental health team.

I Qualified 10 years ago as a flying instructor and commercial pilot but eventually came back to the NHS. I am a Suzy Lamplugh Trust personal safety trainer and am also a trainer in physical interventions, restraint and positive behaviour support.

I set-up KiteRight in April 2012 as I felt there was a huge portion of the population that for one reason or another were unable / scared or unsure how to access the sport.

The charity has two main aims:

Firstly to increase access and participation in kite sports for these individuals, increasing their self worth, self esteem, community access and participation. The word "can't" is not used in your vocabulary as we believe everyone no matter how severe their disabilities or challenge "can" participate in one way or another. We also reinvest in those who want to be involved in the KiteRight process, by helping them to become assistant instructors, or other positions within the charity all the way up to board level.

Secondly to work with academic institutions such as Bournemouth University to engage in and commission on clinical research as to why Kite Sports can have such a profound effect physically and emotionally on so many people. This will involve Psychology, Physiotherapy, Occupational therapy and Nursing students and academics. We aim to publish research findings in academic and sports journals.

We also engage with other student programmes

including event management, product design, graphics, film and media and engineering.

We are about working with EVERYONE and supporting using kite sports to make a real, measurable and meaningful difference to peoples lives, wellbeing and futures.

High hopes ? Impossible dreams ? Unachievable goals ? ... Many may think so...

So be part of something special and lets prove the cynics wrong and show that a community, national and international can push for social change, acceptance and support for the many who would not normally be able to access the sport and make a difference to their lives.

WeatherFlow Wind Meter



Works with iPhone, iPad, iPod, and all major Android devices. The WeatherFlow Wind Meter is the first of its kind by a US-based manufacturer, having been engineered here then calibrated at the University of Florida's Aerospace Engineering

Department. Needless to say, they've been around, they know windmeters, and this revolutionary product is no exception to their standard to view and share live-action weather.

The Wind Meter works with a FREE App for your mobile iOS or Android devices recording wind speed (average, lull, and gusts), wind direction, and location. Precision readings (+/- 0.5% or 0.1m/s at up to 15 degrees off axis) in m/s, mph, knots, km/h, and beaufort scales with range from 2mph to 125 mph. Not only does the WeatherFlow Wind Meter come in rugged eco-friendly packaging that doubles as a handy storage case, it fits in your pocket when not in use. When attached, you can share on-site reports with WeatherFlow, Instagram, Vine, Twitter, SMS, Email, or Facebook.

\$34.95 from kiteboarding.com

The Kite Museum, Canada

Posted by George Paisiovich on my kite museum web-site:

After five years on Pelee Island, we closed the kite museum on Pelee Island. The island people are wonderful and everyone is encouraged to visit them. For us, the age, composition and construction of various items require a more controlled interior environment.

So now what? After months of consulting and reflection, it comes down to this: Do I want to spend an intensive next few years establishing a new museum and then make the commitment to keeping it going for years after that into my late 60's and 70's, and then to figure out how to leave it after me? I have always said - though not really practiced as much as I should have - that my priorities are father, husband, provider, and then kites.

At 57, I have decided that no I do not wish to continue down this path, and now is a logical time to change direction. I have decided that I shall focus on windworks and exhibitions, and to narrow my kiting focus to North American "Dime Store Diamonds" to assemble the largest and best documented body of work - kites, documents, media, photos, etc. - which can be left to a larger North American institution as I get older.

I will also keep some very special kites, and anything which was donated shall be gifted to a responsible home.

So what have I decided on next steps? Consolidate my collection in one warehouse and begin to inventory everything I have. This is underway, though I need to schedule some "play days" for friends to come and help me sort through my stuff, see what needs repairs and then ready them for cataloguing. For them, it may be fun as "kite geeks" to hold and explore a number of kites they probably have never seen and won't again.

Identify duplicates and items which do not fit into the new vision and sell them.. I will allow friends to contact me about their interest and try to figure out the fairest mutual means, after that then via the Internet. In particular, I shall scale back my list of exhibits to tour to: Ray "Good Stuff" Bethell - Be Inspired!, Dime Store Diamonds - Paper Kites of North America' But-

Bits & Pieces

terFLYKites to FlightThe Kite Library Pictures, Photos, Prints, Postage, Pins and Post Cards Galleries, The Bells of Baddeck.

So what kinds of things will be for sale? Most of my duplicates and items not part of the above. For instance, traditional Japanese, Chinese, Asian kites and banners; Gibson Girls kites/kits; Stieffs, signed Waldorfs, Tlrlbys, Powell, store bought kites from the past decade; kites from various countries and sports; duplicate documents and images from the past 200 years; string, winders, accessories; and two hang gliders someplace and one of I think only two Transpanier painted foils, and a bunch surprise items I have forgotten about ; -))

Check back to my web-site if you wish to for further news and updates, or contact me at george@kitemuseum.com.

Seen in New Scientist

Wanna watch your volcano danger zone? Go fly a kite

Kites have been used by the citizen scientists on the Caribbean island of Montserrat to take pictures of the volcano which dominates, and constantly changes, their island, threatening their homes and lives.

Montserrat's Soufrière Hills volcano has been causing earthquakes and puffing out gas and ash since it blew its top in 1995, burying the capital, Plymouth, in more than 12 metres of mud.

Active volcanic landscapes are normally monitored from a plane or a helicopter, but the cost usually makes surveys infrequent. So some local people have taken aerial photography into their own hands, with the help of researchers from the University of East Anglia in Norwich, UK, the British Geological Survey in Edinburgh and the Montserrat Volcano Observatory in Salem.

These volunteers have been flying ultra-robust GoPro HD Hero2 cameras attached to kites over the Belham River valley. The images are stitched together using separate kite-shots and have been used to rule out the possibility of building a bridge across the valley.

X-Winder on Kickstart

Make carbon fibre tubing and other composite parts at 80% less cost. An affordable, small scale filament winder for the desktop.

The X-Winder is the World's first small scale, desktop, affordable filament winder. Build custom carbon fibre parts at a fraction of the cost of commercial products. Filament winding is a proven manufacturing technology that has been around for decades - but it has never made it to the desktop level - until now.

Potential Huge Cost Savings

The X-Winder builds custom parts from raw materials in their most basic form: filament and epoxy resin glue - without costly moulds or complicated lay up methods. Building parts from raw materials provides huge cost savings. For example, a 1" diameter carbon fiber tube typically costs about \$20 per foot when purchased from a commercial vendor.

Whether it can make kite spars small enough to be of practical use is yet to be determined! Then there is the cost—the 4 foot model costs \$1500 including some supplies.

Seen on Instructables.com

Build a Delta kite from an Umbrella.



In this case a dual line sports kite!

The author writes: First of I have to admit, that when I started working on this project, I was mainly driven by my ego. I would appreciate it, if any of my ideas become valuable for somebody.

So, why would anyone build a kite from an umbrella? The fabric used in common umbrellas is very light and durable Nylon. For this build I used an old and broken pocket umbrella, I had

lying around. Also on rainy days people often leave their umbrellas in public places, so you can grab one for free!

This project set a lot of challenges concerning kite-design and minor problems, which were either solved or developed throughout the build.

The step by step process is shown on the web site—how successful it is we leave to you to decide!

Cody Statue at Farnborough

The formal unveiling ceremony of the Cody Statue on the Farnborough Road took place on Wednesday 7 August, the centenary of Cody's death. The event was a great success, everyone seems delighted with the statue and we thank all those who took part.

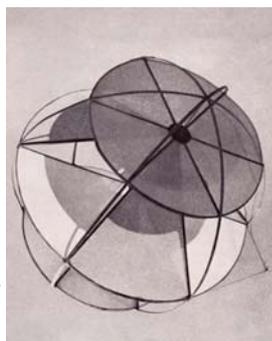


The statue by the side of the Farnborough Road is close to where Cody achieved the first powered flight in the country. Hundreds gathered for the unveiling, including members of the Cody family and enthusiasts from around the world.

It is planned to complete the coverage of the area adjacent to the statue with engraved bricks. Many are already in place but it is still possible to buy a brick. Go to www.codystatue.org.uk to see how.

Seen on Blogspot.com

One of the blogs seen recently shows a number of College Kites from 1957. The images come from the University of Illinois "Kite Derby Day" All the entries shown are from the sophomores in the department of



Industrial Design.

<http://mondo-blogo.blogspot.co.uk/2010/08/college-kites-1957.html>

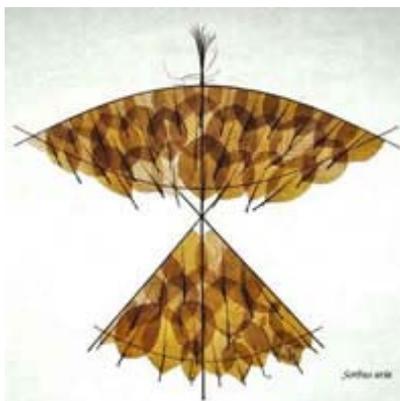
Art in the Ark, Basingstoke.

They are current running an exhibition (until November 8th) titled Surface. One of the artists is John Browning—www.johnbrowningkites.org

John, now retired from his profession as a Chemist, has been making kites for over 40 years. His favourite media have always been natural materials – paper, silk, bamboo.

Inspired by Claude Lea Comallonga in France, he took up papermaking and the use of plant materials to create his kites.

"Living things are collected, cooked and arranged into structures which capture their beautiful patterns.



The materials themselves suggest arrangement and balance and they are brought together in shapes, colours and textures which are pleasing to the mind and to the eye and which...fly!

Leaves, petals, fibres and plants are incorporated into many different kite creations. Then, when the wind is kind, these creations are put into the sky. They find their element – the air – the place where they belong – where they are free and they become... kites!"

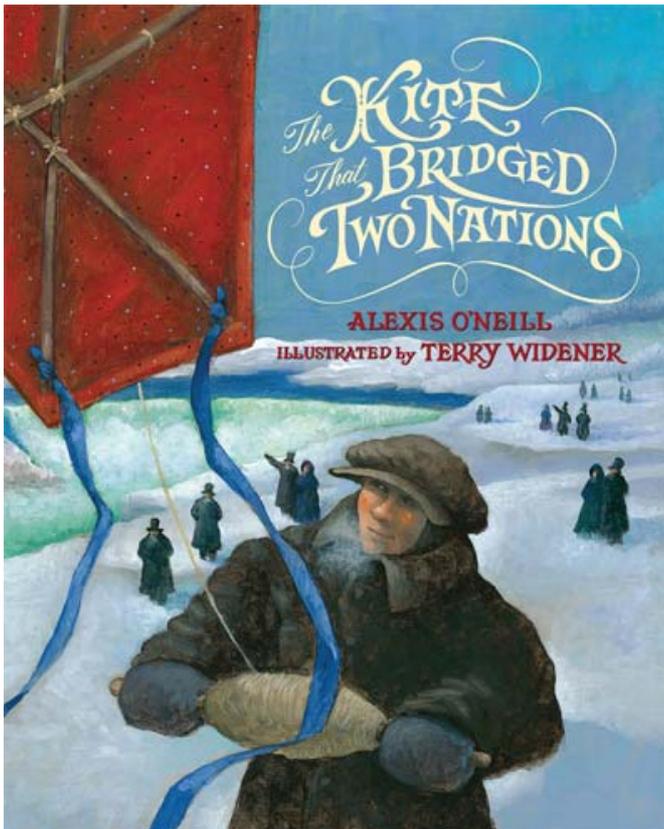
Books

The Kite that Bridged Two Nations

This soaring and poetic picture book is based on the true story of Homan J. Walsh, an ordinary boy born in Ireland and raised in Niagara Falls, NY. In 1848, Homan entered a kite-flying contest. The winner's kite string would span Niagara Falls and bridge the United States and Canada. Despite biting cold and strong winds and against tremendous odds, Homan Walsh won

Bits & Pieces

the contest, earning him a place in history. His success also led to the building of the first suspension bridge across the Falls, linking the two neighbouring countries. Author Alexis O'Neill and illustrator Terry Widener worked closely with experts on both sides of the Falls, and the book includes author's note, timeline, bibliography and further resources



Available from Amazon.

Firebox.com

Nice little print by Andy Fairhurst. "He got trapped in a cave full of bats (a 'bat cave' if you will) when he was just a young boy and his father fished him out. This is about as much as we know of Bruce Wayne's turbulent childhood, but what of the good times?"



Did he play conkers? Stuff his face with mud? Did he go to scouts with the Scarecrow? Learn to ride a bike? And just when did his voice get

that deep?"

From £19.99

Got some left over kite line?

Skythreads Jewelry (USA based) has a use for them. Kelly Rogers—years working at a local kite shop in Harwich, Massachusetts and a deep love for kites inspired her to create jewelry made from kite string. Find them on Etsy.



Kite Surf Record—Hayling Island

From the Portsmouth News.

Inspirational entrepreneur Sir Richard Branson took to the water with ease as he set a world record on Hayling Island. The billionaire was at the beach along with hundreds of kite-surfers who were attempting to set a new Guinness World Record for the most amount of kite-surfers to surf for a mile.

In total, 318 kite-surfers took to the waves for the challenge, and many carried on afterwards to complete a 46-mile sponsored kite surf along to Lancing, West Sussex, to raise money for three charities – Virgin Unite, Snow-Camp and the RNLI.

Sir Richard said: 'Kiting to me is the best sport in the world. It's a great way of keeping fit, it's great fun. You are bouncing across the waves, away from mobile phones and modern life. And it looks magnificent.'

Sir Richard's 90-year-old mum Eve Branson was on the beach in support and sounded the horn to mark the start of the challenge. The Virgin boss is no stranger to record-breaking. Last year, he broke the record for being the oldest person to kite surf across the English Channel.

Sir Richard said: 'It's wonderful, because of the amount of kites we have had down here. We're planning to make this an annual event.' He added: 'Next year we hope to be back again and every year for some years to come.'

Peter Powell Kites.

Following in the footsteps of Peter, his sons, Paul and Mark have spent time sourcing the fin-

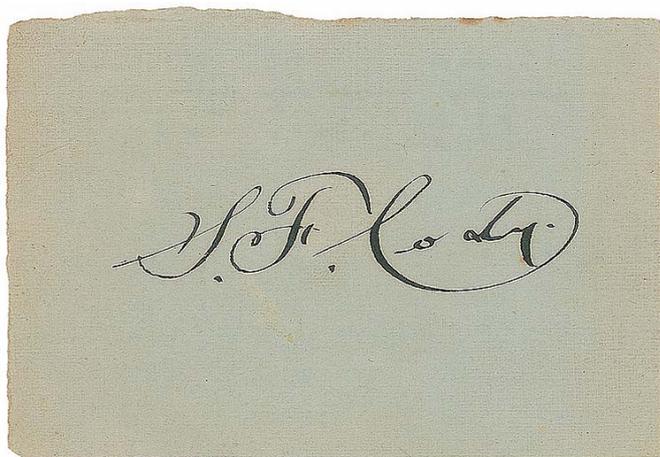
Bits & Pieces

est materials to reproduce the classic design that is the Peter Powell Kite™. It has gone through rigorous testing to ensure that it is as good if not better than the original kite itself.

Have a look at the web site www.peterpowellkites.co.uk

From the Auction Sites

Invaluable.com. Lot 414: Samuel Franklin Cody



Early pioneer of manned flight (1867-1913) known for his man-lifting 'war kites' and the development of early airplanes for the British military. Bold vintage ink signature, "S. F. Cody," on an off-white 4.25 x 3 album page. In fine condition.

Ebay. 2 very rare vintage kites.



Cambridge Combat kite (includes original linen control lines/sterring bar. (Pocket folded) leaflet an instruction sheet included.

North Pacific Flying Tiger Glite (Glider Kite). Glider or single line kite can also be converted to dual line stunt kite. Instruction sheet and 9m tail included.

Both polythene sails are fracturing & are included only as templates for replacement. Both owned from new and have been flown, repaired, adapted.

Also included us a copy of 'Kite Combat Rules' (Cambridge Leisure).

Asking price £40.

Flying Paper

A documentary film by Nitin Sawhney and Roger Hill An uplifting story of Palestinian youth in the Gaza Strip on a quest to shatter the Guinness World Record for the most kites ever flown. A film co-produced with young filmmakers in Gaza.

The film opens in the small village of Seifa in the northern border area of the Gaza Strip with Israel. Two young girls fly a handmade paper kite down the road leading to their village. Musa a 14 year old boy and unofficial leader of the village youth calls for one of his cousins to run off and gather the paper and flour paste needed to construct a kite.

Musa and his wise-cracking sister Widad begin the construction of a newspaper kite while the children of the village sing and watch eagerly. Widad challenges Musa to a build-off to determine who is the best kite maker in the family, the stakes of the sibling rivalry are set. Tomorrow they will split into teams, build kites, and challenge each other at Waha Beach at sunset to determine whose kite reigns supreme.

Throughout the film Musa and his sister Widad remain at the heart of the story as we follow their developments in life through the rich Palestinian tradition and cultural expression of kite making.

The film climaxes on Thursday, July 29, 2010 on the shores of Waha Beach as thousands of Palestinian youth gather in baited anticipation for the launch of over 7,500 kites. One year after the kite festival we return to Seifa to discover big changes in the lives of Musa and Widad.

There is a chance to see it in the UK at November 29-30, 2013: Festival Screening: CinePalestino Festival, Showroom Cinema, Sheffield, U.K. The festival is produced by Showroom Cinema, one of Europe's largest independent cinemas, and the Yorkshire Palestine Cultural Exchange.

Diều Sáo - some preliminary notes on the Flute Kites of Vietnam

Prepared by Uli Wahl (Germany) and Paul Chapman (UK)

Summary and Acknowledgements

This paper has been prepared as a result of two weeks in April 2011 spent in and around Hanoi where the authors searched for, and found, the Vietnamese *Diều Sáo* flute kite. The search would not have been successful had it not been for a great deal of earlier research and for the support of our generous Vietnamese friends. These friends are mentioned in the text but here we would especially like to thank Mr Quan Hang Cao for his unstinting assistance, translations and patient explanations.

In this paper, we have tried to bring together all that we know about the *Diều Sáo*. The main body of the text deals with our experiences, with the old legends and stories, with the extraordinary *Diều Sáo* event at Bá Dương Nội village and with our thoughts and concerns for this important aspect of Vietnamese life, centred, as it is, on the ancient rice farming culture. The appendices contain our edited notes on the specifics; the places, the people and especially on the techniques and types of kite flutes and the kites themselves.

As will be explained in the paper, we acknowledge that this represents only a preliminary review. We know that there are more kites, more flutes and more legends and villages to explore. Hopefully they will be found on a later visit, sometime in the future.

1. Introduction

The Vietnamese flute kite is not well known outside Vietnam, even among kiteflyers. Today, when it is mentioned, many people shake their heads or, if they suppose some knowledge, talk vaguely about paddy fields, buffalo and strange sounds that evoke the spirits of the wind. The aim of our project was to explore the flute kite¹; to find it and to try to understand it. We started with what we imagined was a strong knowledge base. We knew something of these kites and their flutes through old images in the Western literature. Uli had visited the Musée de l'Homme in Paris and, while being knowledgeable about Armengaud's work², there were no actual kites to be seen in the museum. Earlier we had met Vietnamese kiteflyers in France at the international kite festival at Dieppe and had seen and heard their wonderful musical kites. Then, and importantly, Uli discovered details and documents that drew parallels with other wind-blown instruments. He made and flew his own versions of both the kites and flutes. Paul, while not being so strong on Aeolian aspects or Vietnamese kites, is a knowledgeable kite historian and has travelled widely in the Far East on his own kite explorations. Together we formed a strong team with a background of academic research,



Figure 1 Old and new images of Vietnamese Flute Kites

¹ It is as well to explain our definition of the flute at this early stage. To many, the flute is the assembly of Aeolian devices that we saw attached to a stick and suspended above the kite. In fact these assemblies may contain several individual flutes. And these individual flutes generally have two separate chambers, each with its own mouthpiece and tuned individually to provide a pleasing beat when flying in the air. We only saw one flute, the Friendship flute made by Mr Nguyễn Hữu Kiên, that was more complex and which comprised two sets of flutes within one flute body. We hope that the reader will take this explanation into account when reading the descriptions.

² Armengaud Christine. *Musiques Eoliennes*. Manu Presse. Paris, 1983, pp.33-35. The French Aeolist's "Bible"

open minds and a willingness to learn. Importantly, we are both kite makers and this common ability removed many potential barriers.

For reasons of cost, timing and logistics we were only in Vietnam for two weeks and had, as our principal objective, the traditional kite flying festival at Bá Dương Nội village³. Our preparatory work had put us in touch with Mr Quan Hang Cao from Hanoi and he proved invaluable with his ability to open doors, make introductions and provide an expert Vietnamese insight into what would otherwise have been unintelligible to us. Not unsurprisingly, our time in and around Hanoi was far too short as every day produced another insight, another adventure and another chance to make copious notes before bedtime. By the time we had left we had already recognised two things. Firstly, that we had collected more information on the Vietnamese *Diều Sáo*, as this is the Vietnamese name for the flute kite, than has been previously published and, secondly, that understanding anything Asian is like exploring an onion; there are so many layers and each layer brings not only greater understanding, but also contradictions. We recognise now that we have only been exposed to the “first layer of this complex onion”.

At first sight it seemed a simple matter to prepare a short note on these Vietnamese kites since they initially appeared to be simple kites (*Diều*) equipped with Aeolian windblown flutes (*Sáo*). This is not the case. We found that there are many types of kite and many types of flute and, like so many crafts, there are trade secrets only known to particular villages, or individuals. Collecting the documentary material and making sense of it has, therefore, been something of a challenge. Inevitably there has to be a certain amount of cross-referencing and this has defined the structure of our paper. The main body attempts to be an informative narrative while the detail, comprising primarily our cryptic notes and observations, is given in the appendices.

We only visited North Vietnam, and were based in Hanoi where we stayed in the excellent Freedom Hotel, situated on the edge of the Old Quarter and just a stone’s throw from Hoan Kiem Lake famous for its ancient giant turtle. Hanoi seemed exotic. The flavour was immediately Asian, but with a strong Parisian influence where we could wind down over a glass of iced civet coffee. Once out of town, the French influence evaporated.

In retrospect, and after meeting many people, visiting many places, finding kite makers and flute makers as well as experiencing the kite ceremony and kite flying at Bá Dương Nội village, we were left perplexed. We had hoped to discover everything about this elusive onion but realise now that we had barely seen below its surface. It is for this reason that we title our findings as Preliminary. They are what we saw but they are certainly not complete and, in all probability, there may be misconceptions despite the efforts of our helpful and hospitable hosts. We hope that the Vietnamese people forgive us for any errors⁴ and we look forward to their input for corrections and further insight.



Figure 2 Kites on the drainage pathway at Bá Dương Nội

³ We now know that the tradition relates to an ancient religious story regarding the patron saint of Bá Dương Nội village. While the story is locally said to be 1000 years old, this needs to be understood in the context of it not occurring in the written history, as well as the term “1000 years old” meaning “a very long time ago”.

⁴ There is an old proverb of the Bambara in Africa: “The stranger sees only the things he already knows...”

2. Stories, fables and myths

The first written mention of the kite is credited to the Chinese⁵ where it is said to be at least 2,400 years old. The traditional, and auspicious, day for kite flying in China is the Qing Ming⁶ "Pure Brightness" day in April. This festival marks the start of spring when whole families go out to picnic and enjoy the wind and good weather. The Chinese say that kite flying is a healthy activity for children because, when they look up towards the kite, they have to breathe deeply. Focussing on the kite is also considered good for the eyesight.

There are old legends in Polynesia, Cambodia, in South China and also in Vietnam where each makes claim to the invention of the kite. While the Chinese claim to have the first written mention of kites, these could equally have emerged in any of these countries since, apart from China, none had written traditions in ancient times and knowledge was handed down by mouth from generation to generation as, indeed, it does today with the Vietnamese kite and kite flute makers. It is possible that the Chinese source is just an indication of what was known at that time and cannot be seen as an absolute proof of priority⁷.

Ngô Quý Sơn refers to these stories and flute kite festivals in his "*Activités de la Société Enfantine Annamite du Tonkin*". He tells us that the flute kite is linked to many old traditions in the old Tonkin Province in the north of Vietnam. This is the region around *Thang Long*, which was the old capital of Vietnam⁸ dating from the 7th century and which is now Ha Noi.

The Vietnamese have a rich culture based on many myths and legends that are used to inform the people about life. Much relates to the weather and its associated typhoons, monsoons, dry periods and environmental catastrophes. This has been important in teaching the predominantly farming community about the annual rhythms of farming life and the close relations of men, heaven and earth. One old Vietnamese legend appears on the Internet:

"Tương truyền tại đền Đức Thánh Cả của làng, cánh diều sáo truyền thống đã có hơn ngàn năm tuổi. Chuyện rằng xưa kia, khi trời - đất giao hoà, con người và thần tiên luôn quấn quýt bên nhau không muốn rời xa. Bỗng một ngày thảm hoạ ập đến, thế gian tăm tối, trời và đất bị chia cắt. Bầu trời thì cứ cao dần lên, tách xa khỏi mặt đất. Thần tiên và con người không làm cách nào gặp được nhau gây nên bao nỗi niềm thương nhớ. Vậy là cánh diều đã ra đời, nối sợi dây tình cảm giữa bầu trời và mặt đất, mang theo tiếng sáo du dương bày tỏ tấm lòng của người dưới hạ giới với người cõi trên."

This has been translated by Ngô Quý Đức as follows:

"According to the temple in Đức Thánh Cả village, and as stated in the legend, the traditional Vietnamese flute kite is more than a thousand years old. In ancient times, when heaven and earth were in harmony, the human beings and the gods were as one⁹ and would never want to be separated."

⁵ Wang XiaoYu. *Chinese Kites: Their Arts and Crafts*. Shandong Friendship Publishing House, 1996. Previously only available in Chinese language editions. The book refers to Mo Zi (478-392 BC), the Chinese philosopher who "spent three years and successfully made a hawk out of wood, which was broken after one day's flight". Mo Zi passed his knowledge to Gongshu Ban who made a magpie that could be flown in the air for three days. Gongshu Ban also made a hawk to "pry into the citadel of the State of Song". According to Li Shi (Song Dynasty) in "A Sequel to the Study of Myriads of Things", it is said "In spring time, to fly a kite at the end of a string would entice young boys to look up with open mouths and thus release their inner heat". And Fucha DunChong (Qing Dynasty) in "Yearly Events in Beijing" writes "A kite flying in the air can relax the eyes"

⁶ The Chinese Pure Brightness festival of Qingmingjie (清明节) in early April is linked to the early Chinese lunar calendar and marks the important transition to warmer weather in the agricultural year. While the main activity is "sweeping the tombs" and honouring the ancestors, it is also a festival for spring outings and kite flying. It is interesting that both G N Wright in "*The Chinese Empire Illustrated*" and De Groot in "*Les fêtes annuellement célébrées à Émouï*" mention the Double 9th, Chongyangjie (重阳节) festival on the 9th day of the 9th month as a traditional day when the Chinese fly kites. The book by Wright contains the well known engraving "*Kite-flying at Hae-Kwan on the Ninth Day of the Ninth Moon*" and mentions kites equipped with musical hummers. Modern texts such as the *Oxford Chinese Dictionary* refer to the Double 9th as the traditional day for climbing mountains whereas Pure Brightness is the day for kite flying.

⁷ Since ancient times the Chinese had a very well developed merchant marine that operated along the South China coast and beyond, along the Vietnamese coast to Indonesia, Malaysia and also to India and Africa. It is not known whether kites were found by the Chinese, or were introduced by them. It is not impossible that some forms of kites developed independently.

⁸ Tonkin is the Eastern Capital; Vietnamese *Đông Kinh*, 東京. An early name for Hanoi is *Thang Long* meaning Ascending Dragon; the modern Chinese translation being *Shàng Lóng* 上龙. Mr Ngô Quý Đức refers to a flute kite festival at Vồ-du'o'ng village (otherwise also known as Làng Tri, Bắc-Ninh)

⁹ The story likens them as the segments of a tangerine or mandarin orange.

However a sudden catastrophe came down and engulfed them. The world fell into darkness and heaven and earth were divided. The heavens rose higher and higher and became separated from the earth. The heavenly gods and the earth-bound humans were no longer able to meet one another and this created a deep feeling of sadness. This led to the creation of the kite which became the string to link together the affection between heaven and earth. The melodious sound of the kite flute showed the love felt by the people in lower world to those above."

This story is mirrored by other such stories to be found throughout the region, particularly in the South Sea Islands of the Pacific where there are concepts of the gods being linked to chiefs through kites¹⁰.

Mr Ngô Quý Đức has provided a discussion of ancient stories, particularly the story of the founding of the Bá Dương Nội kite festival. This story is an oral one and is not to be found written down, although it appears graphically on many of the kites seen at Bá Dương Nội.

"The legend says that Bá Dương Nội village was created by five clans who lived near the Red River around 3,500 years ago. At that time the area was a forest with bamboos and wild reeds spread over a distance of 5 km until it reached the river where Vinh Phuc is today. The story says that every day it was the job of the village children to herd buffalo in the forest from morning until nightfall. These children would gather to play at wrestling and other sports. However as time went on they became bored with these games. So they cut bamboos to make tents where they played. They copied the activities of the elders in the village and made a temple where they also copied the worship rituals. Initially, the children offered their lunch as an offering at their temple. They would bring rice from their homes to offer it at their temple. Bringing sticky rice to the temple mimicked the actions of the elders and this gave a feeling of reality to their worship.

One sunny day, while the children were lying on the grass and looking the blue sky, they suddenly saw a hawk flying overhead. They wondered about how it could fly in the sky and questioned why it did not fall down. The oldest child called the others together and told them to bring bamboo and paper so that they could make something like the hawk. This hawk became the kite and gave the children the new game of kite flying. Sometime later one



Figure 3 The story of Bá Dương Nội is told on a kite made by Mr Nguyễn Gia Độ

of the children found a dead bamboo whose stem had broken to leave the hollow reed exposed and which made a sound when the wind blew across it. The children cut down the bamboo to try to discover the secret of the sound and, as a result, they created a wind-blown flute. They attached the flute to the kite and this became the origin of the Vietnamese flute kite. The kites would fly high into the sky with the flutes sounding. When the villagers heard the sound, everyone became interested and from that time the kite was no longer considered just a children's game. The whole village made flute kites and flew them together. The flute sound made everyone feel happy; they forgot the weariness of their work and carried on working more enthusiastically.

All this time the children continued to bring sticky rice from home to the "bamboo temple" as an offering for worship. Their parents began to wonder why it was that the rice was disappearing so fast. As soon as they found out that their children were taking it, they immediately put it into safe keeping and the children were forbidden from taking it out of their home. The children stopped worshiping at their temple since there was no rice to offer for the ceremony. After a few days, and when the children were out herding buffalo, the sky suddenly turned dark and many black clouds appeared. When this happened, the herd of one hundred buffalo¹¹ disappeared. The children were shocked and ran everywhere trying

¹⁰ See Chadwick "The Kite: A Study in Polynesian Tradition". 1936.

¹¹ One hundred buffalo seems too many for one village although it may represent the collective herd of the five clans; we may have mistranslated or misheard. It could possibly be that "one hundred" represents the concept of "very many".

to find their lost buffalo but they could not find them. Then they ran back to the village in tears to tell their parents and elders what had happened. All of the villagers went to the buffalo grazing lands. They split up and searched everywhere but still could not find any buffalo. What they did find, however, was the bamboo temple made by the children. The oldest of the village elders asked who had made it and what it was being used for. The children then told their story of how they made it and how they took rice from their homes to offer at the temple. The village elder held a meeting to discuss this and speculated whether it had any relationship to their problems. They thought that the most probable explanation was that when the children stopped worshipping, the deity became angry and struck against the bamboo temple, and in his anger he hid the buffalo as a punishment. In this case the villagers thought they would need to recover the situation. This led to them restoring the ceremony and the villagers brought offerings of incense as well as fruits, chicken, pork, other meats and sticky rice to the bamboo temple. During these ceremonies the village elder prayed that if the deity had supernatural powers he would return the buffalo to the villagers, and that, in return, the villagers would build a beautiful new temple for him. When the village elder finished his worship the dark clouds vanished and the sky again became blue. The buffalo reappeared and everything returned to normal. This was on the first day of the full moon in the third month of the Vietnamese calendar (April in the Western calendar). Since then, and on the first full moon in the third month of every year, according to their calendar, the village hold a ceremony at the new temple and a village festival with flute kite flying competitions take place.

The deity became known as "Châu thổ Chi thần" or "Giang châu Chi thần". He is known as the Delta God and is the village's Tutelary God. We have found slightly different translations in the Vietnamese dictionaries. "Châu thổ" could mean the ground where the children herd buffalos, but it also means the Red River Delta; which is much the same place. "Chi thần" means one who has become godly and/or a very confidential and faithful friend; again similar in meaning.

The villagers built a temple for Châu thổ Chi thần, but some time ago the river changed its course and that led to a landslide and the temple was lost. In 1950 the villagers of Bá Dương Nội decided to revive the temple so they chose another site, this time on the protected inner side of the river dike, and built a new temple. Although the temple has been rebuilt since the 1950s, the site has remained the same."

There are other stories relating to the Bá Dương Nội kite festival. One explains that the kite flying ceremony and competitions are held as a celebration service for "The King's change of clothes holiday" at the Châu thổ Chi thần Temple dedicated to the Spirit of the Kite. This may explain why other festivals were also taking place in the villages that we passed on our journey along the Red River road. Another account says that the festival commemorates General Nguyễn Cầm, the native son of the village, who helped Đinh Bộ Lĩnh quell the rebellion of twelve feudal lords.

3. Flute Kite Ceremony and Kite Flying at Bá Dương Nội

According to the handwritten programme posted at the Bá Dương Nội temple entrance, the Flute kite festival started on the 14th day of the third moon in the Vietnamese calendar¹² and continued until 16th. We were only there for the last two days, firstly on Sunday April 17th and then we returned on Monday 18th April (the day of the full moon) since the winds were not co-operative on the Sunday. We were taken to the village by Mr Quan Hang Cao on the Sunday and again travelled there by taxi on the Monday. The road to Bá Dương Nội from Hanoi travels along the top of the Red River dike banking with views of the wide

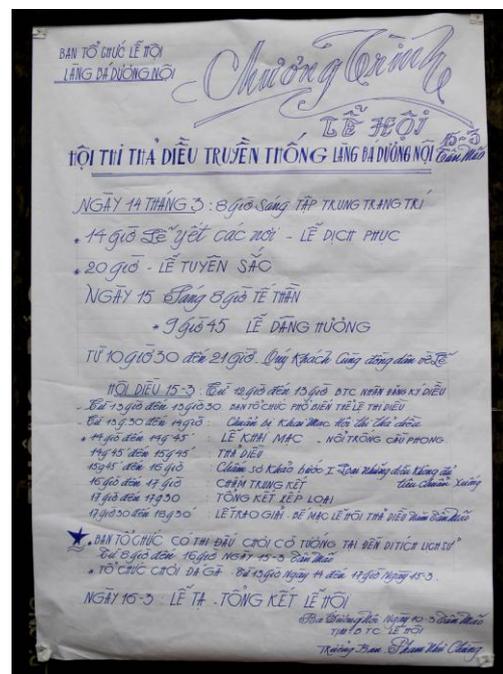


Figure 4 Festival programme, including dates and itinerary, at the entrance of the temple at Bá Dương Nội

¹² The Vietnamese calendar is the âm lịch and, because it is also based on solar positions, it is not a pure lunar calendar as is the Chinese calendar. The Vietnamese calendar is a lunisolar calendar. The differences between Chinese and Vietnamese calendars can be found at: <http://www.vietnamtravels.vn/tours/services/1375/Vietnamese-and-Chinese-calendar.htm>

river and the local bamboo matting and timber industries on one side and the villages and paddy fields on the other. The road became increasingly crowded with traffic and street markets as we passed the various riverside villages which were also holding weekend festivals. Eventually the traffic, which included many local industry transport vehicles, became so completely jammed that we were forced to abandon the car and walked the remaining kilometre, through the entrance gateway and down the local lane to the village. By the time we arrived it was evident that the villagers were already in festival mood since there were numerous food stalls and village games lining the roadway, all of which were crowded with people enjoying themselves. We passed through these activities and were taken to the village temple for the initial ceremonies. We met the president of the Bá Dương Nội village kite society, Mr Nguyễn Hữu Kiêm, and later went to his large house for discussions and lunch. Later in the afternoon we returned to the temple and the paddy fields opposite for the kite flying.

We were told that the village assembly at Bá Dương Nội decided to revive the village flute kite festival in 1986. Before then the flute kite ceremony and kite flying competition had been dormant for many years. The village festival, according to the village elders, has its origins in the stories of about 1000 years ago. We were told that the village temple is dedicated to a Weather God, and, according to the old folk story, is related to a cloud that made its appearance and took away some men. Here there is some conflict with the more detailed story which talks of missing buffalo. The story may have its origins in an exceptional typhoon and resulting inundation. In any case, and as a result, the local people pray for good winds, and good weather for the rice growing and harvesting season. This is most probably relating to the rainy season that starts around the date of the village festival. The festival is held each year on the first full moon (15th day) of the 3rd month in the Vietnamese *âm lịch* calendar.

As soon as we entered the temple forecourt we could see stalls on each side that were occupied by the village women who were managing the special temple foods. These were being prepared by girls adjacent to the main temple at the end of the forecourt where there was a small kitchen. These foods included small rice balls filled with a small cube of gingered sugar. There were sticky rice cakes shaped like a Chinese bell, small spices wrapped in lotus leaves and bananas. All of these were accompanied with jasmine tea. However beer and other drinks were also offered. As guests visiting from overseas we were well looked after by our generous hosts. We, in our turn, explained that this weekend was also the Easter festival and Paul provided chocolate Easter eggs which the village women happily gave to the numerous small children.



Figure 5 We were offered sticky rice balls at the Bá Dương Nội temple

The prayer and blessing ceremony was a long and complex affair. The village elders, dressed in their ceremonial robes, sat under a covered area and the ceremony was accompanied by music played on traditional Vietnamese instruments, chanting and singing. Somewhat surprisingly we were allowed access to all parts of the ceremonial areas for observation and discrete photography. While most of the ceremony involved the men folk, the village women followed with their own, shorter, ceremony. After praying for about one hour,



Figure 6 Diều Sáo being registered and blessed at the Bá Dương Nội temple

about fifty *Diều Sáo* were brought into the temple court and were lined up on the courtyard for inspection, to be measured, numbered and to be sealed. At this time the temple courtyard became very crowded, not only with the kites laid out before the temple, but with the kite teams and others, all of whom took a great interest in the presented kites. At the same time many people were making financial gifts to the temple and were being given refreshments. We saw that the gifts were all recorded and found later that these would be displayed publicly.

On the left hand temple building entrance was a barrel shaped Chinese ceremonial drum covered on both sides with a membrane. A gong was on the right hand. The music accompanying the ceremony was played on a two string violin¹³, two sorts of wood bladed oboe¹⁴ and a special ceremonial dragon headed *dan bau* played by Mr Phạm Hồng Nhâm. Mr Phạm Hồng Nhâm had previously won many kite competitions in his youth and is still highly regarded as a kite maker. This dragon headed *dan bau* was made from a bamboo stem with the roots of the culm forming the dragon's head and antlers. It is the famous traditional Vietnamese monochord where only the overtones are played¹⁵.

The *Diều Sáo* kite activity comprised two components; the presentation of the kites at the temple for registration, measuring, judging, sealing the flutes and the ceremonial blessing. The second component was the parade of kites to the flying field and the consequent flying. The kite competitions were performed over two days, partly because of the lack of a good wind on the Sunday.



Figure 7 Mr Phạm Hồng Nhâm (left) and the ceremonial dragon headed *dan bau*

When the kites were first brought into the temple it was necessary that they should be registered. The first part of the process was the measuring and a visual check of the kites. Each kite had to have a wingspan of at least 2.2 metres and it had to carry at least two flutes¹⁶, although most were fitted with either three or four flute assemblies. The smallest flutes had to be at least 2.5cm in diameter with the larger flutes being progressively larger. The kite sails were not allowed to be white as this is the colour of mourning. Generally the sails were made from brown paper although many of these were decorated, either with paintings or with appropriate motifs¹⁷. The kite flute itself was sealed with two strips of paper on each side in order to prevent tampering/replacement of the flutes. A further registration paper was attached to both the kite



Figure 8 Flute sealing in the courtyard of the temple at Bá Dương Nội

¹³ Vietnamese name *Đàn hồ*, a variation of the Chinese *er hu*. A two stringed "violin" held vertically and played with a bow. There are other names for the instrument depending on the resonator of coconut, see http://vi.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C4%90%C3%A0n_h%E1%BB%93

¹⁴ Vietnamese name *Kèn*; wood bladed oboe, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C3%A8n_%28musical_instrument%29

¹⁵ see <http://www.vietnamesearwork.com/itemList.aspx?GroupID=212> for an overview

¹⁶ Robert Whitehurst refers to the number of flutes as being at least three. He also mentions a cash prize.

¹⁷ Some of the kites carried writings on their sails. The following is an example of one such poem:

*Đêm trăng vắng vắng tiếng sáo diều
Vi vút tầng cao tựa tiếng tiêu
Khúc nhạc thanh bình đêm thanh vắng
Ngã mình nghe nhạc thú phiêu diều*

Golden moonlight strikes the fluting kite
Hours of enjoyment at an immeasurable height
Singing quietly during the peaceful night
Surreal music that makes me happy, and gives me rest.

surface and the flute attachment stick to prevent the owner changing the flute assembly or the kite. Later we understood the reason for this as there were many damaged kites, particularly those that crashed into the pond. The registration seals were stamped and the paper contained writing although we did not find out the reason for this. All of the kites were registered with a large red painted number on the kite sail and this number allowed easy identification when the kites were flying. The number of kite flutes varied between three and five although the majority carried three flutes. In no cases were there two flutes of the same size. In the competition the quality of the flutes and their sound was not judged. Judging was only for the quality of the kite itself as well as its flying properties; i.e. height and stability so we assumed that part of the reason for the flute sealing process was to limit any changes to improve the flight performance of the kites. We were told that many of these kites had been made by local people especially for the festival and that most had not previously been flown.



Figure 9 A kite with weak spars resulting in excessive dihedral

Flutes were, however, kept and flown from year to year. This may account for what we saw later when many kites suffered from tumbling, spiralling, lateral rocking, pitch oscillating as well as sometimes losing elements of the flute assembly. Several kites fell in the pond.

The reason for some of the failures was explained by the young fliers, mostly by hand gestures, as the result of weak wing spars or wing tips that bent up too high and which resulted in excessive dihedral. In other cases the flute assemblies were mounted too far forward and contributed to the kite instabilities, usually resulting in tumbling.



Figure 10 Flute kites in the garden at Mr Nguyễn Hữu Kiên's house

There were several categories of kite competition with the winners receiving a winner's scroll certificate, a hanging flag and a floor standing electric fan. This year there was no Juniors Category and in earlier years there may have been a cash prize. We were not certain how the separate categories were defined.

After registration we were taken to Mr Nguyễn Hữu Kiên's house for discussions, to see his kites and for an excellent lunch. We were able to examine his kites, including the very unusual "fairy" kite, as well as have detailed discussions about the flutes since Mr Nguyễn Hữu Kiên is a very accomplished flute maker and had made the unique "friendship flute" that he presented to Uli. Then we returned to the temple to witness the remaining preparations before the flying.



Figure 11 The kite procession

Uli was also invited to Mr Nguyễn Gia Độ's house where he was able to see the kites and flutes made by Mr. Nguyễn Gia Độ. The traditional one-room house is located next to the temple area; on the right side of the temple with the rice fields to the back of the house. Mr Nguyễn Gia Độ invited Mr Quan Hang Cao and Uli to drink some tea and, while he was looking at the flutes, Mr Nguyễn Gia Độ presented Uli with a yellow-violet coloured flute as gift. Uli saw several flute-kites, together with some large bird kites, hanging at the walls. He noticed the beautifully carved roof beams of the house as well as a hammock. He also saw cardboard templates as well as drawings for kite and flute making¹⁸. They were only at the house for about 10 minutes since Mr. Nguyễn Hữu Kiên appeared and

¹⁸ There were a number of cardboard templates and drawings which appeared to be for flute and kite making.

it was necessary to leave quickly to go to the temple since the kite procession was about to start.

At the appropriate moment all the kiteflyers picked up their kites and proceeded to the nearby kite field. It was an excited and seemingly chaotic procession that involved exiting the temple gate and walking the short route to the field opposite that was accessed by a narrow opening leading to a concrete flagged pathway leading to the pond. Most spectators stood on this footpath as the paddy field was both under cultivation and boggy¹⁹. The footpath was, in fact, the cover for the village sewage drain and the flagstones were not continuous. The launching lines crossed the walkway at right angles with resulting amicable confusion. Several people fell into the drain, with unfortunate consequences.

Kite flying²⁰ involved a long launch so the launch teams found their way along the dry narrow pathways between the muddy paddy fields on one side while the fliers went to the other side. This left other members of the team protecting the line as it crossed the pathway.

The kite reels were almost all flat wooden winders comprising four wooden sticks. In some cases plastic spools were used but these usually carried nylon monofilament line. The most commonly used line was either three strand hemp or a similar silk or synthetic line with a diameter of 2 to 3 mm. There was no braided line or the traditional bamboo line. Some winders carried great lengths of line, possibly several hundreds of metres. The lines were prepared by laying out about 200 metres across the paddy-field in order to give a long launch. Each kite team comprised several launchers, fliers as well as line handlers.



Figure 12 In flight at Bá Dương Nội

The winds were very low which made launching very difficult as the line handlers could not run due to the soft and soaked ground. They had to haul in the kites by hand. This resulted in unstable starts and kites diving, tumbling and being caught in tangles. When the kites were airborne and at a reasonable height (100 metres) the low winds also caused trouble as some kites exhibited pitch rocking followed by, sometimes immediately, nose down tumbling. We thought, and this was confirmed later, that this was because the flutes were mounted too far

forward. Other instabilities caused diving and looping motions which could sometimes be corrected as the kite swooped low. There were many crashes although not many of these caused irreparable damage. In some cases both kite and flutes were completely submerged in the pond and were recovered to be flown again! Even paper covered kites were recovered intact, thanks in some part to the special paper treatment (discussed later), or with minor damage other than being soaked. The flutes themselves, whilst not being waterproofed, are



Figure 13 Ten Điều Sáo sing in the wind above our heads

¹⁹ The paddy-field also served as a graveyard since there were numerous stone tombs to be seen.

²⁰ The winds on the Sunday morning were very light but, at about mid-day, the wind started to blow from the South East at 2-3 on the Beaufort Scale; i.e. less than 10ft/s, 3m/s.

the most valued part of the assembly and consequently received the most attention. When the kites were high they found better winds and at one time there were about 15 kites (out of the fleet of nearly 50) flying high and smoothly.

The flutes sounded loudly on the launch and when being pulled up. They howled during dives and sounded clearly when they were high. It was difficult to record the flying flutes because of the amplified temple music and announcements.

As well as the many participants and numerous interested spectators, the fields were managed by the farmers who generally ignored this invasion of their field and carried on with their weeding as if nothing unusual was taking place. Perhaps surprisingly there was actually very little damage to the crops.

As the winds on the Sunday were not very strong, it was decided that the kite flying would continue the next day. We were warned that the winds might not improve but we returned on the Monday in any case. The Monday winds were even lighter than before which left all the kites grounded and the kiteflyers huddled at the entrance to the paddy field. Uli had long discussions with the village elders while Paul was invited to by Mr Phạm Hồng Nhâm to see his kites and visit his house. Mr Phạm Hồng Nhâm is 81 years old and lives comfortably in a courtyard house. We had met on the path leading to the flying field when he invited me to his house. On one side of the road was a locked workshop where he stored kites that were under construction or about to be covered. The room contained a wooden slatted bed. We drank a white spirit that tasted like Chinese *bai jiu* (百酒; firewater). After photographing the kites and flutes we moved across to his courtyard house. The house contained a large living room with beds at each end and formal reception seating in the centre. Some finished kites were hung up as was a *Dan Bau* which Mr Phạm Hồng Nhâm played. Most of our discussions were conducted in French.



Figure 14 Flute kites in the temple courtyard



Figure 15 Lack of wind prevented any flying on the Monday



Figure 17 Flute Kite flying at Bá Dương Nội

4. *Diều Sáo* in 2011

Our objectives prior to the experiences in Hanoi were relatively simple. These were to attend the flute kite ceremony and kite flying at *Bá Dương Nội* where we hoped to see and record the flutes as well as document the kites. We also wanted to see something of how the kites and flutes were made, and we intended to visit the museums and institutes of Hanoi as part of our research. The actuality of our visit far exceeded our initial objectives. In many ways we were overwhelmed by our findings and in others we were left confused.

We were disappointed to find that the *Diều Sáo* is not, apparently, recognised as being an important part of the cultural heritage by the institutions. We found nothing of importance in the Museum of Ethnology and the scarcity of publications at the National Library was surprising. Apart from once appearing in a stylised²¹ form on a postage stamp, we were surprised that the *Diều Sáo* did not appear in imagery, despite its important folk art heritage. Even the woodblock stamp makers in the Old Quarter of Hanoi did not have the *Diều Sáo* image in their sample books, although one now does. This apparent indifference shown by the official bodies can have two influences. Firstly it shows a lack of interest and care for this important and ancient art form, and secondly, that the art form, where it still exists, is not influenced by the need to adapt to modern pressures, particularly tourism and remains preserved intact in its original form.

There are, however, some signs of support. The *Maison des Arts* gallery in Hanoi actively promotes a fusion between the *Diều Sáo* and art in the context of aid for the victims of Agent Orange. One would hope that this activity will bring awareness of the uplifting power of the *Diều Sáo* to future generations. Presently the basic kites and flutes are seen as a bare canvas but, as in Japan, Korea and increasingly in China, it may be expected that the artists will become kite and flute makers too. Clearly the *Diều Sáo* as an art form is a long way from its cultural heritage, but such a development may need to become acceptable as Vietnam continues its rapid pace of development and accompanying fundamental changes in lifestyle.

While questioning the lack of official acceptance, and the validity of the flute kite as an art form, we were delighted to find that the traditional Vietnamese *Diều Sáo* is still being made and flown. We were thrilled to have the privilege of meeting *Diều Sáo* enthusiasts in the villages of *Bắc Giang* where we were able to witness, at least in part, the art of flute and kite making. To be amazed is an understatement for our feelings when we spent two days witnessing the flute kite ceremonies and flying at *Bá Dương Nội* and the chance to meet important members of the kite community. Subsequent to our visit, and as a result of our findings and experiences, we were delighted to find that there are others in Vietnam who truly care for the *Diều Sáo* and who are prepared, like ourselves, to embark on the task of documenting and supporting this fascinating and unique aspect of Vietnamese culture.

One may ask “is the *Diều Sáo* safe”? In a fast developing country such as Vietnam, the answer can only be “it depends”. It depends on whether the activity remains respected. It depends on whether the reason for the *Diều Sáo* remains valid, even in the present form of village festival. It depends on whether young people in this increasingly mobile and materialistic society want to, and are prepared to learn the craft from the older generation. It depends on property development given the strong rumours that villages such as *Bá Dương Nội* might disappear in the face of increasing urbanisation and industrial development²². One unexpected uncertainty is that of the portability of the kites since they are large, some of them enormous, and they are not easy to store and are particularly difficult to transport. The traditional kite is not collapsible and could be discarded for another, more easily portable device to carry the traditional flutes. And it is not inconceivable that the flutes themselves could be cheaply mass



Figure 18 The 5000 dong postage stamp, circa 1999, featured a *Diều Sáo*

²¹ The artist has drawn a very poor flute kite since the wing bending is excessive. However the graphic may have cultural links to a crescent moon and/or to the horns of the water buffalo. The form of the kite is that of a lemon leaf kite (type 1,1) and it is equipped with a single flute.

²² Known developments near to *Bá Dương Nội* include a river bridge, link roads and major planned industrial developments, all of which are likely to encroach on the village.

produced in metal and/or plastic. Clearly nothing is certain and it seems appropriate that now is the time to capture the current status in order to have a firm basis for future generations.

We came to Vietnam as Europeans who thought they already had a good knowledge of the flute kite, so what were the surprises? Not entirely unsurprising were the varieties of actual kites and how these related to the old stories that we were told. Similarly we found new flutes and were surprised by the size and the quality of the workmanship of some of these. We were surprised to find that the villages essentially operated independently of one another²³ and, because of this, it would appear that there are significant local differences in style, quality and technique. The biggest negative surprise had to be the apparent lack of official recognition and documentation.

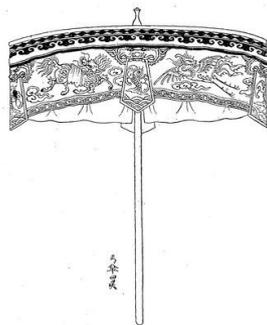


Fig. 35. — Tan. — Parasol d'étoffe brodée.

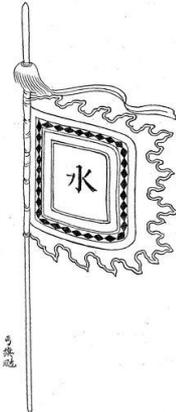


Fig. 19. — L'étendard de l'eau dans le groupe des cinq éléments.

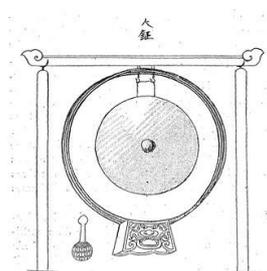


Fig. 22. — Le Gong. — Chéng.

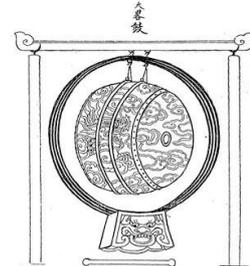


Fig. 23. — Le Tambour. — Tréng.

Figure 19 Temple symbology - new and old. The drawings are taken from « Les Symboles, les Emblèmes et les Accessoires du Culte des Annamites ». G. Dumoutier, 1891



²³ Most of the kite and flute makers are farmers. We learnt that a farmer's life is hard and time consuming. He hardly ever leaves his fields during daylight hours. His only spare time is at night and, traditionally, the farmers found rest and relaxation by listening to the kite flutes since the kites could be left flying all through the night. At that time none in the farming community needed to travel far. The ability to travel would have been the privilege of the rich who would have had the time and money to do so and, in a similar way to Western countries until relatively recently, this would have been considered by the peasant farmers to be a waste of money and productive time. In any case the road network was very limited, particularly in the pre-French period where the rivers were more frequently used.

Bristol 2013—Hugh Blowers

Like a Phoenix from the ashes.

When Avril Baker announced that Bristol would not be happening in 2012, there was a general fear and feeling that there might not be another festival at Ashton Court. Happily, and despite all manner of problems along the way, Bristol made it past the quarter century celebrated in 2011. Equally, from the initial thoughts that the event would have to concentrate on British flyers, Avril and Martin were able to assemble an extensive list of participants from the continent and further afield. Careful wording of the publicity implied other makers would be present, but in reality it would just be examples of their work. What was also evident throughout the weekend is just how popular the festival is in the local catchment area. It was heaving on both days, and most could not recall having seen so many members of the public there on a Saturday. The traders and concessions must have been rubbing their hands with glee, given the queues, especially for the bar. Mind you, how you can justify charging £3.50 for a pint, yet £2.00 for a half of the same brew eludes me at present?

Unlike most other festivals, Bristol allies itself to specific charities, including the Great Western Air Ambulance. Given all the kites that were about, it was some pretty fancy flying to bring the helicopter between the trees at no more than 10ft above the ground to land it just behind the traders. What makes the work of this charity even more real is that on both days, the helicopter had to leave to attend to incidents in the area it serves. The other charity was the Lighthouse Project in India, which is personal to the Bakers, as their daughter had just returned from her work there a few days previously.

It has been remarked before about the 'sameness' of some festivals, and it is an easy trap to fall into and hard work for organisers to vary the programme and what is on view. The focus at Bristol is very much the activities in the display arena with many 'old favourites' combining with new features to keep the interest of crowd, and the flyers, it has to be said. Bristol and the Decorators are synonymous, although without Romney on this occasion who has been laid low with something most unpleasant. Being the only Quad line team present, they spent a significant portion of their day showing off their routines to an appreciative audience, interspersed by Brian and Carl Wright and their two



and three kite display. From Carl flying three kites on his own, the number of flyers trebled for the same number of kites with Bath based Team Flame. Having had the full sky of sports kites at Portsmouth, courtesy of the Follies, it was a stark reminder of the incredible teams that have graced Bristol in the past and how team flying has seemingly lost its popularity in Britain?

In order to placate the 'powers that be' most of the large kites had been moved into the single line arena, which made for an exciting time and put space at a premium. Walter and Steffan Bloem aka Chaos Kitters from Germany must have wondered if their name was some sort of portent as they spent much of Saturday retrieving their pilot from behind the stalls. Apart from the inevitable tangles, it was odd to see pilots that were flying perfectly suddenly turn over and plunge to the ground, or perform a very large loop collecting numerous lines in the process. Andrew and Kathleen Beattie avoided most of the aggravation by the simple expedient of using every foot of the height clearance and anchoring almost in Somerset. Mind you, having driven down to Portsmouth, back to Scotland and then down to Bristol just three days later shows commitment above and beyond the call.

A regular feature at Bristol is the mass launches and large formations of related kites. The sight of 20+ Carl Robertshaw deltas rising together after a countdown by the Mayor was nothing

Bristol 2013—Hugh Blowers



short of spectacular. It always works, if you have enough kites. Whilst most of the kites were privately owned, the bulk of the sodes had to be put together and prepared by their builder Janneke Groen, and with their long rope tails, require a bit more organisation and flying skill, but there is never any shortage of that, although there were still one or two that managed to get themselves into a pickle. With the predominance of inflatables in arena 1 there was not too much room for smaller kites, so it was very much a case of finding a hole in the sky and staying out of trouble, which was easier said than done as attacks from left, right and above proved. Michael Goddard had his usual range of vibrantly coloured kites, including one built from the skin he painted alongside Michel Gressier in Dieppe last year.

What did not work quite as well as we had hoped were the banners of Michel Boucard. Having to hammer in each of his ground stakes took some considerable time and too many cars



that 'dropped off' and then stayed by the arena left him short of space so that he had to put up his tsunami as a double row, which rather spoiled the effect. When the wind changed direction on Sunday though, it was a different story as the two rows then created a series of waves that appeared to be rolling down the line. An accident or by design, who knows, but highly effective. By contrast, the introduction of 'east meets west' was a great success. Many of the kites we see use traditional shapes, but made from western materials as they do lend themselves to a variety of decorating techniques. Kelvin Woods had his appliquéd Elvis and Debbie Harry edos alongside the dyed cotton 'Strange Fruits' of Steve Brockett having another day in the air to shake the dust out of it. Michael Goddard has been experimenting with printed images for a while, but another printed kite that did impress me was a lovely panel of images photographed by David Ellison and then printed by Roy and Hayley. David did admit that what seemed a perfectly realistic size whilst building did lose something in scale when put into the air. More traditional were many of the huge collection that Malcolm Goodman had brought down from an original Chinese dragon to a large ripstop Barrowman. Making a very rare appearance was the Dec's Jorgen Moller-Hansen parafoil giving Jake a workout. Relief commentator George Webster was giving a tour round the sky when the coming together of the dragon's tail and a long fluffy tail necessitated some urgent action.

Lost in the sky, but absolutely gorgeous were the delicate paper and bamboo miniatures by Frances Anderson. She has extended the techniques she uses to other decorative items for the non kiteflyers to spend their money on, but it is amazing just how sturdy these little kites are. From questions and comments from the public, it was obvious that size does matter as lots of people were enquiring about the 'world's biggest kite' that was due to be flown. Even so, most were not prepared for just how big the Kuwait flag really is, and given the almost impossible position that had been allocated for the

Bristol 2013—Hugh Blowers

launch it was remarkable how well it did fly.

What has been very refreshing this season is the number of younger people flying. Josh Mitcheson has been around for a while, even though he is still in his mid teens. He has been joined by James Woods, following in Kelvin's footsteps by building an impressively appliquéd edo, but with his own, unique graphics. It was also great to see two young lads getting into inflatables, although it was something of a learning curve for them, especially when one allowed the line on Marco's pilot run through his hands. We do need an influx of new blood as most of the youngsters of a decade ago have sadly faded from the scene.

It had not been the warmest of days, so it was a case of lacing up the tent for the meal and auction. Before the auction started Avril Baker presented each of the Decorators with a set of 'painters whites' with the team name emblazoned on the back to remind everyone how they had acquired that epithet back in the 1980s. What was most noticeable about the auction this year was that there were fewer items, but with most being of substantial value. There was only one 'frivolous' item, yet by tradition this raises very significant amounts, but that is another story. What is indisputable is that kite auctions depend on the absolute generosity of flyers and traders. In particular, Marco Casadio donated a pair of his 'English' cherubs that raised nearly £400 alone. Marco was duly rewarded when Bryn Baggely bought him a Charlie Brown tie to wear, the first tie Marco had ever owned. Paul Reynolds has a unique way of parting people from their money, which he achieved to great effect with a copy of the Cody auction catalogue. It is always gratifying (for the donors at least) if items do not go too cheaply, and this certainly proved the case, with the total raised being over £2,500 for the night. Sad to relate, that there were a few sore heads the following morning though!

Throughout the previous week, the forecast had been for almost perfect wind, but by Sunday morning was supposed to have dropped right away. In fact you could not have wished for better as it had changed direction and was now almost directly down the site and was great flying for those up early enough to appreciate it. After a couple of hours though, the breeze began to strengthen and started to cause problems, especially when there was a 22sq metre

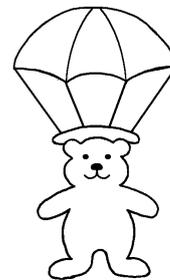
pilot that needed bringing down while the crew had gone for coffee. By lunchtime it was getting a bit silly and the decision was made not to fly the flag as the tractor being used as an anchor would have been way too light for the job and would have become the world's largest land board.

Chaos Kitters had vacated the arena to give them a bit of space, which enabled them to put up Asterix and Obelix on the same line, not their biggest pieces, but more than enough on the day. Equally impressive was a new Rolf Zimmerman dragon over by the woods, complete with matching pilot. Andrew had his pilot and manta way up again and it was fascinating to see it changing direction, but with loads of space and no other lines to cause it problems. It could be seen from miles away by all accounts.

Contrary to the publicity, Karl and Sara Longbottom put in a brief appearance during the three days they were home between returning from Canada and the US and setting off for Australia. Don't know where they get the stamina from, but it was great to see them, complete with new(ish) grandchild. Karl had built a new kite for his trip called the 'Bondai Bikini'!!! He claims it represented his fantasy woman with an exceedingly skimpy bottom half and a seriously large superstructure. Ah well, if he meets her, I hope Sara does not find out? Inevitably, apart from changing conditions, day two of a festival largely repeats day one in terms of arena features, although Jerry and Carolyn Swift drove down from Yorkshire late on Saturday to provide parachuting fauna and indeed Flora.

Two fine days at Portsmouth and two equally fine days at Bristol was a perfect way to bring the major festival season to a close. The crowds here were even bigger than on Saturday if that could be believed, and it is difficult to comprehend that events such as this could be denied the use of Ashton Court, although this does seem a distinct possibility at present. We hope that the 26th Bristol Festival will not prove to be the last, but if that should occur then it was a roaring success and as enjoyable as ever. Thanks to Avril, Martin and all the helpers for doing it all again and goodness knows what time the last car managed to get out.

THE BEAR FACTS



A very occasional news letter from the Ted Berets in loving memory of Roman Candle in the hope of easing the pain for those of us who loved it and not giving the po-faced the satisfaction of believing they have won.

PORTSMOUTH

It had been suggested earlier in the year that we should have a tribute fly for The BOF at this year's Portsmouth Festival. Although nothing specific had been arranged there was a time slot allocated on both days.

Electric Arthur turned up with his rig as did Jerry and Carolyn Swift and on Saturday with the help of others from the Ted Berets and the Grumpy Old Gits there was a successful display. A couple of bears were "souvenired" as John used to phrase it but thanks to the watchful eyes of the recovery team these were restored to their rightful location. Sunday dawned a little overcast with lighter winds but on schedule the two rigs were staked out and the optimism paid off. Once the previous demonstrations were clear lines were run out and kites launched. At this precise moment the sun peeked over the edge of the cloud and we could all imagine the voice "Look at them silly sods down there. Show them po faced ***s that we are neither gone nor forgotten and them europrats have still not won"

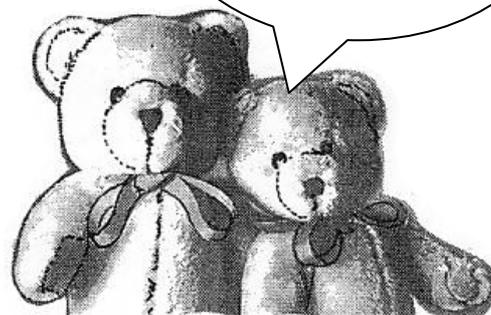
John, where ever you are keep smiling on us like that and we will continue to keep your memory alive.

It is good to know that it is not only kite flyers who play these games with teddy bears. Recently there has been an upsurge in people who want drop them from ever higher altitudes. In 2008 a team from Cambridge university claimed to have parachuted 4 from 30,085m, in 2012 The Royal Flying Doctor service took a bear to 105,515ft but returned him to earth with the control capsule. In August 2013 a bear leapt from 39,000m over Newbury to beat Felix Baumgartner's record by 31m and as far as we know this is the current record. These last 2 apparently did not wear space suits. There is currently an attempt from one of our own kite flyers and it should have gone ahead at Jolly Up 13 if they had been granted the required NOTAM.

Other news, A copy of "BMISS Aerial Applications Manual" has been located and will shortly be available at the BMISS web site; now all we have to do is get the CAA to issue an exemption certificate. BOF if you are reading this, we could do with some help.

Good job it was bears and not brass monkeys that were parachuting.

Keep B.M.I.S.S. alive by sending pictures, videos, record updates and anything else to be published at www.bmiss.org.uk or in TBF. So that's it from Electric Arthur and The Ted Berets but please keep in touch via arthur@tedberets.co.uk or the good old snail mail.



Portsmouth 2013—Hugh Blowers

Portsmouth wins in the 'weather stakes'.

As news filtered through of what was happening elsewhere in the country, and not too far away at that, no one could complain about the weather, which we experienced on Southsea Common over the bank holiday weekend. In truth, there was not too much even the most churlish could moan about, with the exception that is of the toilets. Uurgh, they must have reinforced everyone's dislike of the 'tardis' conveniences. By Saturday afternoon they were definitely into the close encounters of the turd kind, stinking and overflowing. Apparently it was because 'people were using them'??? [Ed: *This included the campers who emptied their portaloos in them!*]. After numerous complaints, including many vociferous ones from kiteflyers, they were eventually serviced and on Sunday were kept in a reasonable condition, how hard can it be? Getting the unpleasant bits over early, a shock to the pocket was to find that the University had sold off all their parking to the council so now it was a cool £12 a day to park, instead of free as it has been for years. [Ed: *The kite festival parking was still free to members*]. That's how to attract visitors.

Being us, and intent on avoiding the worst of the traffic jams we did the 'tourist bit', which started with a sail past by the magnificent square rigged, tall ship, 'Stad Amsterdam'. We were also treated to the Battle Of Britain Memorial Flight, the Vulcan, a submarine with the crew lining the casing, and on Sunday, a Spitfire. The new 'Mary Rose' museum was well worth the walk, although it will still be a few more years before it is entirely open to the public gaze. Did we avoid the jams, well, by all accounts yes, so it was worth it, apart from the aforementioned £12 parking that is.

Still, on to the business of the weekend and a truly 'International Kite Festival'. It never ceases to amaze us the extent of the guest list Gill and Jon come up with, and there is always a sprinkling of newcomers to these shores amongst the more familiar faces. Peter Lynn once said to us that it was no longer necessary for him to be invited to festivals as there were now far more examples of his kites being flown than he could ever carry. Having seen the back of Andrew and Kathleen Beattie's trailer I can confirm the truth of this, and that is not counting what was already in the air. Mind you, what time that was I do not have a clue as there was

a train of kites up when we drew the curtains back some time before 7.00am, perhaps they were still on Scottish time? As usual, there was competition for space amongst the inflatables as the sky was packed with pieces old and new. Mantas with mandibles fought for space amongst the more traditional versions, whilst being hunted by a shapely 'scuba diver'. A very colourful 'mermaid' lurked amongst the 'anemones' overlooked by a string of Marco Casadio's Cherubs and his delightful Tinkerbelle. His Cherub in shorts and union flag tee shirt was a delightful addition to his ever-increasing range of kites.

Inevitably, the formal programme started with an altitude sprint, and here I must digress a trifle. Bob Cruickshank took issue with me again, not that he wasn't mentioned in my reports, but that he did not get true recognition when he did win sprints, so now I can rectify that. The first altitude sprint was not won by Bob C and neither did he win the Rok fight, but that was not won by a Rok either??? So what was going on? Well, the wind was somewhat fresh and the 45 seconds allowed was somewhat on the generous side, leading to smoking reels and a shortage of line. George Penney convincingly won, but as his Dan Leigh delta was not attached to his reel at the time, the victor was adjudged to be Alan Pinnock. George's delta was still visible and flying downwind some 15 minutes later. After some considerable 'winding down' time, the arena was given over to the first of several displays by Fusion, the 'bonny lads' from the north east. They have really been working hard on their routines and can now showcase the many different facets of Revolution flying. Most noticeable was their new suite of kites with skins printed by the Gonzalez brothers that show off to perfection the dye sublimation process used. It is now acknowledged that Fusion can take their place amongst the other Rev display teams as equals, even if one member does have 'cross lateral' moments in the grid fly, and it wasn't Vince, contrary to the scurrilous rumour put about by the commentator?

After my comments about printed kites in a previous issue it was lovely to see so many examples of 'art kites' on display. In particular there were two large edos, one new, one not seen for a very long time. The new one was another spectacular image from Kelvin Woods, this time the king, Elvis, at all his moody looking best. That it was flying at all was something

Portsmouth 2013—Hugh Blowers



of a miracle as an entirely self-generated miscalculation had the bridles neatly laid over the commentary bus and mic aerial. The older one was Steve Brockett's 'Strange Fruits', having its first flight since being liberated from under the theatre stage in Wellingborough. Also impressive were the edos and asymmetric kites of Michael

Wegenmayr. Michael has not been to festivals for many years yet his work shows the depth of talent that exists in the kite world.

New to many was a Rev team from Japan, Karasu. With only two 'Blast' kites, their flying was probably best appreciated by existing Rev flyers. That they used the same music three times a day probably did not help, especially as it was so distinctive. My general feeling is that as the number of kites goes down, the flying has to be much more spectacular to retain interest, or that there has to be a gimmick to spice it all up. You do not need a gimmick though when there are as many kites as Cerfs-volants Follies put in the air. Unfortunately, appendicitis two days before the festival left them two flyers down, and finding French speaking flyers of that standard at short notice is next to impossible. Unless of course, there just happens to be Dave Morley and Steph Ferme on hand to step into the breach. The 3 'Fillies' were first on, just as a taster, before the 6 kite team took to the sky to impress one and all. Now anyone familiar with sports kites will have half an idea that when one of the team flies off to the right and the rest go left, a 'Ronnie Weave' is in prospect, but threading through five? Well he made it, just! Then it was time for the Fillies to join in for a 9 kite routine that drew rounds of applause from the crowd and hardened pundits alike.

Festivals are used to seeing the work of Robert Valkenburgh, but apart from this, the British scene has never really embraced the concept of

the 'wind garden'. Michael Lowe has been slowly acquiring an extensive collection of wind instruments that he displayed in a very attractive group on both days. Most of his pieces use a natural wood finish and mounted on black tripods they looked really good. Being able to walk round and under them to hear all the different tones being generated was quite hypnotic. Bob C had also ventured into the jardin du vent territory with a 'field' of gently waving, fluorescent straws. It did take him a considerable time to lay it all out as each element, and there seemed to be hundreds, comprised a wire stand that had to be put into the ground, a neat counterbalanced holder and then the straw threaded over the top. It was the concept of the long straw being counterbalanced that gave the whole installation the most attractive look of fluid movement. Not sure I would have had the patience?



The featured kite this year was to be 'cellular' and probably the best definition of these is a shape that can be replicated and joined together to form a larger kite. That does not apply to Christian Harms though who does use cells, but hardly ever two of the same in any one kite. At the other extreme, and taking the theme most literally, were Volker and Christian Holberg. Using multiples of single element Hargreaves' they had a train, and by judicious use of spars and bindings, combined them to create a traditional Hargreaves, a biplane version and a treble box. Incredibly inventive and neither were the creations small by the time the building was complete. Dick Toonen spent ages putting together an 'Escher' like structure using square cells, which could be bridled to fly in a variety of planes. It also spread a fair amount of splintered carbon about every time it landed

Portsmouth 2013—Hugh Blowers

on a corner. We also became used to the most appropriately named drum kites hitting the ground around us, also doing wonders for carbon sales. At £20 a throw, there were ready buyers for these at the end of the festival. Ralf Maserski had a fascinating metamorphic box, which both changed shape and plane of flying by use of a loose bridle on an angled spar.



Difficult to categorise was the Zeppelin of Jan Claes. This took the form of a giant Sentinel, but with inflated tubes instead of rigid spars. Contrary to talk on the field, this is not a new idea by a long chalk as the principle has been around for years, as anyone who remembers the giant delta will confirm. What has brought the use of the tubes back to prominence is the development it has undertaken for single skin power kites enabling curved shapes to be created, such as the dirigible with the crew flying on a moonlit night, seemingly powered by one of Jan's Archimedean screw propellers. Not new, but certainly innovative in the use of pump-up spars and adjudged to be worthy of the Innovative kite award.

The clever, wacky and weird were joined by a variety of more conventional and recognisable

shapes, including several Brasington 'cells' and his Peter Lynn inspired Bi-D and Tri-D. What we did not see flying was an amazing twin jet, winged rocket that sat in the static park, which brings me neatly to my usual hobby horse. At the flyers briefing, Jon Bloom had specifically spoken of the Peter Lynn 'pledge' and the need to get kites into the air. It was very noticeable, and commented on by several observers, that some of the invited flyers were hardly living up to the name and one kite flown twice in two days for maybe 10 minutes hardly warrants the builder being brought over to this country. The problem does not go away, and if PL cannot shame people into making more of an effort, then perhaps it is down to the organisers to see who puts the hours in and not invite those that don't?

By contrast, seldom can one look across to the car park area and not see a sky full of Revs, either in team or larger formations. Each day, Fusion, Flying Squad, The Decs and Karasu ran through their repertoire of routines in an hour-long display before combining into a now well-ordered grid fly. Mind you, the news that 80+ revs had flown in the US gave everyone pause for thought. Stacks 10 high must be interesting to fly? One observer of this though reckoned that you could have driven a bus between the lines, so perhaps it was eight teams of ten flying on the same beach, rather than a single grid?

As a tribute to the late John Barker, who died in such sad circumstances late last year, the Swifts and Electric Arfur combined to parachute a whole host of bears and assorted fauna. The only sadness for us was that Arthur's wonderfully choreographed celebration of the art did not happen, primarily because he did not know he was going to perform until Saturday morning. He did 'just happen' to have his rig in the car though! The rest of the afternoon is largely a reprise of the morning's programme with the addition of the spirits and angels and the previously mentioned Rok fight. Given the conditions, TC's kite was used as a 'height limiter' and the fight commenced with all flyers at the same level. With the exception of the odd lurker who did not want to become involved, it was soon down to the last couple of kites before Christian Baden Powell was declared the winner, even though he was not flying what we all understand to be a Rok. It was 6 sided, but sparred as a hexagon and flown one corner up,

Portsmouth 2013—Hugh Blowers

so is it a Rok, one for the rulebook probably. Interestingly Christian later engaged in a private contest with Petra and was beaten in two straight fights.

Sunday started with – a rainstorm- that stopped almost as quickly as it started, but was enough to seriously dampen anyone not in close proximity to some shelter. By the time the programme was due to get underway, the sun was out and a fresh wind blowing, which meant the sprint was reduced to 30 seconds duration. I am happy to report that the winner this time round was none other than Bob Cruickshank, who is hereby given his proper place in the annals of kite history. Some of the competitors demonstrated what was to be an ongoing difficulty, and that was the lack of wind low down as it was now northerly and coming over the town. Fusion managed to cope with it, but Brian and Carl Wright found it extremely frustrating for their demos, having to have a couple of re-starts along the way.

The wind was also giving those in the inflatable area some fun and games, with tangled pilots being the order of the day and much pulling down involved. New to us was another super figure from Berg-Adler being flown by Dirk and Sonia's daughter Celine, on what we believe was her first 'solo engagement'. A variation on a theme was apparently an illicit affair between a Peter Lynn Fish and a Manta, which has produced a fish with a long tube tail. What did become very apparent is that in these types of conditions, it is imperative that flyers are with their kites to deal with any problems, especially when it involves a manta power-diving into the public area.

The art kite segment produced a very different range to Saturday, with several painted images on show. The work of Claudio Capelli is always effective in any size and most of the painted kites were small, although there were Air Gallery edos in the static park. Now to stretch the grey matter, imagine an edo with two toadstools, a four legged, six armed, woodland spirit reclining on them and smoking a hookah pipe. Now, cut away all the excess material, spar what is left and fly. Well this was another of Michael Wegenmayr amazing creations. New to the festival scene and probably not flown since the early 1990s was Llud, one of the series of dragons built by Steve Brockett, even though I will not embarrass George W by repeating his

calumnistic, commentary, faux pas!!!! This wonderful kite had been languishing in a lock-up where it had suffered serious water damage from rust and mildew over the years, but has been restored to flying condition, where it is hoped it can join its brothers Idris, Cadfael, and hopefully Llefeley. Something of a tradition now is the flying of Spirit and Angel kites to allow people to remember flyers that are no longer with us, a list that unfortunately keeps getting longer as the years go by. This is still probably the most effective of all the Martin Lester inflatables and a reminder of what an innovative designer he is, even if his exile to Cornwall means that we now only see him occasionally at festivals.

Difficult to believe that it was a bank holiday and we were not drenched, blown off the common or shivering, which all made a very pleasant change, and meant a highly successful conclusion to a thoroughly enjoyable festival, the 22nd. A lot has changed over that time, but most noticeable was the dwindling number of traders, indicating what is happening in the world of kite retailing. Happily, the green room by courtesy of Roy and Haley has not fallen foul of the recession so that we were well supplied with tea and luvly cakes all weekend. Here's to the 23rd.

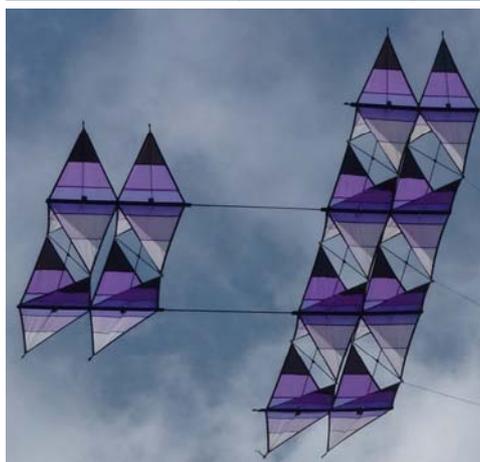


Portsmouth Goes Boxy.



Selection of the Cellular kites at Portsmouth this year.

Clockwise from top left: Dick Toonen—multi-celled box, Christian Harms—Rocket Kite, Volker Hoberg—Hargraves, Kelvin Woods—Cody, Beccles Bunch—Robert Brasington, Christian Harms—Winged Boxes, RIKS Siemons—Roto 8, a variation on a Facet Kite.



Future Events

North Hants Kiter's Jolly Up 14 April 26th & 27th 2014

Gate open from 12noon on the Friday...

It's nearly that time again to come and join us for another FUN Weekend of Kite Flying for Kite Fliers! The site is located in the village of Cliddesden, just south of Basingstoke (not far from J6 of the M3).

On-site camping is available from **Friday** midday onwards (£8 per tent/camper for Fri and Sat night).

The Saturday evening food will be the BBQ, tickets available on the weekend—(£7.00 and please try to bring a plate and cutlery!). Once again we will be doing Jacket Potatoes for those interested at lunch-times over the weekend, and Bacon rolls will be available on both mornings.

The Auction will once again be held on the Saturday evening, and any donations gratefully received before or on the week-end (*before 4pm please* if possible to give us time to set it all up).

We will run the Beer Lift competition, wind permitting, same rules as before.

Roy Martin's Sled competition will take place (to get more details contact him directly please)

Roy's Refreshment Tent will be open for Business, normal rules apply.

For further info, please either contact:

Roy on 07778 352825, Colin on 07770 338419
Or e-mail roy@kitesup.co.uk

You can pre-order your tee-shirt / poloshirt, etc just email if interested in doing so.

(The dates for this same event taking place later this year again are Aug 2nd and 3rd 2014)

Please Note: this is NOT a Buggy/Boarding weekend, thank-you.

Basingstoke Kite Festival 7th & 8th June 2014

At Down Grange Sports Complex, Pack Lane, Basingstoke. From 10am to 5 pm (both days)

Come along and help us to celebrate our 22nd Festival and join in the fun!

Guests from Home and Abroad will be joining in, and as well as things going on in the display arena, there will be the usual array of activities, along with various Kite & Food traders.

A raffle is held over the weekend with lots of donated kite related prizes, donations gratefully received!

On Saturday evening we will have our usual Social Get Together in the marquee, and all are welcome (There is a small fee if you would like to join in with the Buffet, please let us know-in the Raffle area - on the Saturday in the morning)

Camping is available on the Friday and Saturday evenings for £10.00 (payable on the weekend) and there are Showers and Toilet facilities on site.

Come along and join in, and we look forward to seeing you there!!!

Contact: Alan Cosgrove (Main festival Organiser) 01256 421800
Roy Broadley (Kites Up) 01256 812487

October 2013		
26-27	15th International Kite Festival, 83600 Fréjus-Plage, Provence-Alpes-Cote D'Azur, France	
November 2013		
17	Indoor Kite Flying 12:00 - 16:00, St Joseph's College, Swindon	Karl Longbottom, School House, Dorstone, Herefordshire, HR3 6AN
2014		
April 2014		
12-21	Berck International Kite Festival, Berck-Sur-Mer, France	
26-27	North Hants Kiter's Jolly Up 14, Cliddesden, Basingstoke	Roy 07778 352825, Colin 07770 338419
June 2014		
7-8	Basingstoke Kite Festival, Down Grange Sports Complex, Pack Lane, Basingstoke	Alan Cosgrove (Main festival Organiser) 01256 421800, Roy Broadley (Kites Up) 01256 812487
July 2014		
12-13	Barmouth Beach Kite Festival, opposite the lifeboat station Barmouth, North Wales	Waine Hucker, barrikiteflyers.com
19-20	Leominster & Hereford Kite Festival, National Trust Berrington Hall	Karl Longbottom, School House, Dorstone, Herefordshire, HR3 6AN
August 2014		
2-3	North Hants Kiter's Jolly Up 15, Cliddesden, Basingstoke	Roy 07778 352825, Colin 07770 338419