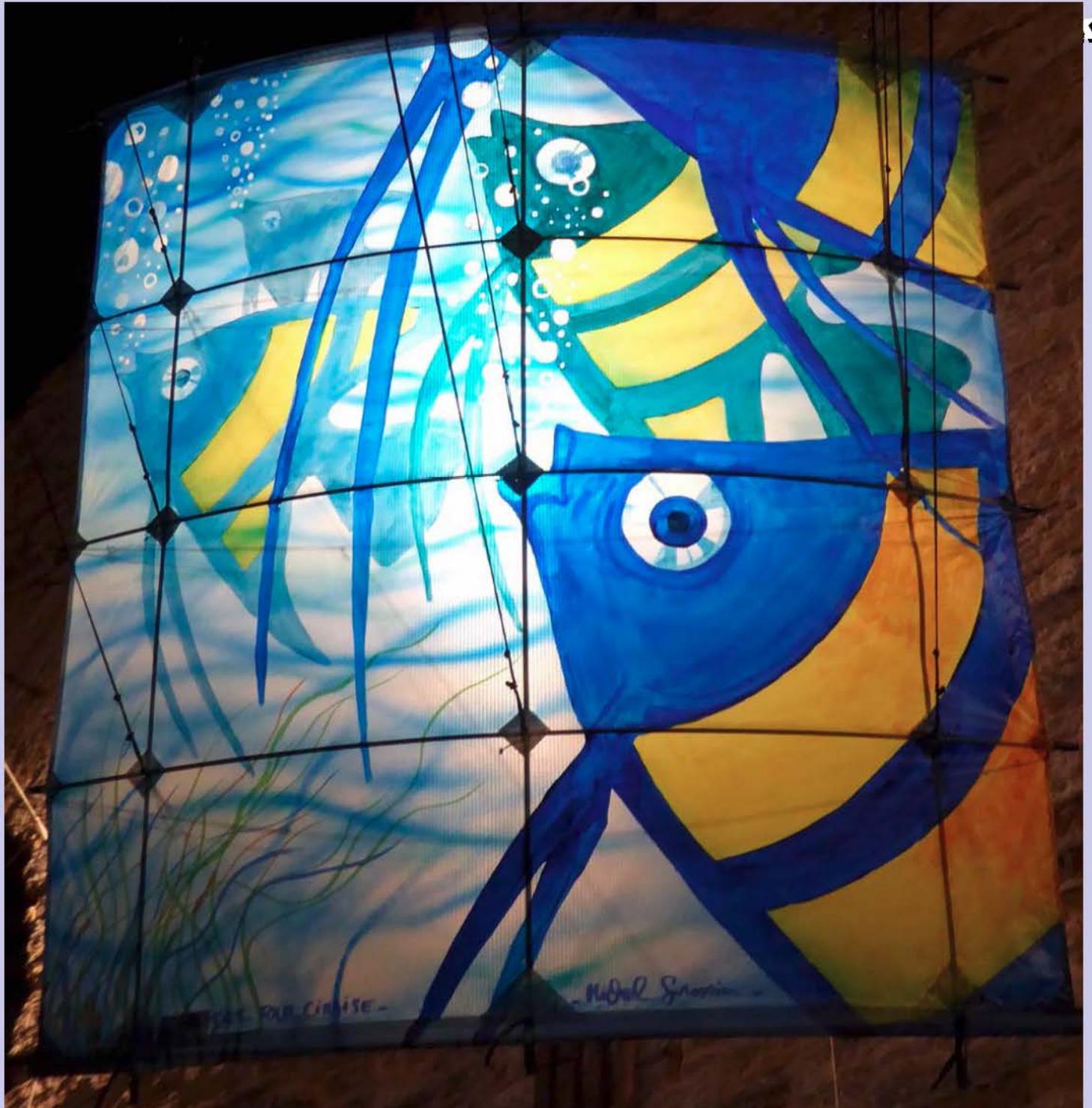


THE KITEFLIER



Issue 152 July 2017 £2.50

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

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Front Cover
One of Michel Gressier kites from the exhibition in Cervia, Italy
Photo: Gill Bloom

Dear Reader

First of all our continued thanks to the stalwart contributors to the magazine. If it was not for Hugh Blowers and Allan Pothercary, this magazine would be much smaller. So we, and you, owe them a big thank you for their continuing hard work and support.

If you want the magazine to continue then you need to contribute to the content. It does not matter what it is—as long as it is kite related. Surely people have opinions, have bought/designed/made/flown a new kite, been to a kite festival. Why are you kite flier? What do you get from the magazine? What is missing or under represented in the magazine?

Even writing in to answer the above is a contribution!

On to Portsmouth—we hope to see many of you to help celebrate the 26th anniversary of the festival. We have a great line up with lots of interesting kites and kite fliers. There are plenty opportunities to fly your kites. Please support the event as there are not many kite festivals remaining that give you an opportunity to interact with the international kite community.

Just a note: For those who do not receive the electronic version of the magazine—this may be a little bit later than normal. Our trusty 12 year old printer has been on its last legs for a while—we have been holding out due to cost—but finally died on us. Waiting for the new printer has caused the delay. But it will be worth it—better quality (hopefully).

See you at Portsmouth

Gill and Jon

Membership Type	Fee
Electronic Subscription (Individual or Family)	£5.00
Household (Individual, Family, Senior)	£15.00
Overseas (Europe)	£25.00
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Portsmouth International Kite Festival 2017

Taking place Saturday 12th and Sunday 13th August at Southsea Common, Portsmouth. This is the 26th Festival.

The theme this year is "The Continents". We are pretty sure we will not manage Antarctica but the others should be covered. There should be lots of interesting kites from around the world—hopefully—an exhibition of some of these kites.

We aim to have several displays where you can bring your kite into the arena and join in. See the Portsmouth web site for details when the timetable is published.

Even if you do not have a suitable kite for the displays—there are often more kites than people to fly them, so why not come along and help—just ask.

We are again hoping to have a display of Dragon kites. We are also looking to grab the record back from the USA for the highest number of Trilobite kites flown at the same time. So if you have one (or more) of these bring them along. Or offer to help fly one as we know we have more kites than people!

We are pleased to have a number of talented kite artists coming to Portsmouth this year with their range of kites together with a range of large inflatable kites from new and regular guest fliers.

We have a wide range of invited kite fliers at Portsmouth this year—some regulars and many fliers appearing for the first time.

Coming to the event are Linda Sanders (Australia), Gary Mark and Michelle Welsford (Canada), Keith Mould (South Africa), a team from Weifang (China), Quinin Bekker (Holland), Evert den Blanken (Holland), Long Valley Kite Fliers (Switzerland), Markus & Katja Flender (Germany), Bernard Dingwerth, Rolf Sturm, Gerd Klaus, Markus Munstermann, Karl-Ulrich Kortel, Meik Sclenger (Germany), Jan and Jolanda van Leeuwen, (Holland), Kites on Tour (Germany), Nasri Ahmed and Bohari Kipli (Malaysia) plus Caterina and Claudio Capelli (Italy).

From the UK we have Team Spectrum, Paul and Natalie Reynolds, Brighton Kite Fliers, Tony Cartwright, The Flying Squad, The Beccles Bunch, The Avon Kite Fliers, The Decorators, Dave Ellison, Guy Reynolds, Flying Fish, Martin Lester, Nick James, Andrew and Kathleen Beatie and Team Flame.

The timetable will be published on the web site www.portsmouthkitefestival.org.uk when we create it! Plus of course George Webster on

commentary.

There will be a selection of kite traders and caterers on site as well as a selection of non-kite stalls and a craft tent.

Festival Auction: There will be a short (hopefully) auction taking place Saturday evening around 8:30pm to raise funds for the festival. This will take place in one of the marquees on site. Items for the auction gratefully received before or on the day. Everyone is welcome to attend the evening events.

Free parking is available for KSGB members on request from us IN ADVANCE. No passes will be available at the site. Send SAE or email us with your car registration number. You will be able to unload your vehicle on the site but PLEASE, once unloaded, move your car to the car park. The car park is located on the left as you enter the site from the Queens Hotel end.

Camping There are no places left—we can add you to a wait list if requested. If you do not have a camping pass please do not camp!

For details of local accommodation please contact the Portsmouth Tourist Centre on 023 9283 6722, www.visitportsmouth.co.uk. The University Halls of Residence, where the invited kitefliers stay, can be booked online at www.port.ac.uk/holidays or call 023 9284 4884.

We hope to see as many of you as possible to come and fly your kites. There will be a number of arena spots where anyone can show off their kites.

Finally we would like to thank Portsmouth City Council for their continued support of the event.



Gary Mark's Astronauts

Trilobite record

I am going to get straight in there and talk about this year's Portsmouth world record attempt of the most Trilobites flown.

In the last edition I spoke of standardisation of flying from within an arena of no bigger than 100 metres x 100 metres. 1) to make it more of a challenge and, 2) so that smaller events could easily participate on a level footing rather than the most TB's flown on say "a beach" which could be three miles long, easy to fly and difficult to adjudicate.

I hope Bognor pick it up as well - Unfortunately we are at an event in Leeds that weekend.

Note that it is "flown from, the arena" so as long as the kite is held or anchored inside the boundary, it matters not if the kites are outside (as long as they are safe of course!).

It was with some in trepidation that Gill and Jon gave way to my haranguing to take up Jim Nicholls' challenge to beat his, then, record of nine last year at Portsmouth but it soon became clear what an awesome spectacle it was.

Tribe

Since then many people have become Trilobite owners or even multiple trilobite owners (they now own a Tribe of trilobites) and have told me that they are looking forward to taking part this year.

So the main thing will be bringing enough friends as pilots because, I feel sure, that there could otherwise be more TB's than people to fly them!



The company that first produced the Trilobite have enjoyed a lot of success with this kite and now other companies have started to produce and/or sell it too.

I have been told of two of them - one in China (What??? a Chinese company making a copy? - Well I never!) and another company in South America, so will we see some competitive pricing now?

We will be bringing our tribe to Portsmouth see you there!

Jellyfish

I know I have my regular 'Victor Meldrew' sessions carrying on about poor communications slow de-

Pothecary Corner—Allan Pothercary

liveries and terrible after sales from the far east and I also know people must be saying "Why does he keep buying them?" - There must be a clever, humorous and cutting answer to that - I'm working on it!

Once again I had all of the above poor customer service and more but, this time I am more than pleased with the product.

There are a couple of different but similar versions of this kite but this one has more detail and was about the same price with the on-line discounts and shipping with this company is free!

Wrong one

I first ordered from Kaixuan but mistake realised over cost and design I did manage to cancel my order with them but they charged me \$15.00 for the privilege! ...and that's after all the free publicity they have had from me - not to mention all the money I've spent with them! Woah!

The Jellyfish was a first for us among large inflatables in that it came with a flying line but, what **are** these people on???

It was a line of about 100lb breaking strain on a winder like you get with a cheap kiddies kite. The instructions and, I assume, any warnings, were very clearly written - but in Mandarin! (my Cantonese mate had trouble reading them).

Then, on their web-page, the advertising said the kite was suitable for children over 14 years - I read somewhere else that such a kite is suitable for three year olds as long as they were accompanied by an adult???

I have to tell you that this kite PULLS! More on this later but the more I have to do with these far eastern companies the more convinced I am is that as long as they can get your money, they have little conscience of what they say or do to get it.

I suppose the only saving grace is that they price themselves out of reach of those inexperienced fliers who would quickly find themselves in trouble were they to attempt flying such a beast. I often let people have a tug on the line to feel the power and they are always surprised.

Getting permission to buy from the governor was fairly easy as they did one in pink. The Jellyfish certainly brought speedy acclaim from both experienced flyers who deluged me with "Where did you get it" requests and the Joe Public with the usual request of "How much?" and then dissolving into the distance without the "Where from?" question.

The basic design of the 'body' part off the creature is that of previous incarnations such as the lady-bird or the tadpole, both kites with a tremendous amount of pull but suffered from instability.

Pothecary Corner—Allan Pothercary



The jellyfish could be a design by accident affair and maybe took better shape as longer tails and other extremities were added whilst looking to make this shape more stable but the three cells are different to the Trilobite and are now much better balanced as this is one of the steadiest kite in our collection. However the sheer length of the tail means that it needs to be flown at back of the field to prevent tangles with the kite lines.

At eighteen metres in length the Jellyfish fills the sky with enormous presence and cannot fail to be noticed even in a crowd of other kites.

Angle of attack

There are two tow points on the bridle for different winds but I followed friend David's advice to try the top setting first and neither of us have even tried the bottom one which, I assume, would make the thing pull even harder or maybe better for low winds. I will try at some point for curiosity but - If it ain't broke don't fix it!

The complication of the skirt and all the things hanging from it and hypnotically swirling in the wind make this a truly fascinating kite to behold from literally any angle.



The manufacturers claim to have several different colours available although I do get people tell me they have given up in frustration of trying to communicate or have cancelled the order after waiting more than a month for it to arrive - mine took two months.

The tracking system has been 'temporarily unavailable' for more than a year that I know of and any questions on this are ignored but now I have told you what to expect I still say it can be worth the hassle.

There's loyalty for you

I had a good reception and fairly quick turnaround on my elephant line laundry design back in 2015 although sales didn't really take off that well. Reports back to me said overwhelmingly that fliers wanted to own the kite but it was far too expensive for what was, after all, little more than a big bag.

I suggested to the manufacturer, Kaixuan, that it could be less expensive or perhaps make a smaller one and telling them what people were prepared to pay. Guess what - they didn't bother to reply!

Second idea

On the 26th January 2016 at 11:05 I emailed Jessica with another idea suggestion and some designs of Chickens to be made in to line laundry. (Yes I still have the email). This time I actually got a reply; they loved the idea but they were busy with a festival so maybe later.

Now I see that 18 months on that they have taken up my idea. Did I get credit? Did I even get told that they were making it? - No.

I wrote and told them that I was disappointed but not surprised at their actions. Guess what? - No reply! These are the people that tell you they want to be your friend and do long term business with you.

As I write, yet another flyer has contacted me via Facebook to say that he has had a problem with a double size rabbit he bought and has had no reply to three emails asking for help. I would refer to my earlier comments.

ION

It was a nice change just recently to get out and fly some new sport kites. We were accompanied by ace flyer Tim Rhon who many will know as the man who helps fly the dragons or - The Dragon Master.

The kite on test was the HQ Ion. I have to say right up front that it wasn't our favourite kite from the HQ stable but, nevertheless was capable of providing a lot of fun - it just depends on what you want out of a kite.



Pothecary Corner—Allan Pothercary

Although the usual, advanced tricks were possible with the Ion, extra concentration was required to achieve them. For the novice flyer, however, this is a strong kite and appeared to have an unusual characteristic neither Tim nor I had not encountered before in that in the lower fifty percent of the window, the kite was slow, low pull and easy to stall but above that height changed into a very zippy creature with increased pull.



Certainly a nice looking kite, well made to HQ Invento quality standards, that stands out impressively in the sky and now, two years on from the first model, produced in a two tone green colour as well - the introduction of a second colour always a sign that a kite is selling well. The wing span is just over two metres and it's recommended by the manufacturer for winds of 7 to 30 mph - although I am not sure that I would want to be on the end of it at that speed.

It is easily available and comes in a strong bag with (nice to see) its own lines.

Marilyn and I talked about how to celebrate our 25th wedding anniversary. As some will remember we did mark this event many times over the years by strutting our stuff in the arena at the Weymouth kite festival but should we spend out and have a big party for all to enjoy or should we book a month, in the warm, flying kites?

Our 25th

OK, Florida here we come. Leading up to the holiday I tried to contact kite flyers in the Sarasota and Clearwater areas of the Gulf Coast where we were to stay. I didn't get any replies to any of my messages although we did note that certain groups did fly on designated beaches on regular dates.

There are some fantastic beaches to fly on in this part of the world but many are inaccessible due to the lack of available parking spaces - Not too few - none! However where there was parking facilities were excellent, somewhere to get food and drink and the all important loos - you just had to get there early or suffer the penalty of keep driving around until someone left and a space opened up.



T.I.

The first Sunday we were up to Treasure Island following what we had read on the internet. No-one had arrived so we just got on and set up as we would easily be spotted. We had loads of people come over to chat or to have photos taken with the kites but no other flyers to be seen. Many of the people that came over were locals and said they had never seen anything like it before so I suspect the information we had was old news and the non replies I put down to general flaky-ness.

We did come across the odd enthusiast but they were very much solo operators and knew nothing about local clubs, They do hold a couple of quite big events down there each year so someone must be in the know but we couldn't find them.

We flew on a few beaches but the one we enjoyed most was Siesta Beach, one of America's finest and with the finest sand I have ever seen - I brought some back and showed anyone that came near at Basingstoke festival. There is an amazing video filmed by my son, using a drone, now on our You Tube channel giving an idea of the size and tranquility of it all.

It's a very wide beach with several paths that people use to cross and settle at the water's edge leaving most of it empty. We only annoyed the local authorities the once by putting up a feather banner I had especially made by Kites Up because they said they couldn't have advertising.

I explained that we weren't kite traders and it was just the name of our team but I took it down anyway and gave the guy a card to go look us up on the internet.

The next day we made sure that we were wearing our shirts with the same team logo on the back, vive la difference!?



Pothecary Corner—Allan Pothercary

The photo above shows what to expect from the video with shots from side on and above and a spectacular panoramic of the whole beach area. In this one you can see us below with the rabbit I reviewed in the last magazine.

We did ask for a quote for the 9 metre rabbit and got \$585.00 back.

Just on principal I won't be paying five times the amount for only twice the size! Of course I asked the manufacturer if this was right and, guess what - No reply!

Nature Coast

I did get contact from one American flyer via Facebook and he invited us to Coquain Beach on the following Sunday where he and his partner had a kite store at the market there every week.

Sergio and Elizabeth, such a lovely couple, hell bent on enjoying life and flying kites.

The pair formed a company run in their spare time called Nature Coast Sport Kites. It all started when, one weekend they were looking for something to do and saw a festival advertised at Treasure Island.

Elizabeth spent most of the day learning to fly in the Rev flying school and then, when every one had packed up and gone home, they noticed that Davis Hazidski of Revolution Kites was still packing away with loads left to do (been there done that many times ourselves).

Naturally the guys went over to lend a hand.

This was followed with going off for an evening meal and a friendship was made. David suggested that Sergio and Elizabeth had the personalities and the enthusiasm to set up a kite store of their own and offered to help.

Not Sure

Some thought was given to this idea and now they have a trailer stuffed full of all sorts of kite goodies from spares to the very latest in Revolution Quad Kites

They've included skill toys novelties and fidgets and travel to all kinds of events at the weekends, reverting back to Coquain when they are not booked in elsewhere.

Elizabeth has been addicted to kites since she was four and they will both talk to anyone about their passion no matter what the question.

They are not yet selling over the internet, in fact I am not even sure that's the intention because of the time all that would take but anyone who has met them would wish them all the best for the future.

Talking of kite traders I really do have to add my congratulations to kiteworld.co.uk. Ever since I



have known Stephen and Michael I have been on at them to improve their web-site.

I have had many a banter with Michael, whose job it is to look after it and, ultimately, take on the mammoth task of changing it. I now find the site very easy to navigate and have found many more items I had missed before.

Whilst undertaking the work and conversing with suppliers, a long, unsolved problem came to the surface.

I had fielded a few complaints myself about messages and requests not being answered and the brothers were mystified because they knew that they had replied.

It turns out that the returned messages were going out but then getting lost in the ethernet and not reaching the customer - this has now been resolved with the new set up.

I hope that the guys do well on this; we need kite traders - without them we lose a true link to kites and will have to depend on the unscrupulous ones who see kites as just a product and only interested in how much money they can make.

Traders don't just sell "ready to fly kites" they are the doorway to spares, materials (not for me - I don't do fiddly), new innovations and commercial kite makers.

They will have a wealth of knowledge and be happy to pass it on.

Come and say hello at Portsmouth.

Allan and Marilyn

kitedisplays.co.uk

Serious Logistics. 31st RICV Berck Sur Mer —Hugh Blowers Photos—Lyn Blowers

Those who read Chris Evans' motoring column in the MOS, and there must be some or they would not continue to employ him, will know by now that the longer his introduction, the less positive he is about the car being tested, so end of intro.

After a significant anniversary like last year, how would the 31st event pan out? Well it has to be up there amongst the best of our twenty visits. There was however, a very different atmosphere, as the security so evident at Dieppe was even more obvious here. As Mayor Bruno Cousein explained, the festival is now the biggest public event in the north of France, and so presents a significant risk in the current climate (as subsequent events have shown). The entire seafront and parallel road was secured with barriers lining all roads and across every junction with security staff at each. Concrete stop blocks and vans blocked access roads and parking was prohibited around the entire area, and that included residents. The entire car park area was also cordoned off for the first time. Drones were prohibited, as were any aircraft over flying the festival site. As in Dieppe, anyone ignoring the no parking signs had a long and expensive trip to the car pound, including some unfortunate kite flyers. Visitors were also advised by road signs to park-up almost a mile away and walk in. This was not the first surprise for us either, as we arrived to find the entire motel complex we have used for many years entirely gutted and remodeled. Happily, the cat is still OK, even if she now needs to think about, and make a serious effort, to jump onto the settee.

Another leap forward in organisation was that the huts were already allocated and keys available when registering, meaning a flying start to Saturday. The weather for the previous week had been superb and looked set fair for the entire festival, although Gerard was concerned about prospects for the wind, or lack of it. There was certainly enough to get an impressive sky almost from the word go with arenas and kites stretching the entire beach from the land-yacht club down to the old hospital complex, soon to be new apartments. There is certainly a lot of money coming into the town for new developments, civic improvements and it was obvious that there were a lot of people coming in as well, even this early on, something I will return to later. Equally obvious was that Manta Kites in all their forms were dominating the Southern arenas, with pilots, without pilots, as pilots and even in trains, seldom fewer than ten in the air at any one time and often many more.

The forklift driver is always in demand on day one to move the anchors to more appropriate locations so there was a chance to see who was and was not there and for how long. Facetube and word of mouth confirmed health problems had kept a number of expected arrivals away and we wish them all well. The usual British contingent occupied their traditional huts to be joined by Berck virgins, Michael and Fran Goddard and AKF substitutes Martin Baker and Alan Holden, so by the time the sun was over the yardarm kites were up and order established. Prior to our leaving home, it had been announced that the Star Trek 'universal translator' was almost a reality, with an app that could simultaneously translate speech from a smart phone to an earpiece. It appears that the caterers may have been using this when the lunchtime menu was printed, as Saturday included 'net of fish' and 'young carrots with grasses', it got better!

Another change was Gerard reverting to something not seen for many years, and that was interspersing the sports kite demos in the main arena with a variety of single line and other kite displays. Karl and Sara Longbottom had brought along a bag full of Phoenix kites that were to play an important part in the week's proceedings. With eight kites and a number of volunteer flyers it was intimated that one of the displays should be Phoenix, so what could be done? Well, these kites are extraordinarily stable, but can be moved around the sky with ease and safety so a practice run had vertical lines, horizontal lines, echelons, arrowheads and more. What about a 'round the world' suggested Martin Baker, no problem, so we were up for it when the call was made? Rene Meir helped by Daniella and Gerhard had a series of his hearts in a train, with Vlandra adding 'Eyes in the Sky'. Karl had added a large angel to the mix, so what better than to have six Phoenix doing a pinwheel round a stationary angel? Marvelous, but then it got a bit silly as all bar one of the flyers had sports kite experience, so what about a refuel? Three kites in each stack looked amazing, bringing to an end the first of what turned out to be eight appearances.

Sunday it seemed as if Gerard's fears had come true, the wind mucked about all day, but it did not deter the crowds who were intent on enjoying the day, it was bedlam, not helped by the an apparent lack of water that closed the toilets for much of the day. The queues for what facilities that were available were epic, but nothing compared to the traffic queues later in the day. Berck and traffic are legend, but this year it reached an all time snarl up, not helped by the main through road being closed. One group left to go to their hotel and in two hours still had not managed the one-mile trip, so legged it the

Serious Logistics. 31st RICV Berck Sur Mer 2017—Hugh Blowers Photos—Lyn Blowers

rest of the way. It was up to three hours to clear the town by car apparently. Although the wind was light and variable it was quite flyable, just different kites needed, so a raid on Karl's bag produced a set of hearts to join Rene for the afternoon display. The sports kite teams were fully employed with a complete line up of ten Folies and Mademoiselles, Panam'air and Now'air up to a combined eight, Red Alert from Russia, the Decorators, enhanced by Vince and Chris from Fusion and Flying Squad who would join FLIC to create one of the most memorable experiences of the festival.

During lunch ('jump of duck'), FLIC, with Chris Goff, Helen Ribchester, Gary Neville and a gap, to be filled later by Steve Hoath, started working up a routine that was mind boggling in its complexity and length. Seb Clark was orchestrating the whole thing as they were walking through, time after time. By the evening, they were in a position to start running the music as well and it represented everything I like about team flying. It was dynamic, relied on the movements coinciding with the music cues and all sorts of nuances that would not become apparent until it was in the sky. By the time we left for our meal, we knew this version of Beethoven's fifth pretty well, and much of the routine.

How inflatables have grown in size over the years was epitomised by one team, whose jackets bore the legend 'over large is too small'. For those not aware of the sizing convention there is Micro, Mini, Midi and Maxi, the biggest there used to be. Then came the 'Mega Series' a trilobite and a manta, but several teams and individuals wanted larger than maxi, so was born the 'over large'. Even this was not enough, leading to the 'super-over large'. AWITA had gone up one on even this, commissioning an octopus that was no less than 65m long, 210+ feet and weighing in at 60 kilos, over 130lbs. It flew beautifully with the flowing movement of tentacles that only this size can create, but could they get it up in the display arena in the light wind. Well, yes, even if it

took a bit of effort and a lot of space. This was not the only large octopus as there were a couple of others that looked pretty big.

Monday brought brouillard, fog to us, and a day of ethereal and surreal flying as there was wind as well. All round could be seen misty figures looking up, hopefully to catch the occasional glimpse of their kites. Lunch was the intriguing choice of 'play of pig to the juice' or the even more obscure 'net of sail needle inhabitant of Berne'. Beginning to wonder if the same people that programme sat-navs have had a hand in the translating app? Arena displays continued, as the French do not seem to concern themselves with weather, there are just even more of them when it is hot and sunny. Only in France can a nudist beach have the GR Littoral path running through it, broadens the mind somewhat, beach volleyball was not like that in the Olympics! The more moderate temperatures ensured that everyone was clothed on the kite field, but one does question what the crowd on the promenade must have made of the Folies flying their routine in the fog with ten almost translucent white Cuben fabric kites? The spectators probably saw more of the Phoenix than we did, but these kites continue to amaze me with the range of wind they will fly in.

Tuesday started so promisingly with 2,000 enfants charging around and lots of stuff in the air, but by mid afternoon it was all very wet stuff as light but persistent rain required several tots of medicinal spirit to ward off the cold. The weather did not deter the enfants who ran about happily dragging kites behind them. The British contingent did take pity on one school that had lined up the pupils one by one, issued them with a large plastic sled and then set them off at a run down the beach. Sadly lack of preparation had kites upside down, back to front, one bridle, no bridle, so we were fully employed helping out. Don't remember teachers that young or attractive when I was at school? The rain was never heavy but in a few hours the inner two cells of our pilot had several gallons of water sloshing about. This was a true baptism for our 'new' red pilot. After years of unjustified complaints about the 'b' blue pilot a replacement arrived from PLK, and I have to say, it is amazing, flies in anything from 2mph to as strong as it got and never moved at all. Mind you putting a soaking and sandy 8m pilot and equally wet and sandy crab away is not the most enjoyable experience. We have learned to bring a large waterproof bag to bung everything in with the hope that the following day will give a chance for everything to dry out. In case you are wondering, lunch was as described, 'chicken tex mex' so no surprises.



Serious Logistics. 31st RICV Berck Sur Mer —Hugh Blowers Photos—Lyn Blowers

All change for Wednesday and the start of a couple of days that you hope for but dare not expect. There may have been fewer flyers than previous years, but there was no shortage of material in the sky. The beach was ram packed from one end to the other with every imaginable kite and a few beyond imagination. Dirk and Sonja Kruger had twelve mid sized Thai cartoon characters on a line and two larger versions.



Uwe and Ellen Dunkel had four Zimmerman owls in descending order of size, while we were able to dry out our crab and add another three to the mix. After a bit of huffing, Guy Reynolds was relocated to the arena immediately in front of the Aqora, usually occupied by the man lifting team. This gave Guy ample opportunity to spread and create a one-man festival. Batman and Cat Woman, Superman and Mr Incredible, Polar bears, Brown bears and a lovely Igloo. This had been at Portsmouth but was at the other end of the field, so this was our first viewing. It is an amazing creation with panels imitating the snow blocks and an ultrasonically welded floor that allows people to crawl inside. I would have to give Guy the award for display of the week, but that was not the only triumph for British kite makers.

Martin Baker was flying a giant set of Martin Lester's footballer's legs on the same line as 'Archie' the top half. La Vieux Du Nord, the local paper voted the legs their 'kite of the festival for the day', featuring it and an interview with Martin the following day. Lunch was garnished with 'butters Mr Hotel' or if you had the fish, the more upmarket 'butters Mr Cordial Hotel'. A further 'garnish' was Daniella Zittman and Sonja Kruger in full Bavarian Dirndls, not



wanting to waste these traditional costumes having brought them for the now non-existent parade.

Thursday continued in the same vein with the wind coming in from the northwest from just after nine until close of play. Sara Longbottom laid out a comet train, only to see it self-launch, where it stayed for the next eight hours. Our aged trilobite sat way up for an equal length of time with the Icarex still as bright as the day it was made but the Carrington tails even more faded. Lunch was 'leg of lamb' or 'net of saumonette to the surprised duglere' whoever or whatever a duglere might be and why was he surprised? With the wind so steady, serious consideration could be given to the arena programme, especially when we were sat at the downwind end waiting for our Phoenix slot along with the Goddards and assembled helpers. Observing routines from afar is never quite as good as being amongst them



Serious Logistics. 31st RICV Berck Sur Mer 2017—Hugh Blowers Photos—Lyn Blowers

though. Each day started with mega teams from both quads and two line. The quads stole the show with a traditional two line style 'follow the leader' as well as a series of very complex grid flys. There was a plan afoot to get one hundred Revs flying together but usually it was over fifty creating all sorts of shapes, symbols including RICV 2017. The sports kites by comparison have still not risen to the challenge, relying on numbers alone.

There is little doubt that the British have raised static and wafting quad flying to an art form over the years, yet I find the European and American style of team routines more fascinating, especially if they are flown to the music rather than with. I guess this is the essential difference between the pick up squads and the teams? A particularly stirring piece of music is 1492 by Vangelis, theme to 'In search of Paradise' (remember Dreams of Flight), which was used by the combined Panam'air and Now'air team for their eight-person team, four Revs, four sports kites. Their routine impressed me last year but the extra Rev added another level to their performance. Having seen it from a concept through the working up and practice, the combined FLIC/Flying Squad exceeded anything I dared hope. The routine was long, had numerous elements including Phillipe knocking each kite over in a ground pass, precise music cues and ended with enthusiastic applause from crowd and assembled flyers alike. It was a privilege to have seen it happen.

Oh yes, it was another award from the local paper for a British kitemaker, this time a Martin Lawrence Hawk being flown by Bob Cruickshanks, so another celebration while we waited for the traditional briefing for the vol du nuit. This has become something of a tradition with Gerard explaining what will happen and a willing volunteer translating. With Seb as the translator we were not too sure if what we were being told was precisely what Gerard intended. A new addition this year along the crowd line was a row of LPG flame guns as seen at many major sporting events. This meant the large gas balloons were much further back leaving a relatively small space for what were termed 'proper kites' before the 'landmines' and banners. Illuminated kites and 'mattresses', as Seb referred to them, were in the next arena and sports kites could go 'where they liked', simple.

Where was the week going, Friday already? An early departure had been Derek Kuhn more than compensated for by Gill and Jon Bloom arriving hot foot from China. Unfortunately, the wind also departed until lunchtime, creating a unique event. The mantas, both the Peter Lynn and Fischbacher version, will fly in very little



wind, but it was still something of a surprise as two came down the length of the beach towards us being flown from hand by Craig Hansen and Dave Hogan. I know from experience that maxi kites can be flown in this way but it was what followed next that was remarkable. Having walked them all the way back, both of them were handed to Kathleen Beattie who flew the two maxi mantas herself to what Craig claimed as a world's first.



Serious Logistics. 31st RICV Berck Sur Mer —Hugh Blowers Photos—Lyn Blowers



After a lunch of lasagne, even the translator could not muck that up, the breeze came up nicely and an attempt to put up as many maxi bears as possible, again around a dozen. The intention to cover the beach with whales would have to wait. For the second time in the week, Jurgen, Uwe, Ingrid and Ellen took their giant bols into the arena. It takes a while to unpack and layout and uses a lot of arena when they filled it on cue, but with the non-stop programme, it was soon time to deflate it and pack it all away again. Flying six Phoenix was easy by comparison; just getting them through the crowds to the arena was the difficult bit. The organisation by the field directors was superb throughout. One walked miles to give timings and flying order to enable each group or team to be assembled at the downwind end of the arena. As a display or routine was underway, the next group prepared to be ready to fly as soon as the team had landed or the single line kites walked out the back of the arena, and so it went on for around three hours each day. Friday night is gala night and without a sports kite competition there was a realistic possibility of the food being relatively early, by Berck standards anyway. A very brief speech from the Mayor welcomed everyone and the evening was underway. He did return to the microphone for a much more serious speech a while later. This was an impassioned statement about how important it was that terrorism should not prevail and how he was taking a very big risk allowing the festival to go ahead and the responsibility was on his shoulders. It was to a standing ovation that he thanked Alain for all the security measures that had been put in place, and what security. Owing to Prince Charles' visit to France and the area, most of the National Gendarmerie were on duty there, so Berck had to hire in a squad from the regular army, who were on patrol all day. In addition there were dozens of Opale Security staff, VSP, Vigi Pirate, Saveteurs, Protection Civile and local gen-

darmes, all organised and supervised by Alain, who is more normally associated with allocating huts and the keys.

It was something of a surprise when Gerard announced that there was to be a new award from this year to recognise the long connection to the festival of Andre Cassagnes. The 'old stagers' will well remember Andre holding court and amusing spectators all day with his various line ferries and poppers. The new Andre Cassagnes Trophy was to be awarded for 'kite creation' so it was a very proud moment when Karl Longbottom was announced as the first winner for his Phoenix. I have been accused of taking a backhander for my enthusiastic comments about this kite, but it is every bit as good as I have intimated and then more, and six or eight together do look stunning. Three awards for British kite makers in three days can't be bad? Liberty of the night must have been the marketing person who labelled the white wine on offer 'a moment of pleasure', it made not drinking relatively easy, but we had probably had enough during the day?

Sun still shining on Saturday but not a lot of wind, and what there was offshore for just about the first time. Plenty enough for light kites on long lines and adventurous manta flyers taking advantage of the gap down at the town end. This did lead to an interesting phenomenon, possibly not for those involved though? The mantas would fly happily, but as they warmed up they started to thermal ever upwards before nosing over and diving straight to the ground, several hundred feet in front of the anchors and making surprise arrivals amongst the concession stalls. The wind did its usual trick and swapped to onshore after a rather special lunch of 'stay at home hot sauce' or the 'net of Hocky woman', all accompanied by 'stay at home vegetables'. Gill Bloom had her latest 'bird kite' flying, a golden pheasant I believe. Like the rest of her work, this involved an incredibly complex mix of dyed and appliquéd material that works so well. In discussion we were certain that Gill is the only person using this technique, which does produce amazing images and yet the juxtaposition between these and a 'garden' of printed flowers nearby clearly illustrated the very differing opinions on these two approaches. One requires very little artistic input, interpretation and even less kite making, whilst the other involves a huge amount of all of these. Probably why I can afford a print at a tenner, but not the original at fifty grand, but I know which I would rather have.

To say that the town was heaving by now was something of an understatement as there was little room left to heave in. The beach was

Serious Logistics. 31st RICV Berck Sur Mer 2017—Hugh Blowers Photos—Lyn Blowers

packed, the prom was packed, every restaurant or bar was packed and with queues, and as for toilets, well! Some of our number found it quicker to walk back to their hotels while using the official passes to get to the front of the queues did not meet with universal approval from the Berckois.

It was of course *vol du nuit* and I cannot remember seeing larger crowds, even during the day. The big question was whether Gerard's luck would hold and that there would be wind? For a while it looked OK, but as dusk fell, so did the breeze. The word had gone out that white kites were required in the arena so the occupants of huts 16 and 19 had taken a stack of alternatives to the tent in preparation, reflective jellyfish, angels and Phoenix, a mylar pyrodelta, a 50s style robot with flashing chest panel and Bob with his Spirit. Now this has to be a 'free spirit as it is renowned for going exactly where it likes rather than where the flyer wants, so might yet prove to be a liability. Around 9.30 a nice breeze sprang, enough to get the inflatables up in the gap and lighter kites in the arena. The wind was perfect for the jellyfish and a long held ambition to get a kite up high enough to be part of the pyrotechnics. Karl even offered to build a new one if it got marmelised.

So, with the usual mellifluent announcement, the *vol du nuit* was underway with incredibly loud music accompanying the throbbing gas flares, the large dirigible balloons wandering back and forth along with the release of the helium filled and fluorescent 'eggs' that floated out to sea, visible for ages. Vulandra had their spacecraft and alien while all around bad language and carnage ensued as invisible lines, high in the night sky, tangled. Having bagged the downwind area, the jellyfish was perfectly placed for the ensuing cacophony of sound, explosions and pyrotechnic mayhem that Berck has become famous for. The concussions hitting the body so close to the fireworks has to be experienced to be believed and the thumps coming down the kite line were equally impressive. After a final cataclysmic salvo it was all over, and not a single scorch mark on a very brave jellyfish, what a night. All that remained was to get home, not a problem for us on foot, but in a car, almost beyond belief. Cars were parked right back to the motel with queues running from the town centre down every road and little sign of any movement. Many gave up and kipped down at the side of the road and there were even some families sleeping four to a car in the car parks.

If you were waiting for a 'but', well here it comes. Sunday was nearly a disaster. DFS (Disappearing Flyer Syndrome) had struck with

a vengeance. From Friday there was a continual exodus and by Sunday morning, with the exception of Rolf, AWITA and a few others, virtually none of the large inflatable crews were still there. Even the sports kite and quad teams were looking somewhat decimated. To compound the problem, there was very little wind either. The public were there in their droves so the remaining flyers did try, but with the temperature well into the 20s, a blazing sun and no breeze, it was silly hot and difficult to keep anything in the air.

The wind garden was the sole area still providing a nearly full service. The ground installations need no wind and Joel Goupil has cunningly added crank handles to his more interesting automata. It would be interesting to know how many times his dragon chicks hatched and squirted the crowd in the course of the festival. Good to see Jean Claude there with an even bigger display. That man knows no limits as to what can be made from re-cycled Pett bottles. The 'cat man' also had a whole series of whimsical variations on his cat theme, which needed little translation.

I have to admit, I was beginning to wilt in the heat, so wondered how we were going to cope with the arena slot for the Phoenix, given the total lack of wind? That any of the teams could perform a routine was amazing, even if FLIC had to resort to team 360s and Panam'air used up the entire arena twice with a reset halfway through. Unlike a competition though, the show must go on. Finally it was our turn with Karl arranging for six launchers, three Russian, three French as it turned out and we flyers to wind out around 100feet of line. On the command we set off, at a remarkably slow pace it had to be said, as six Andre Cassagnes Trophy winning kites rose into the air. They were surprisingly easy to keep up so we managed to fly most of them the whole length of the arena and then through a gap in Michel Boucard's banners to retrieve them on the beach.

All that was left was to reflect, over a couple of glasses of wine, on what had been a wonderful festival, and the sigh of relief from the Mayor's office at the close was almost audible. Just the small matter of getting the contents of the huts back into the cars and vans and after all the sun the sand seemed exceptionally soft and the stairs a long way away and very steep. Within half an hour though, the barriers were being cleared and the roads opened. The Mayor intimated that there would be a 32nd RICV in 2018, whilst during the week we were appraised of some serious politics relating to Dieppe so all we can do is wait, see and hope.

Phoenix Gallery



The Oldest Known Kite—Peter Lynn

Reproduced with Permission.

I remain hopeful that one day, a midden somewhere in South East Asia will reveal datable remnants of a leaf kite that will push the known origin of kites back beyond 10,000 years. Pretty good proof would be a piece of Locoloco leaf spine with line tied around it at an appropriate bridle point.

Maybe such a piece has already been found- but has remained unrecognised because the discoverers, lacking kite knowledge, are unaware of its significance.

Early kite history is severely handicapped by indigenous kites having been, necessarily, made from biodegradable materials. Except in unusual environments - and there are no kites amongst the vast array of every-day items in Pharaoh's tombs, almost certainly because kites were unknown to the early Egyptians - kites degrade to unrecognizability in a matter of years even in dry stable environments. I've already had to dump various silk, paper and bamboo kites that collected in the 1970's and '80s because the silk disintegrated, the paper turned into holes, while the bamboo split and warped. With very careful curating some older Asian kites have survived in recognisable (though faded) form for a little more than 100 years, but not much more that I'm aware of, from the collections and specialist kite museums I'm familiar with. There are a few kites in national museums elsewhere that are older than this, one being in the British Museum. This is a Maori 'manu aute' birdman kite from the Bay of Plenty in New Zealand, collected in 1843 and probably dating from not much earlier than this: www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=514357&partId=1

It is in such fragile condition that it cannot now be taken out of the museum, and hasn't been exhibited since 1998.

One kite that is older than this is known. It's of the style called a 'French Peartop' and has writing on it: "RB and TB 1773".

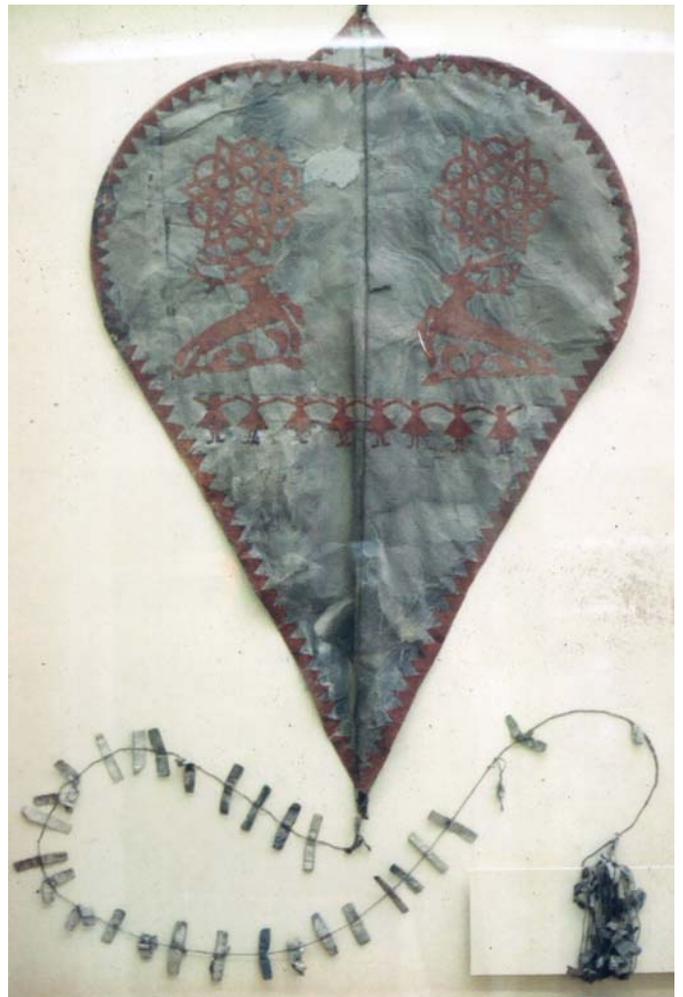


Breestraat, Leiden (Netherlands) in 1985.

When I first saw this kite, it was in a case on the wall at Vlieger Op (a kite shop then owned by Gerard van der Loo) in den Haag in the late 1980s, and I was

able to purchase it from Vlieger Op about 10 years ago.

It then went to Drachen Foundation in Seattle www.drachen.org/video/worlds-oldest-kite where Thom Shanken, a forensic coroner from New York with an avid interest in history, investigated its provenance. www.drachen.org/simplenews/drachen-foundation-newsletter-march-2008.



Fraud and forgery being not unknown in the antiquarian world (for personal gain, the support of a theory or even just to get one over fellow 'experts'), this involved a detailed and sceptical look at its every aspect.

One of Thom's first questions was its provenance from 1985 to 2007 - wanting to assure himself that what we have now is the same kite that was found in Leiden in 1985.

Personally, I had no doubts about this as I'd had a good look at it back when I first saw it, and can attest to it's being the same kite now- with the same decorations, initials and date. Nor, for this kite from this place, did there seem to be any of the agendas that motivate the forgers of fraudulent maps, for example. But then again, I'm not a particularly suspicious person.

In any event, this concern was allayed as detailed study established that the kite we have now, whatever happened to it between 1985 and 2007, was in-

The Oldest Known Kite—Peter Lynn

deed very likely first made and flown in the late 18th century.

The first step in this was to consider whether the materials used in its construction 'were consistent with the claimed age'. This was established by examination of the paper, string, dating of the book pages used for the tail, the type of glue and many other details.

But what if some clever forger had constructed it more recently from late 18th century materials?

By building and flying replicas, Thom then discovered minutia in the tensioning of the bow and its later reinforcement that make the possibility of it's being a forgery highly improbable*.

With this and the weight of other evidence, his conclusion is that it's likely to be genuine- and was probably made by 2 young boys.

I'm not sure about the 2 young boys bit - the standard of construction and decoration seems high. By the age of 12, while being a prolific kite builder, I doubt I could have produced something of this standard - though children back then were maybe a lot better at this sort of stuff.

But I also believe it to be a genuine and original 18th century kite - except that it does look to me like someone since 1985 may have pencilled over the original date to make it more readable. This 1773 date, although probable, does not definitely indicate that the kite was built in exactly that year in any case.

930mm along the spine, 630mm wide, amazingly, it's in flyable condition - the paper covering is pliable, the sticks (I've been told they're Hazel, corylus avellane?) are sound. The spine is roundwood - straight from the nut tree. The covering is patched and there's been skilled tuning of the bow (which is whittled), suggesting the kite had been flown, damaged, repaired and flown again.

A well-used and well-loved kite I would say.

A feature is that the bridle (we used to call them belly bands when I was a kid) is quite tight to the surface of the kite and the line attachment point is a long way to the rear. In my experience, this suggests that it would require quite strong wind to fly - which is why I will never try it.

The tail is of the traditional bow-tie type, in this case the ripped-out pages of an 18th century book (Latin).

But what do we know about RB and TB? Who's kite was it? Alas, it's conjectural, but I imagine that these are the initials of two children (most likely from the same family), who made the kite, or for whom it was made (more likely I think). Property records for Leiden from this period still exist (but are expensive to access), and having the address, one day it may be possible to know more about who they were.

Also significant, is that it's construction and features are very similar to those of the kites I made and flew as a child - the shape (though we more usually made

diamond kites), the sticks, paper, glue, decoration, and tail, had not changed substantially in the 7 or so generations that passed until I started making kites in the 1950s, on the other side of the world.

Two days ago, it finally arrived in Ashburton and will be displayed in the Lynn Historical Woodworking Museum at the Plains Heritage Village here.



Or it will be when we have established that difficult balance between making it viewable while preserving it in as good condition for the next 244 years. Controlling temperature and humidity - and shutting out UV light- are considerations, about which I will need to get expert advice.

This museum was my father's life's work, and I am pleased to be able to make a second contribution to its attractions. The other is the German reciprocating antique sawmill, ex Hoberg, which has featured in earlier Newsletters, that has now found a home there.

Thankyou Thom for your careful investigation.

And thanks to Drachen Foundation, Scott, Ali, and staff, for their professional curating of this kite - and for packing it so carefully for shipment to here.

Now there's yet another reason for visiting us!



(* What looks like a repair to the bow (in the accompanying photo) is actually not a repair- the bow is undamaged, rather it is how the kite maker has stiffened that side to balance the kite.

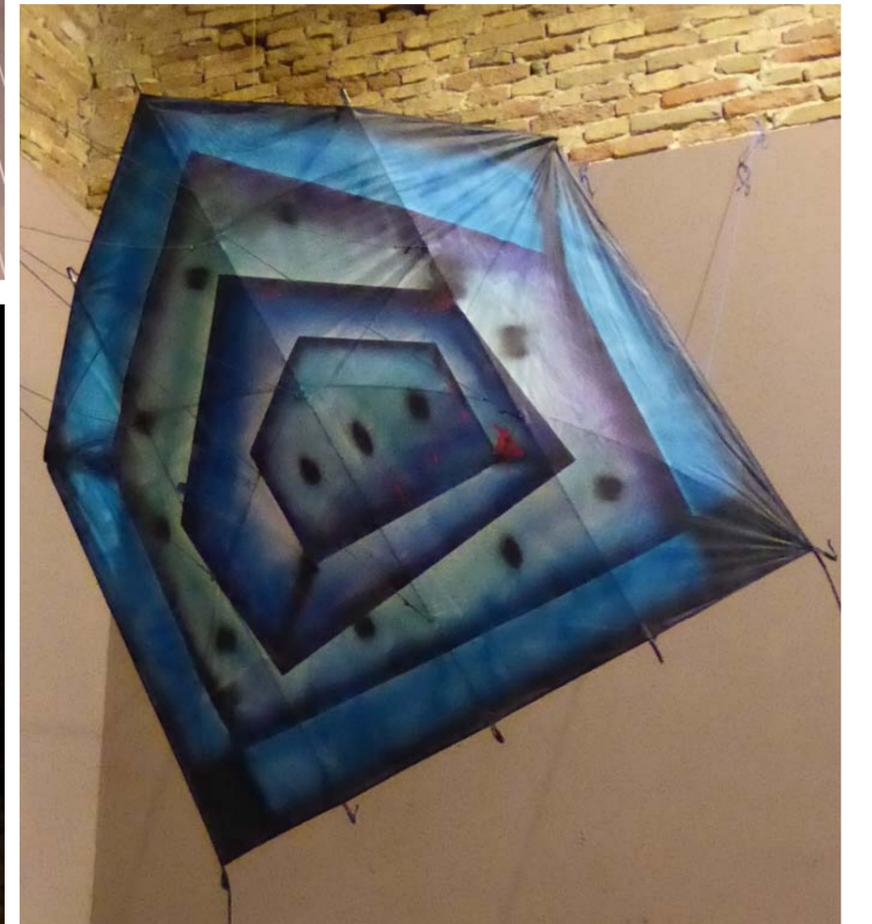
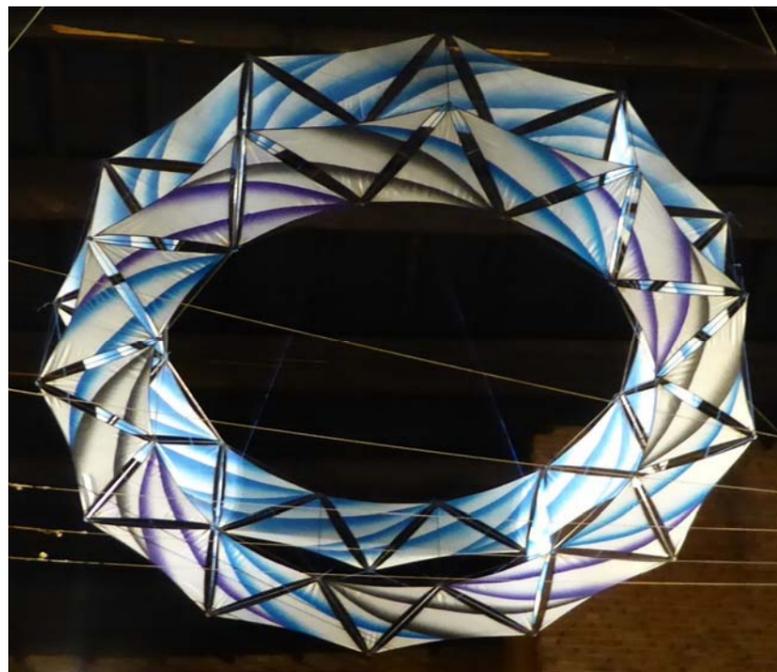
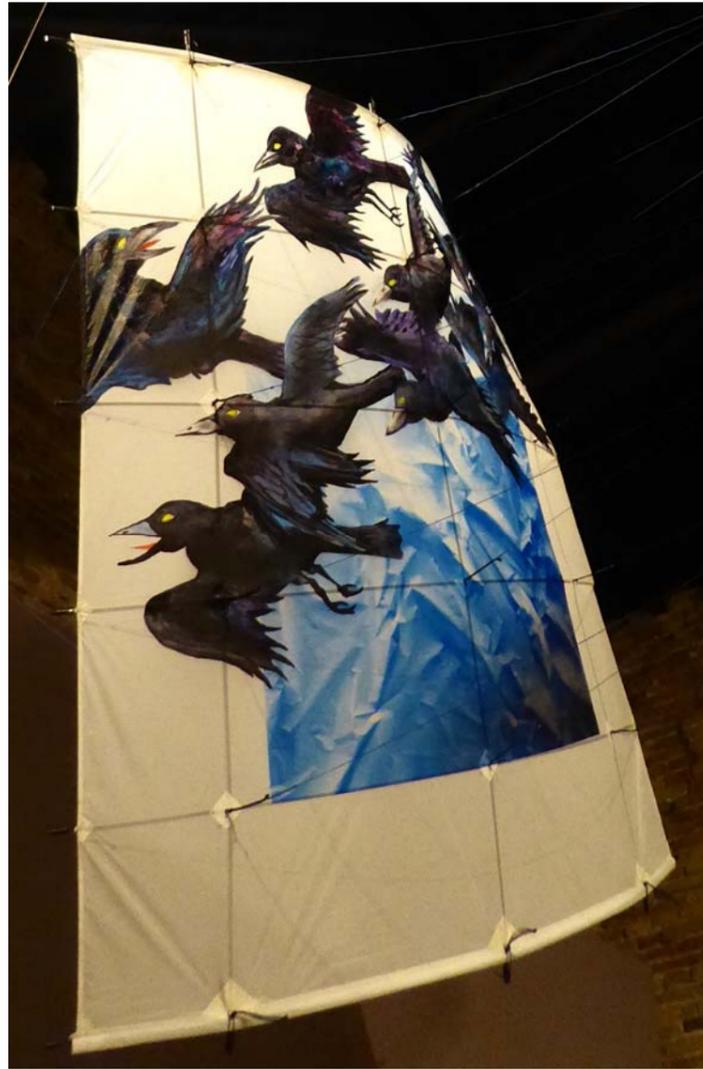
Michel Gressier and Friends. Artists Sky and Earth—Gill Bloom

As part of this year's Cervia International Kite Festival a special exhibition was held featuring the kites of Michel Gressier and others.

Born in Tours in 1954, graduated from the Academy of the Fine Arts of Grenoble Michel Gressier started as an engraver and in 1995 was inspired by an exhibition which included Curt Asker, Falko Haase, Tal Streeter, Istvan Bodoczky and the grand-daughter of Henri Matisse—Jackie Matisse.

The exhibition features a rich selection of works that follow the creative journey of Gressier from the 80's to the present. The painter of Tours produced new forms of kites and other items—ranging from large "Boules" flying on the beach at the Pinarella di Cervia Festival to the large flat and kites.

It was certainly a stunning exhibition and reflects the talent and creativity of Michel Gressier.

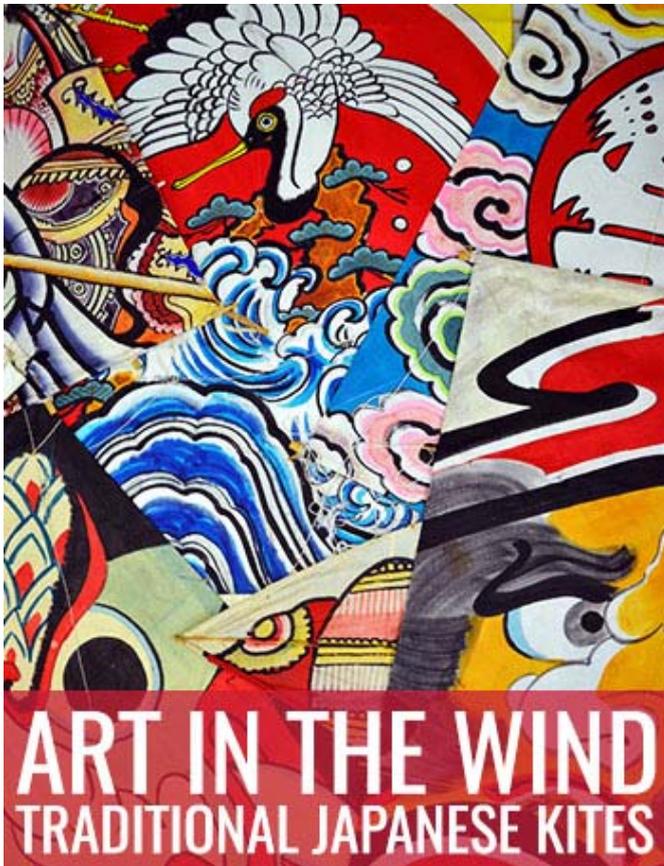


Bits & Pieces

Kite Exhibitions

Art in the Wind: Traditional Japanese Kites at the Embassy of Japan in Washington, DC.

Until August 18th



Discover the centuries-old tradition of kites in Japan with this wonderful display curated from more than 50 traditional Japanese kites! These vibrant, colorful kites are a never-ending source of visual delight with their variety of shapes, sizes and decorations. Featuring birds, insects, legendary samurai and more, each region of Japan has their own characteristic shape and style for kites, making Japanese kites some of the most spectacular in the world. Treasured for their aesthetic as much as their use, kites continue to be an important part of Japanese culture even today.

Come explore the fascinating artistry and experience the feeling of flight with these colorful traditional Japanese kites!

There is also a link to some 'colour it yourself' kite designs. www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/jicc/exhibits/art-in-the-wind.html

Kites go up at Bair Museum
Martinsdale, Montana

"Above and Beyond — Paintings as Kites" showcases selected works by Bozeman painter

and MSU Art Professor Emeritus Harold Schlotzhauer at the Bair Museum in Martinsdale.

The works were influenced by the history of Japanese kites and the time Schlotzhauer spent in Japan with his family. Japan's kites are among the most spectacular in the world, treasured as much for their aesthetics as for the pleasure they give as toys.

The history of kites is long and multi-cultural. The exact date and origin of the kite is not known but it is believed they were flown in China more than two thousand years ago. Kites were first introduced into Japanese culture by Buddhist missionaries who traveled from China in the Nara Period, 649-794 A.D., and they were used in Japan at that time in various ceremonies.

Schlotzhauer's kite paintings are presented in a variety of shapes and sizes, including some traditional shapes and some invented, but like most kites his original imagery is bold and colorful. Their brilliant patterns, bold motifs, and electric, linear energy are reminiscent of Japan's spectacular Edo period kites, still considered today to be some of the most beautiful kites ever created.



Bits & Pieces

Kite Sneakers

Vans Sk8 Hi Peanuts Charlie Kite Skate Shoe

Showcasing your favorite Peanuts characters, the new Sk8 Hi Peanuts Charlie Kite Skate Shoe from Vans has you covered for your next big adventure! The Sk8 Hi Peanuts Charlie Kite Skate Shoe features sturdy canvas uppers with graphic printed side panels, and classic vulcanized sole construction for optimal flexibility and natural board feel.



Priced at \$74.99. Sadly we cannot yet find a U.K. stockist.

Seen at the Auctions

Ebay. Antique Oriental Frame Art Kite. 22K Gold leaf and silk. Pre WWII 32" x 28" Description: This gorgeous antique work of art is believed to be from the 1930s and appears to be silk work with gold leaf accents. Kite framing is bamboo.

It is a muted reddish (meaning power) and the peacock which is good luck. So is believed that it was made in "celebration" of the Japan/China war which began in July 1937. This is the only information that was noted as their ancestors immigrated shortly thereafter.



Listed for \$799.99 plus postage.

Ebay. DALEKS' KITE

© BBC TV 1965

Polythene sheet is 17" X 17"

One of the scarcest Dalek merchandise, and is in undamaged condition.

I have had this professionally framed and glazed with good quality materials. Overall dimensions are 24" x 29" x 1" This is Excellent, in unmarked condition. Listed for £489 plus postage.



Mug for Kites

The perfect stand out gift for any Kite Lover.

Available from etsy.com \$10.00 plus shipping.

Maybe in 2018

Danish art on Japanese kites.

As part of the big kite celebration on Fanø in June, eight Danish artists made paintings on Japanese washi paper.

Bits & Pieces

The Danish artists that participated in the project were: Anders Brinch, Uffe Christoffersen, Margit Enggaard, Jacob Gadd, Rene Holm, Andreas Schulenburg, Sussi Trampedach and Anne Aarsland.

During the first 2 days, Hiromi Endo, the experienced Japanese kite maker showed how to build the Rokkaku Dako using the Danish artworks. Then the kite artworks were exhibited along with Malcolm Goodman's kite collection.

Afterwards, there will be in exhibitions at the Danish Embassy in Tokyo, Fanø Art Museum in Sønderho and Overtaci Museum in Aarhus.

When the 'journey' of the kite artworks is completed, they will be auctioned on Lauritz.com. The profits from the sale are donated to Overtaci Museum, which is both an Art Museum and a Psychiatric Historical Museum.

Jacob Gadd's 'Walther' on washi paper.



3D Printed Dihedrals.

For those who have a 3D printer you may be interested in the instruction file from Thingiverse. The summary reads: Kite Dihedral An angle caused by 2 planes to create a wing The angle of the dihedral is set for optimum stability for a kite.

Using spars made from carbon fiber, fiberglass or wooden dowels the kite skin can be attached. Files a range of spar sizes have been produced (see www.thingiverse.com/thing:2363760 for details). All holes are a tight

fit on the spars and drilling or reaming out might be required

I found 1.08 % to be the best in the slicer program (cura). However your results might vary. To make large fittings the % can be increased in the slicer program

Kite Fighting (again).

This time a written Parliamentary question was raised by Jim Shannon MP. Kites: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department (for Transport) is taking to monitor and control kite-fighting contests.

Answer: Permission is required from the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to fly a kite above 60m, in accordance with Article 92 of the Air Navigation Order 2016.

The CAA has a dedicated page on its website containing guidance on the rules and regulations relating to kite flying in the UK. The CAA intends to shortly commence an email campaign directed at UK kite associations, organisations and clubs with information on the existing regulations relating to kite flying and the CAA permissions process.

This has been picked up by a number of media sources (The Times, Daily Mail and the BBC) with varying degrees of correctness and spin depending on where you look with the Daily Mail winning (once again) for the sensationalist headline—"Pilots face new threat to the skies - KITES: Razor sharp cords used by 'kite fighters' in mid-air duels are getting snagged on low-flying aircraft".

This is quite a serious issue for responsible kite fliers with the potential risk to banning many types of kite flying. If you see such activities taking place—and obviously breaking the law, please report it.

Glastonbury

We know it is all over but we hope anyone going did not take a kite—because they were banned from the site.

A History of the World

This was a collaboration between the British Museum and BBC. One of the items was Japanese Kite. The description goes:

It is thought that kites were first introduced to Japan by Buddhist monks who came from China in the Nara period (710-794 CE). Kites were used for practical purposes, such as lifting materials to workers during the construction of tall buildings, but they are mainly associated with religious festivals and thanks giving ceremonies.

Bits & Pieces

There are many different styles and types of kite, with each region of Japan having a characteristic shape. The decoration often depicts characters from Japanese folklore or have some religious or symbolic meaning.



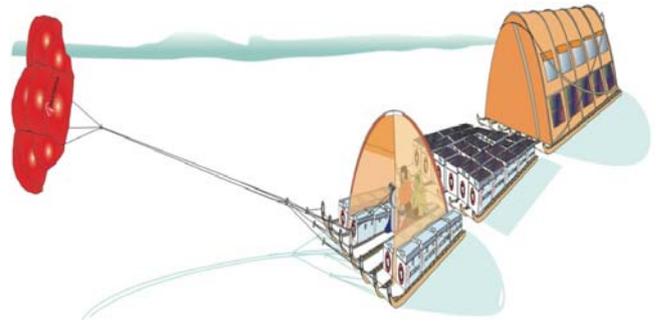
This kite depicts Sasaki Takatsuna, a samurai commander in the Genpei War (1180-1185 CE). In art, Takatsuna is often depicted riding the Shogun Yoritomo's white horse, Ikezuki, racing to be the first to engage in the battle of Uji. The animal head in the bottom left corner of this kite probably indicates that this kite depicts this scene.

This kite is unusual because it was made by a female kitemaker, Asako Kato, one of only three women kite makers working in Japan in the early 20th century.

Inuit Windsled

'Nature Magazine', 22nd June edition, highlights the importance of undertaking 'clean science' and describes the WindSled, designed by polar explorer Ramón Larramendi, as "an excellent opportunity for a low carbon emission scientific platform." The article points out the WindSled can save as much as 100 barrels of fuel, in comparison with the ski aircraft commonly used in scientific expeditions similar to this one just completed in Greenland, Ice River 2017.

The windsled concept is a kite powered sled to reduce the carbon foot print of expeditions to this remote part of the world.



Kite-surfing could put rural Brits online

U.K. network operator EE plans to deliver 4G internet access from a kite-like balloon first developed as an observation and communications platform for the military.

The Helikite was invented in the 1990s and has also found favor with Antarctic explorers, disaster relief workers and emergency services. EE revealed its plans to deliver wide-area network coverage from the helium-filled balloons on Tuesday, although it won't have the first one in service until later in the year.



According to All-sopp Helikites, the maker of the kite-balloons, hoisting a 4G base station aloft can increase its range from 3 kilometers to between 30 km and 80 km.

The system is reminiscent of Google's Project Loon. That effort will put wireless internet access points on high-flying helium balloons that can navigate changing air currents at different altitudes to "loiter" over a particular region. In contrast, EE's Helikite-mounted base stations will be tethered to a particular spot and fly at an altitude of about 100 meters.

Obama surprises Mid-Pacific students with personalized photo, letter

Mid-Pacific Institute middle school students got quite the treat when former President Barack Obama sent a photo of him posing with the kite they made just for him.

Bits & Pieces

It was all part of Kite Day in April. The students designed the kite with the former president's face on the body of a super hero and then launched it over the school's football field that day.

They later sent the kite, along with a message and their autographs, to Obama. His response: The photo and personalized letter letting them know he believes in them.

The photo and letter are now on display at the school alongside a photo of a Calvin Coolidge kite students designed in 1924.



Kite wind farms take off in UK as future of energy

The UK has just given the world's first kite farm the green light. Does this mean we're gliding forth into a new frontier of energy? Greenpeace's Zachary Davies Boren, certainly hopes so.

Why kite windfarms? Kite farms have been designed to harvest energy from the most powerful winds, which are way up in the air. These winds have twice the velocity of those near ground level, with up to eight times the power density – a potent source of untapped energy.

"There is enough energy in high altitude winds to power civilization 100 times over," says Professor Ken Caldeira of Stanford University.

According to Greenpeace's Energydesk, there are nearly 50 commercial high-altitude wind energy projects in development.

How does it work? Different companies have produced several different approaches to wind energy. Most famous, perhaps, is the Altaeros, a blimp-like balloon with a giant turbine that spins in its centre. Makani Power, recently acquired by Google X, is essentially a tethered aircraft; while other companies have developed

smaller tethered balloon-like devices known as 'kytoons'.

But it's true kite mechanisms that appear to be leading the high-altitude energy scene – in Europe at least. This month, Kite Power Systems were given the go-ahead to launch the UK's first kite power plant. This uses 20 kites which are tethered to generators on the ground. These work in pairs to generate electricity, flying in loops at more than 100mph.



For Sale:

Large Chinese dragon built by Pan Gang's father, bought from and tuned by Pan to fly in anything up to very strong winds. A mouse has had a nibble at some of the polystyrene teeth and the eye, hence the asking price of just £75. Could deliver to Portsmouth.

h.blowers@btopenworld.com
01502 712570

Kites are an Optional Extra!



UK National Championships 2017—Lex Kraaijeveld

For the 2017 National Championships, competition was run over three rounds, with the best two counting. As last year, the competition would include compulsory figures, a technical routine, and a ballet. Following last year's feedback, we worked hard over the autumn, winter and spring to add more technically-challenging elements to both our technical routine and ballet. Both now included several axels and half-axels, and we had completely re-choreographed the end sequence of our ballet.

Round 1 - Billing Aquadrome - May 20 & 21

With one round run over a weekend, precision and ballet were split up over the two days in each discipline. So, for instance, in dual-line pair, precision was flown on Saturday; ballet on Sunday. Wind conditions were really tough both days: lots of holes, bumps and turbulence. In addition, Saturday had its share of squally showers.



In dual-line individual, there were four competitors. Besides the expected Tony Shiggins and Fran Burstall, Irma and I also chipped in. This was a one-off, mostly to increase activity in the arena, given that one round of competition was spread across two days.

No surprise that Tony ended up at the top of the leader board, and that Irma and I, with quite some distance, were third and fourth. Keep in mind that we had never practiced the individual figures, and did not have a technical routine or a ballet. Making it up as we went along was all we could do!

Two entries for dual-line pair: the usual suspects Phoenix and Flying Fish. No pictures of either pair this round, and no surprise that Phoenix beat Flying Fish by a wide margin. The Phoenix routine did contain my personal highlight of the weekend: a perfectly executed refuel landing! As to our own flying, we really struggled with the wind conditions, made mis-

takes, and definitely flew well below what we felt we are capable of.

One entry in dual-line team: Flame.

Guess who topped the table at the end of the round?

No entries for any of the multi-line disciplines, no entries for multi-kite, no entries for free-style. Basically, there were only five individuals competing across three disciplines; a pretty meagre showing.

As you might expect, each day was concluded with some mega-team flying.



Rounds 2 & 3 - Dunstable Downs - June 17 & 18

The weather during rounds 2 and 3 was sunny and hot, very hot. Wind on Saturday was mostly 3-8mph, whereas on Sunday we got 0-6mph.

Note the '0'. Upon arrival at the Downs on Sunday morning, there was absolutely no wind, and I felt there was a genuine risk the competition would be called off for the day. Some air movement did happen soon after, and it was decided to give things a go.

Throughout the day, the wind often got thermal, often dropped away completely, and there were frequent calls for 'wind check', resulting in 'wind is bad' and a wind recess called.

Apart from that, did I mention it was hot?

Dual-line individual saw three competitors enter: Tony Shiggins, Fran Burstall (one round only) and Josh Mitcheson.

Multi-line individual had a sole entry: Josh Mitcheson.

The usual two dual-line pairs: Phoenix and Fly-

UK National Championships 2017—Lex Kraaijeveld



ing Fish. Phoenix' 2nd round routine presented the highlight of the weekend for me: the lower leading edge of Tony's Fury broke, resulting in the remainder of the leading edge coming out of the ferrule. Despite having a badly-wounded kite at the end of his lines. Tony completed the routine!

As to Flying Fish, we had our ups and downs. The real down was crashing out of one of the compulsory figures (Boomerang, if you want to know): in the first half-axel, Irma's kite just got too low, and the ground jumped up to grab it. The up was that we felt that our Saturday ballet was the best ballet we ever flew in public.

Not perfect, of course, but it clicked, it felt right, and we hit almost all the axels and half-axels. Made up for the zeroed Boomerang!

During our Sunday ballet, we probably covered the most ground ever due to the turning 'wind': walking backwards a lot, first into one corner and subsequently into another when the wind changed direction. We finished the routine, but only barely, and far from pretty.

Only one dual-line team competitor: Flame.

And only a single multi-kite flyer entering the competition: Josh Mitcheson.

What about multi-line pair/team? No multi-line team to be seen, but we did bully the Dunstable Downs Old Gents into doing a demo in the arena, outside the competition.

If they had agreed to enter the competition officially and be judged & scored, they'd have become UK National Champions ... Maybe next year?

The full results of round 2 are here, and of round 3 here, and some more pictures are here. We did fly mega-team on Saturday (no pics; sorry), but on Sunday, because of the heat, no one could be bothered (the lack of wind would have made it very difficult anyway).

And that brings me to the UK National Champions 2017.

Individual	Tony Shiggins
Pair	Phoenix
Dual Line	Flame
Multi-Line	Josh Mitcheson
Multi-Kite	Josh Mitcheson

Of the two competitions with more than one entry, the dual-line individual was closest. In dual-line pair, Phoenix beat Flying Fish easily, despite the extra elements we added. We'll need to up our game next year, but, with an extra year of scores under our belt, we at least strengthened our #2 UK ranking.

The full results of round 1 are shown at <http://www.savell.plus.com/stack/results-current.html>



Weymouth May Bank Holiday— Stephen Hodges.

We booked a room in Weymouth as usual back in January thinking that the festival would still be on, then in March read on Facebook that there was going to be no festival this year. Barbara and I decided to go down for the Bank holiday anyway and take just a few kites and look around to see what else was on for the weekend. With rain on and off the whole weekend we still managed to get around and fly some kites.

Saturday afternoon we spent time round the shops and having a coffee, no one on the beach flying kites in the evening brought two tickets for the pictures, but first dinner at **Fish 'n' Fritz, 9 Market Street, DT4 8DD** its said to be the best chip shop in Weymouth you always get a good helping.

On Sunday we were told there was quite a good bootsale at **Fairfield Dorchester**, this looked ok as the rain was on and off so it was Bootsale first then some kites later. Picked up some handy bits there, a Pink Floyd LP cover I wanted 'Animals,' also some Poole pottery.

Left there at midday day then the rain come down, the kite festival would have been a wash-out.

Back in Weymouth we wondered down to the harbour, a live band were playing by the bridge it was loud and not our type of music, lots of people standing around drinking beer. We wanted a look inside **The Tudor House, 3 Trinity Street, DT4 8TW** but this was closed maybe we will take a look some other time.

It was late afternoon too late for flying kites we'll try that tomorrow as we are here till Tuesday. Sunday evening dinner was at **The Gurkha, Commercial Road, DT4 7TY** 01305 778877 Alan P told us about this restaurant a couple of years ago, I wish we found it many years ago. They have a great choice of food, Chinese, Indian Thai, Singaporean, Nepali and also English chips. With two large glasses of wine we tucked into some great food, not much else happening and it was very wet outside, so we went back to our B&B and watched a DVD till midnight.

Monday looked ok but still some dark clouds not far away, a drive over to Bowleaze Cove where you can park your car near to the stony beach, there was a small boot sale in the second car park, we had a quick walk round we were told many traders did not turn up with the bad weather we are having, we picked up a mint condition cake stand for £3 it has pictures of nest-boxes on, *anyone for an almond slice?*

At last we managed to get some kites out for the light wind many of them flew well over the souvenir shop and café, using a 20lb braided line and some lightweight Ripstop nylon kites that's all I could fly. I tried flying some Sled Delta's the ones I use for sprinting (*the good-old days at Weymouth*) but I was lucky to get them up to 40 feet, the best one that flew was a grey Sled Delta made by **Karl Longbottom** that must have gone up to 250 to 300 feet in a very light wind

I tested some Indian fighter kites I have made with 16 foot tails. These were quite good, the tail is added to keep them stable for children to fly all made

from Ripstop and Fibreglass. I have many Dunton Delta's but none of these wanted to lift up.

I had been the only one on the beach flying kites, some dark clouds and a few spots of rain, it was time to pack up.

Drove back into Weymouth for a coffee and booked a table for **The Handmade Pie & Ale House at Queen Street DT4 7HZ** 01305 459342 you need to book a table here as weekends can get very busy. We both had great pies with a pint of Irish Stout and a large glass of Malbec, we've been coming here for several years now. Then we wondered round to the harbour to see the yachts and fishing boats. A walk back now to the B&B we got another DVD out.

Tuesday morning we had time to go into the town and visit a hand blown glass factory at **Stuart Wiltshire Glass, 18 St. Nicholas Street, Weymouth DT4 8AA** (*just behind the small Tesco's*) 01305 766037 Stuart set-up the small company a few years ago by himself, he gives lessons in blowing your own glass object, he showed us some vases and bowls that people had made on Saturday, some great vases with swirls of colour inside.

We will book a lesson next time we come down to Weymouth. Saturday or in the week is good, we brought a couple of small glass blocks to hold pens.

Late morning now so time to start heading home, it had been a good weekend, good food, some kite flying, and some site seeing I'm sure we will be back again kite festival or no kite festival, there's always somewhere to go... like the **Abbotsbury Subtropical Gardens, Bullers Way, DT3 4LA** about £12.50 to get in that's for next time. I just need to pick up my fee now from the Weymouth and Portland Bill Tourist Information council....*oh I forgot they are very short of money!*

Happy kite flying at future kite festivals.

Stephen & Barbara.



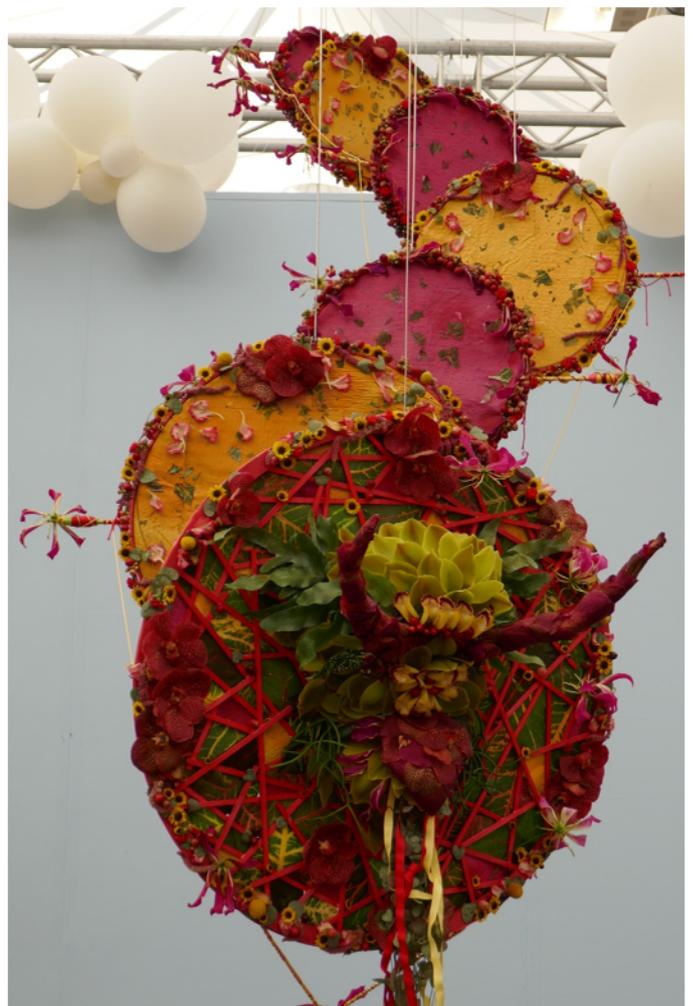
RHS Chelsea Flower Show—Photos Marian Linford

Hundreds of florists entered the nationwide heats organised by the British Florist Association over the past six months, and our finalists represent the pick of a very talented bunch having scored the top marks across the heats.

The design brief was to create Floral Kites using fresh flowers or plant material under the theme of 'City Streets and Summer Skies', a challenging task as the designs are to be suspended in mid-air from the rafters of Chelsea's Great Pavilion.

The florists received the competition brief back in early April and have been researching, designing, sampling and experimenting non-stop to hone their kite designs to the point of floral perfection. Their floral kites could be no more than 80cm wide, weigh no more than 10kg each and be made almost entirely of fresh flowers and foliage.

The winner was Hannah Mae Lane has won Young Florist of the Year 2017 with her colourful floral kite made of a series of detailed hoops. (Below).



Wild wind and water. Bedford—High Blowers—Photos Lyn Blowers

There is an old saying in the kite fraternity, that there is never the wrong wind, only the wrong kites. Well, after a weekend at the Bedford Kite Festival, even that seemed to be untrue as almost every possible variation of kite design could be seen in the air, primarily down to the perseverance and masochistic nature of the assembled flyers. The forecast for the weekend throughout the preceding week was dire, with the promise of strong winds throughout and heavy rain for one day at least. By Friday, there was hope, as the rain seemed to be going further north, but the wind was going to be around 17-18mph both days.

Bedford has a wild water canoe slalom course as well as the river for rowing and sculling, and this was in full operation throughout the weekend. The 'wild water' in the title though was, along with the sweet potato hash, one of the more exotic options on offer for breakfast in the Park Hotel where most of us were resident. Saturday morning was fascinating for inveterate 'people watchers' as we shared breakfast with a very large group of insurance salesmen attending a seminar on 'Mastery in Marketing' through the use of Neuro-Linguistic Programming. Not sure what language the leader of this group used to the hotel manager, but the gist was plain as the staff and kitchens failed to keep up with their demands.

Bedford festivals are almost like a gathering of the clans as Malcolm and Jeanette Goodman have a pretty loyal band of followers for this



unique event. It was lovely to see Jan and Jolanda, his first event since damaging his back so severely just before Berck. This was his first visit to a festival since then, and he was obviously still suffering, so effectively banned from any active flying. Also it was a pleasure to see Marie and Tony from Go-Kites on site. Contrary to rumours, they are still trading at festivals and other events, it is the online part of the business they have closed. Newbies to Bedford were Les Paragon, Francis Pariset and Claudie Ragon from Nice with their wonderful animal banners and optically challenging kites. Apart from them though, there was a delightful 'retro' feel to the event as many of the kites being flown were verging on the vintage either in design or age, and it has to be said, most of them handled the conditions very well. The wind above the trees was very strong indeed, which in turn, caused rollers on the field and quite strong backwind and false wind. Quite bizarre to launch a kite in a decent wind down the arena, only to have it turn ninety degrees as it hit the real stuff above.

After a short briefing it was down to the business of the day and see what could be flown? It was strange in a way, as almost everything would fly, from the smallest art kite to the largest flat kite. It was the inflatable brigade that had the worst of it as pilots were in the wildly turbulent stuff, while the kites they were piloting were in relative calm and hanging, or even blowing back towards the anchors. It was not long before the call went out for an altitude sprint, and here was something of a dilemma. With a 200ft height limit and the strength of the wind, how long to make it? Thirty seconds was deemed enough, which if you did happen to get into the wind was probably twenty too long, and for many, not enough even to get flying. Ultimately, it was no contest, as Iqbal Husain's Nishi Biashi inspired kite was the clear winner. This old design, recreated by Bazz Wreeswijk, had been flying happily for much of the morning, way above the trees.

The variety of kites that were flying at times was amazing, although stability was something of a problem, so there were not too many of them at any one time. There were a number of small, Della Porta types and roks, all of which handled the wind well as well as several long and thin designs including David Ellison's knots David, having journeyed all the way from Tonnes, informed me with a degree of glee, that he had added some colour to his black and white kites, 'just to please me', in this case a two coloured weave. Michel Gressier Dagues are well able to cope with any amount of wind by winding the bridles as far forward as they will go where they sit on the wind nicely. Karen and Godfrey Gamble had several of their decorated

Wild wind and water. Bedford 2017—High Blowers—Photos Lyn Blowers

Tri D boxes, but were suffering from spars breaking in flight. A surprise to me was that a Karl Longbottom Phoenix would fly, although with a full complement of tails. It just put its wings back and got on with it.

Keeping up the tradition of favourites at Bedford were three of the Fusion team down from the north-east. Vince and Jason, along with Chris Beel did their best to show what Revs can do, but they have the very worst job as the three kites were flying in totally different wind strengths, often from different directions as well. That they managed at all is a tribute to their skills, honed through their involvement with the Decorators.



The high point of the weekend on a personal note was that Doug and Linda Richardson had brought the four Midland's George Peters kites for members to display. I know from experience that they can be a bit brutal, being entirely flat, yet the gorgeous Birdman behaved impeccably although it did depend on getting the bridled part of the kite pulling before the long and wide tails took over. Both Mantis man and Demon man did head butt the ground in the process. These kites again are over twenty five years old, but still look fantastic and thanks to Doug and Linda for sorting out the right spars



for the right kite and bringing them along. Luckily, getting them down was not the problem it would be in an open space as they regularly flew into holes in the wind, so rather than recover the kite it was a case of winding it down gently, phew.

For Berck, Jan had built his Soldier kite a girlfriend but had not been able to fly it until now. With the aid of Jolanda and helpers it was inflated under one of his flowforms and for a brief moment filled perfectly showing just what a stunning pair these will make flying together. There was plenty of inflatable activity at the far end of the field with Wolfgang Schimmelpfenig and a range of fish and Guy with his Mr Incredible and other well know figures.



Mr Cao is now a staple of Bedford as well with his Vietnamese kites and traditional kite games. He has developed both the kites and the games over the years, and with a better understanding from us of what is going on these provide an unusual diversion for the pub-

Wild wind and water. Bedford—High Blowers—Photos Lyn Blowers



lic, flyers and commentator. This year Mr Cao, aided by his wife we believe, had created traditional costumes for each team in the colours of the kite they were flying. The robes in black, yellow, green, red and white were very heavy and exquisitely embroidered, while the equally ornate headband left portions of the scalp open to the ravages of the sun. The format was as before, draw for the kite, now with printed panels on each wing depicting the animal it represents, tune the kite, get dressed up, photo call, notable for the Mayor with iPhone to the fore and then to the competition.

With the electronic 'sickles' set so close, all five teams failed in the first game, so it was on to round two. All kites were let up to the full extent of the supplied line and then on the hooter pulled down, but they had to be caught in the hand before hitting the ground. The white team, Malcolm and Jeanette triumphed in this to win a miniature, traditional, flute kite. Unfortunately, the Black team representing Beccles broke their kite so had to retire in disgrace. Thanks to Mr Cao and his family for all their work in organising the games.

The Richardson's van and the Bindon's SUV kept producing a whole assortment of wonderful reminders, including Willi Koch lattices, Raindrop, Brasington and more. The Gambles did try to launch Meg's Mouth but this pulled even more bizarre facial expressions than normal with the crazy wind patterns low down. Considering the conditions though, there had been a pretty good display all day, but now it was time to head back to the hotel for a welcome shower and cup of tea (or something stronger) before the Mayor's reception. All very well, except there was not a single parking space to be had either at the hotel or in the nearby car park so it was on to the nearest road and a request for a refund from the hotel.

Ironic in a way as the hotel was almost deserted each evening, it was the daytime conferences that were keeping the place busy.

Like a school trip of old, the flyers and other guests made their way to the Corn Exchange in an ever-elongating crocodile as conversations and traffic lights spread the line out. Dave Hodgson the Mayor, and Leisure and Culture portfolio holder Sarah-Jayne Holland greeted us all and without standing on ceremony it was grub up, chilli con carne and rice, with strawberries and cream for pud. Short speeches followed before the Mayor and Sarah-Jayne engaged each table in chat for a while. Then it was back to the Park Hotel, where most opted out rather than shell out the outlandish bar prices. First time ever that there has not been a single guest evident and just the hardy rump of flyers discussing the TT, motorbikes in general, model cars and trains and the various exploits of Dave Britain. (one for the memory banks).

Quite evident on Sunday morning that the wind had not abated at all and that the manager had more staff on hand for breakfast. One of the great pleasures of Bedford is sitting in the restaurant looking down on the river and the rowers and scullers at work. How do the ones without coxes ever know where they are going?

Day two followed on in a similar pattern to the Saturday, although it did start with an interesting conversation about the ethics of printing images on kites that were copyrighted or the work of living artists. I have my, fairly well publicised, views about this, but a commercial printer who said that they categorically refuse to reproduce images for kites or banners unless the customer has the copyright, permission from the artist or has paid for image heartened me. Not that there were many kites of this

Wild wind and water. Bedford 2017—High Blowers—Photos Lyn Blowers

genre, indeed the 'retro' feel continued with Wolfgang putting up the magnificent Jake, reckoned by George Webster to be his all time favourite, again 25+ years old. It was joined later by the equally impressive cuttlefish.

The altitude sprint was a way down the programme for a change, producing an interesting range of non-sprinting kites. Launching was again nigh on impossible but once into the wind, off they went, with the winner being declared as Jan van Leewuen, which prompted George to have a race off between Jan and Iqbal, the winner from Saturday but with Iqbal also flying from a chair as Jan had been forced to do. Little real contest as the split malay could not make height as fast as Iqbal's Japanese inspired kite.

Emboldened by the performance of the George Peters kites, I dug the Steve Brockett Merlin out of the bag, large, flat, floppy and made of cotton, it flew happily off and on all day, the fibreglass spars bending to spill excess wind, of which there was plenty. The Gambles were not so lucky breaking more spars, but this was as nothing to what befell Les Paragon. Most of their kites are designed on the same principle, with a scene created by placing two or more separate kites stacked very closely one behind the other. The lady in the shower changes colour and clarity dramatically as the sun catches the elements, whilst Little Red Riding Hood and the big bad wolf rely on three distinct kites. All was going well until Fancis moved up the field to avoid other kites and tangled with a pilot that very effectively mangled and smashed one of their best pieces.

Mantis Man also had some spars broken prior to the weekend so Doug withdrew this from the display but still we had Birdman flying way up, along with a Cloud bird and Octopus from George and Jackie Penney, a Wind Wasp with Leslie Baggeley and Sarah Bindon in charge and Doug and Linda with Demon Man. It is a wise flyer that knows when to quit, so a second fly later in the day was abandoned, as the wind was getting even stronger.

The wind did not deter Mr Cao, who set up the Vietnamese kite game again, minus the black kite and the Beccles entry. By now the wind had swung round a bit so two teams managed to clear the sickles, the German team and Fusion with one line instead of four. This led to another run off, although we reckoned that Chris and Vince was robbed, but the judges decision is final, especially when it was Mrs Cao.

Iqbal Husain was making the most of the conditions and fearing nothing put up his train, ably assisted by Malcolm's grandson, Thomas,



although it was being knocked down by the downdraft rather than climbing. If this was not enough excitement, he then brought out two of his humorous, Chinese Dragon inspired trains. The pizza man launched perfectly to be followed after a period of preparation by the chicken and frying pans. The chicken is even more a labour of love as the theme is developed further with it arriving in a cage and laying eggs in flight as well.

Considering the wind conditions over the two days, it was impressive how many and varied were the kites flown, and that most of them coped, however by mid afternoon it was obvious that most of the flyers had had enough or were not risking any more spars. Several of the continental guests also had to start their homeward journeys, so the festival was drawn to a close, but not before the presentation of the Eddie Megrath Trophy.

This is awarded annually to someone or a group who makes a significant contribution to the festival and this year the tables were turned as Mr Cao presented it to George Webster. As George admitted, he is not often lost for words, but for the first time in two days, he was. Keeping a commentary going for two days in such conditions is never easy, but George manages it with consummate ease, year after year.

Thanks to Malcolm, Jeanette, Andy and Bjorn for organising the festival, one of the better for flying, in spite of, or because of the wind. Whether there will be another remains to be seen, as Bedford, along with every other council, is experiencing ever more budgetary constraints, but let's hope so.

Event News

Car Fest North, Bolesworth, Cheshire. 29th & 30th July
Car Fest South, Laverstoke Park Farm, Overton, Hampshire 26th & 27th August.

Bill Souten writes:

This is a major fund raising event for the BBC's 'Children in Need' appeal showcasing everything from Cars, Live Music to a Food Festival.

The MKF have been approached directly by Chris Evens' team to provide a stunning kite display on the Saturday and Sunday at both the North and South events. Alongside the kite flying will also be a kite making workshop which we would like all kite fliers to help with at some stage over the weekends.

We will have our own flying area throughout the weekend, facilities for a kite making workshop and free camping will be available.

To take part in either of these two events you need to apply to Bill Souten for an application form. Spaces will be limited so please apply as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. Please note this BBC event is already sold out and kite fliers will only be able to attend with prior registration and with the correct passes for the event.

Contact Bill Souten: Chairman@mkf.org.uk.
Call. 07840 800830

The Beach Kite Fest, Burnham on Sea. 9th & 10th September

The Kite Fest is September 9th and 10th. (In 2018 it will be the same weekend 8th and 9th).

This will be our fourth Kite Festival and we have a huge advantage with our location. We have miles of sandy beaches so no restriction on how far we expand. The Festival grew last year and apparently we could be seen from Penarth in South Wales.

This year we have displays, competitions, a young people's photo competition, workshops and an illuminated display on the Saturday night.

For kilters who book in with us (01278 238714) we have free parking spaces on the Esplanade and permission for the Giant Kilters to put their vehicles on the beach.

There's also a fish and chip supper on us on Saturday evening.

Last year over 300 people came down to the 'learn to fly' area and flew a kite for the first time in their lives. This year we have some young 'flying instructors' waiting to help to get you hooked on a new and exciting sport that suits all ages.

The raised seawall provides a fantastic viewing point for all and an ideal place for trade and craft stalls. We have a wealth of lovely cafes and a wide choice of accommodation with the camps, B &B's and hotels close to the sea front.

This is a festival with a lovely atmosphere and an annual event which is loved by both residents and visitors alike.

Best of all its two days of free entertainment in lovely surroundings with lovely people.

BOGNOR *Regis*
KITE FESTIVAL

- 3 Days of Family Fun -
26th - 27th - 28th
August 2017

WEST PARK
BOGNOR REGIS

Plus **-Live Music-**

Children's Entertainment
(inc. Saturday & Sunday shows by Nick Clark)
Bar and Refreshments
Craft Stalls
Kite Making Workshop

Saturday 10:30am - 9:00pm
Sunday 10:30am - 8:30pm
Monday 10:30am - 5:00pm

New for Bank Holiday **Monday 28th**
THE GREAT BOGNOR
BAKE OFF

join us on **facebook**
07854 854787
07841 456494
www.brkf.org

See website for full details and updates

A Kite Tale—Peter Lynn

In which a supposedly experienced and knowledgeable kitemaker (me) takes nearly three years to fix an unstable kite when the cure for its malady has been well known to kitemakers for thousands of years.

I've been attempting to get a single skin Serpent kite to fly satisfactorily, single line without a pilot. An easy job, because an Octopus kite with the same head and bridling already flew well done by lunch time. All that was needed, I so naively thought, was to make a tail (or tail and whiskers in the Thai Serpent style) with the same weight and drag as the Octopus's tentacles.

How wrong I was, and the mistake was right at the beginning: Thinking of it as a long narrow kite. I should have been thinking of it as a head (the kite) and separately, a tail.

But first, a brief reprise of kite stability theory and two definitions:

A useful way to think about kite stability is to consider what happens when a kite finds itself leaning a bit one way or the other (that is, its spine or centre line no longer pointing upwards). There is only one force available to correct this; the kite's weight, acting at a point (centre of mass) below where the lift forces that are keeping it up act. There is widespread misunderstanding about this—many kitefliers believe that the wind somehow provides a reference by which the kite “knows” to point itself upwards. It doesn't, and cannot. In the absence of gravity, a kite would be just as happy flying at any point on the rim of a cone with its apex at the kite's tether point and its axis in the wind direction.

This weight force acts to get the kite pointing upwards again, whenever it gets a bit out of sorts, but in this it is resisted by various drag, lift, and inertial forces.

If, as a result of these other forces, a kite is unable to rotate back into the 'pointing up' position, it will move sideways across the sky until either reaching an equilibrium point hanging out to one side or the other or, in the limit, 'finding' the ground. at one edge of the wind window. This is **superstability**, and it's the curse of soft kites because there is no elegant way to shift their centres of mass rearward, (the primary fix for **superstability**) while shifting their centres of lift forward (the other cure) is often also constrained.

If the weight force moment **is** sufficient to correct a lean but not before the kite has moved a significant distance sideways, when correcting, it may overshoot the centre by more than the original displacement. If this overcorrection

builds into lateral traverses of ever increasing amplitude, the kite is **Volatile unstable**.

Perfect stability is when a kite corrects from any lean almost instantaneously and without signifi-



cant sideways movement, or, if the original lean was caused by a wind shift, when the kite moves with the wind as it shifts around without over or under correction.

Now, back to that misbehaving Serpent:

I tried the simplest approach first; a long tapered tail. This was **superstable** in light winds and **volatile unstable** in stronger winds.

Thinking that the tail did not have enough drag (the Octopus tentacles, although having the same total area and weight, flutter around a lot, so have more drag), I tried a tail with many small diagonal slots.

It was terminally **superstable**.

In the next attempt, I progressively added scoops to the head end of the original straight tail.

This was by the theory that the drag the slots generated was too far behind the head (very long tails or tails with drogues at their end, act like a long tail that gets caught in a tree—they pull the kite inexorably over to one side). This was also terminally **superstable**

- and the more scoops added the worse it became.

Volker Hoberg then offered the theory that there needed to be some slots in the tail just below the head to release pressure there. This is from knowing that lift generated by the first



A Kite Tale—Peter Lynn

section of the tail could shift the centre of lift rearward by enough to cause the kite to dive over to one side.

This version was much improved, though still somewhat **superstable**, and **volatile unstable** in winds of more than 20km/hr or so.

These are just some of the many variants tried, but give the general idea as to how resistant this kite was to 'conventional' cures. It was at about this point I recognised my basic error and started to consider the problem from the point of view of the Serpent's head being the kite, and the tail being, well, a tail.

Tails are self supporting; they slope downwards at an angle to the horizontal that exactly supports their own weight, and have three effects: on the kite: They damp lateral movement that can otherwise build into destructive figure eighting (**volatile instability**).

Their drag pulls the kite downwind, reducing any inclination to overfly. Their weight moves the kite/tail system's centre of mass rearward, reducing **superstability** (tendency to inexorably lean off to one side or the other). Of these, the last is the least understood, and in my view, the most important. This misunderstanding causes many kitefliers to think that drogues, (which provide only lateral damping and downwind pull) are equivalent to tails- but they aren't, because drogues tend to exacerbate **superstability**, not reduce it.

I can't think of any other device that simultaneously reduces both **volatile instability** and **superstability**- very clever things tails! But to recover from a lean without pulling the entire tail into line behind it, the kite or head must have some freedom to rotate independently. Just a few degrees either way can be enough.

All of which I already knew but didn't consider relevant for some strange reason. I should have attached the Serpent's head to its tail less rigidly. Volker's slots (4 of) provided some free movement (hence this iteration was less badly behaved), and the 8 tentacles on the Octopus clearly provided exactly enough, purely by chance. To provide more rotational independence for the Serpent's head I then cut the tail (and the whiskers) off and re-attached them after cutting curvature into the seam, so that the tail drag tension was taken through the centre of the tail not the edges.

It now flies well, is neither **volatile unstable** nor **superstable**. The effect of the seam convexity can be easily seen when it's flying; the

outer edges of the tail flap a little while the centre line fabric is taut.

1Skin provide a further illustration of this principle: A double streamer tail, weighing about the same as the kite itself, improves their flying in strong winds and turbulent conditions when attached to a single point on the centre trailing edge.

When the same tail is attached instead by a long "V" bridle with one leg to each outer trailing edge, the **1Skin** becomes diabolically **superstable** in light to mid range winds and violently **volatile unstable** in strong winds- because it can no longer correct in response to any perturbation without pulling the tail into line behind it.

And, the Janggan deliberately has its tail attached to the head by its full width in order to cause the regular figure eighting which is their desired characteristic- in fact this is just (controlled) **volatile instability**. In light winds they are superstable (fall off inexorably to one side or the other)- but the Balinese choose not to fly them in light winds. If their tail was attached instead at a single central point, the Janggan would fly as though it was immovably fixed to the sky in all flyable winds.



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Events List

July		
15-16	Leominster and Hereford Kite Festival, The National Trust, Berrington Hall, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 ODW	www.kitefestival.org.uk
22-23	Shropshire Kite Festival, Lacon Childe School, Love Lane, Cleobury Mortimer, Shropshire DY14 8PE	skybums.com/index.htm
29-30	Dunstable Downs, Dunstable Road, Whipsnade, LU6 2GY	www.facebook.com/DunstableKiteFestival
29-30	Richmond Kite Weekend, Richmondshire RUFC, Theakston Lane, Richmond, North Yorkshire DL10 4LL	www.thestation.co.uk/whats-on/events/kite-festival
August		
5-6	Kiter's Jolly Up, Cliddesden, Basingstoke	roy@kitesup.co.uk
5-6	Exmouth Rotary Kite Festival, The Imperial Recreation Ground, Exmouth EX8 1DG	ellisondavid@me.com
6	Wind in your Sails, Betteshanger Country Park, Sandwich Road, Deal, Kent. CT14 0BF	Malcolmf@kentkiteflyers.com
6	Royston Rotary Charity Kite Festival, Therfield Heath, Royston, Herts SG8 5BG	www.roystonkitefestival.com
12-13	Portsmouth International Kite Festival	www.portsmouthkitefestival.org.uk
12-13	Teston 30th Anniversary Weekend, Teston Bridge Country Park, Teston Lane, nr Maidstone, Kent ME18 5BX	Malcolmf@kentkiteflyers.com
12-13	Old Sarum Kite Weekend, (English Heritage), Castle Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 3SD	info@infinitearts.co.uk
20	Hunstanton Kite & Classic Car Festival, Smithdon High School Sports Field, Hunstanton, Norfolk PE36 5HY	www.hunstanton-rotary.org.uk/page9.html
26-28	3rd Bognor Regis Kite Festival, West Park, Silverston Avenue, Bognor Regis, West Sussex PO21 2RB	www.brkf.org
September		
2-3	6th St. Annes International Kite festival, on the beach, Lytham St Annes, near Blackpool, Lancashire	www.stanneskitefestival.co.uk
9-10	The Beach Kite Fest, Burnham-on-Sea	gaynor.brown1@talktalk.net
24	The Capstone Festival, Capstone Country Park, Capstone Road, Chatham Kent ME7 3JG	Malcolmf@kentkiteflyers.com