

# THE KITEFLIER

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**Issue 157      October 2018      £2.50**

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

# KITEWORLD

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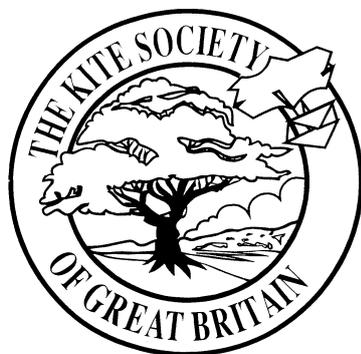
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**Front Cover**  
**Winning Kite at Dieppe by**  
**Andres Ramirez Valencia**  
**Photo—Gill Bloom**

Dear Reader

Well another year has gone by and there has been a mixture of weather conditions but overall the events have been excellent.

Thankyou to all the people who have contributed to this issue—it is very much appreciated.

2019 marks the 40th year of The Kiteflier. So, would it not be nice if you all sent us your best memories of the last 40 years for us to create a compendium of these for the issues over 2019.

Have a good winter and we look forward to all those new kites in the coming year.

Gill and Jon

**Editorial**

September 2018		
29-30	Vliegerfestival Scheveningen, International Kite Festival, Scheveningen beach, Strandweg, 2586 JK, The Hague, The Netherlands	<a href="http://vliegerfeestscheveningen.nl">vliegerfeestscheveningen.nl</a>
December 2018		
9	Indoor Kite Event (for Kitefliers only), St Josephs Catholic College, Swindon, Wiltshire SN3 3LR	<a href="http://Karl Longbottom">Karl Longbottom</a>
April 2019		
6-14	Berck-sur-Mer Kite Festival, Berck-Sur-Mer, Nord-Pas-De-Calais, France	<a href="http://www.cerf-volant-berck.com">www.cerf-volant-berck.com</a>
20- 1/05	Cervia International Kite Festival, Cervia, Italy	<a href="http://www.festivalinternazionaleaqu">www.festivalinternazionaleaqu</a>
August 2019		
10-11	Portsmouth International Kite Festival, Southsea Common, Hampshire	<a href="http://www.portsmouthkitefestival.or">www.portsmouthkitefestival.or</a>
24 – 26	Bognor Regis Kite Festival, King George V Playing Fields, Felpham, Bognor Regis, West Sussex	<a href="http://www.brkf.org">www.brkf.org</a>

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## Pothecary Corner—Allan Pothecary

### QUAD MEMORIES

Around the mid-nineties I had been into kite flying about four or five years and already owned quite a collection of kites, mainly two line but also a few singles and, a black and red, Revolution quad line.

I had taken this four line kite on a week's holiday to Rhodes with the sole intention of learning to hold it in the 'upside down' position and, after spending an hour on the beach just down the road for an hour each morning before breakfast was able to return home having acquired a new skill.

#### *Salt Water*

During the playing around I was showing off to anyone watching how controllable the kite was by dipping it in to the sea and recovering.

However, despite the Rev joining me in the shower on a couple of occasions the salt water still had a corrosive effect and rotted the mesh (or the sewing thereof) making the kite fairly useless.

Through the UK shipping agent in Bristol I was able to contact Lolly, at Revolution to arrange for an exchange of sail - the point being that I had to return the old one.

She was a little bit upset when, in my usual, tactless manner, I told her that I thought the colour schemes on offer were boring and wanted something brighter.

At first my suggestions of blue, pink (Marilyn), and yellow were scoffed at but I must have woken somebody as this seemed to have started a trend of more radical artwork and design.



A few months later we found ourselves in San Diego where we met Revolution sponsored, the late Ron Despojado with whom we became good friends.

#### *The Brits were first?*

Ron was aghast to discover that his new, blue, pink and yellow kite wasn't after all exclusive to him as he had been telling people and that these strange people from England had, indeed been in front of him in the queue!

We met some other great flyers there including Al Stroh and Susan Shampo, a scary, giant of a

man called Mitch and a real character by the name of Charlie McClary who I kept in touch until his passing around 2008.

Charlie, had some great tales but couldn't stand and chat in the flying field - he preferred to sit, cross legged, pow wow style.

#### *All about control*

He had a back injury sustained when driving his camera van back from a kiting event.

I won't say he didn't like the odd drink but he claimed he hadn't partaken when he drove at speed, a turn too early, in to what turned out to be a cul de sac and the rapid stop caused his sled hammer to fly from the back of the van as it rolled rendering quite some amount of pain.

Living near to San Diego, Charlie was one of the first to be aware of the Rev and learned to fly two at the same time, a skill which he took excitedly to a kite festival a long way from home ready to receive the deserved plaudits only for the first thing to be noticed as he pulled on to the site was a guy flying three at once!

#### *Home made*

Around the time of the first session of Blackheath Festivals and the ones at Newbury (Henwick), there was a big, very friendly guy called Peter Phillips who used to fly a four line kite which he made himself. (Sorry, I seem to be talking a lot about guys who have departed this earth).

It was vaguely along the lines of the David Davis, SkyDancer but much smaller and made from a single sail and just one 6mm white fibreglass rod.

He drew me the design, literally, on the back of a fag packet and, being someone who doesn't do fiddly, it was one of the few kites I ever made.



## Pothecary Corner—Allan Pothecary

It was extremely simple, as you can tell from the photo, was very twitchy and took a little effort to control.

There was - is? a very similar kite called the Quadfun which was - is? professionally made and has more than the single panel although I don't know which was the original.

I did try to make some enquiries to verify my thoughts that the original design was from a French guy - no luck with that though.

### *The Easy Quad*



Mick gives a size comparison

Now there is, new to the market, another four line kite of a similar shape but with a centre spine and different bridling and tow points.

The kite in question is from HQ Invento is called the "Easy Quad and comes ready to fly with lines and handles included and in the affordable range for someone wanting to learn the basics of quad flying.

It's not for precision flying, I mean it can be held stationary and flown backwards but it will zip quickly across the sky and therefore I would recommend to have plenty of space around you when flying it.

If you are about at experienced level you can still have a lot of fun with the Easy Quad as it can be made to go very flat in order to execute axles or flat spins, just single ones at first then twos - I can't get past three at the time of writing.

If you are not experienced this is something you can target to progress to.

The EQ stands up to a lot of punishment when it's whacked in to the ground - I haven't broken mine yet although I am sure I would have regretted trying some of the things I did with other, more expensive kites!

The line quality is OK, probably better than I had expected when I saw that they were included and the handles are of 'proper' quad line design!

### *Winding Up*

I still like to put lines on separate winders however (two lines on each winder) and I would recommend having a spare winder handy when you pack away - especially if you share my views on fiddly.

### *Different Levels*

When I test kites for review I like to give them to flyers of varying abilities to get a good, overall idea of how they will be received.

My friend, Mick, a quad novice, managed to keep it in the air after only a couple of tries although the rapid acceleration he found quite daunting at first.

Having said that, Mick has that flying bug and refuses to quit so I did have a bit of trouble getting it back off him.

If you don't mind spending about eighty quid on a few afternoons of enjoyment - what's that, a meal out for two? - then this might well be a fun addition to your bag - or, come and ask to borrow mine if you see us out on a field somewhere.

### **THE ZEBRA KITE**

The next kite I want to talk about is for the more serious two line flyer but please don't let that stop you reading further if you don't class yourself as intermediate or above because this is an excellent kite to learn how to fly tricks.

I am to trick flying as what Jeremy Corbin is to Sumo wrestling but that doesn't stop me from trying and getting immense enjoyment when the kite does what I actually wanted it to - all I have to do then is to figure out what I did to make the kite do what it did do! - don't I?

## Pothecary Corner—Allan Pothecary



The Zebra sport kite is the result of a co-operation between specialist flyer and designer, Helge Gosau and HQ Invento.

### *Change of Direction*

To my mind this is a bit of a breakaway by HQ as they have used top of the range and readily available Skyshark rods in preference to the standard 6mm or Dynamic rods utilised in their previous high end kites.

With very neatly sewn, Icarex sails this, three quarter sized, kite flies great precision with its three point, team bridle and adjustable leach line in the trailing edge giving a choice between extra true precision and rock steady tracking with a gentle purr as it vibrates in the wind or crisper tricks and quiet flight with a tighter sail easily tensioned in a second from the adjustment line on the back.

I still have some of the top, well known trick kites in my bag.

I would honestly say that some may be slightly more forgiving, especially if you get line wraps around the wing, however, I found that the set up to execute the tricks in my repertoire was noticeably easier, thus making the tricks much easier to perform.

It's being able to get the kite in the best starting position that I find the most difficult part of the execution and the ease at which the Zebra does this means that I can perform the trick more often and, equally, get better at it and move on to the next.

This is particularly good with a manoeuvre called the "Jacobs Ladder" which is a succession of tricks performed one after the other that eventually bring you back to the starting point all ready to repeat in one continuous chain.

### *Handy Size*

Another plus for me is that the Zebra folds down to fit corner to corner in a large suitcase and therefore will coming on holiday and I can get some hours in.

When pushing your hands forward together to get the kite laying on its back with nose pointing away the kite sits very deep to allow easy



spins by pulling on one hand and giving slack on the other and the other way around and, with the right wind patience, you can even launch the kite from this position.

On its back with nose pointing toward you in what's called a 'Fade' the kite, for me, locks in and holds better or as good than any other kite I have tried.

I have given this kite to better fliers than me with the confidence that they would like it and, so far, have been right every time - HQ really have got this one right.

### *Adjust to Suit*

There are adjustment knots at each of the three points where the bridle is attached to the frame which can be used to alter the performance in different winds but please count which knot the line is behind before you move anything.

## Pothecary Corner—Allan Pothecary

I found the factory setting suited me best but other fliers might like to change things particularly for high winds.

Wind range goes in parallel with the pilot's skill level and this kite is sublime in 8 to 10mph - I haven't had a kite in a long time that has made me want to go out and fly so often.

The makers claim 4mph to 22mph and, whilst I am sure that it's achievable, I am not agile enough these days quite as low as four miles per hour (that really is no more than something you can just feel on your face) and I have always questioned the sense in trying tricks at the high end in the middle of the window unless you are an expert but I do believe that anyone will be very happy with what they can do with a Zebra Kite in winds of 5mph up to 16mph.

### *See them fly*

Videos of the Easy Quad and The Zebra have picked up a lot of views on the Close Encounters Kites You Tube channel - I must get around to putting them on our KiteDisplays.co.uk website now that it's working again.

### **Hours in?**

I mentioned the above phrase lightly whilst reviewing the Zebra Kite. It's something I am always saying to people who have come to me for coaching.

Some people have more natural ability than others with anything you care to mention and get to a good standard more quickly, whether it be public speaking, walking a tight rope, baking a cake or flying a kite.

One thing is common though and that's the hours of doing it over and over again that makes them better and more comfortable in what they do.

### *You Gotta Want It!*

What I can't teach is that certain 'wanting' you have to have that makes you get on and do it.

Some might argue that it is too difficult but to me, if there were no challenges then it would be boring and pointless but, the same as aspiring to send an auditorium home happy or putting a smile on Mary Berry's face, then you will be out at anytime you can fit in a few minutes without even checking the weather first.

However, why anyone should want to walk a tightrope is beyond me - I get giddy reading Wuthering Heights!

### **PORTSMOUTH FESTIVAL**

Sorry we didn't make Portsmouth this year but Marilyn had a big birthday to celebrate and the Saturday party went on to the early hours of

Sunday making it illegal - alcohol still in the blood, wise - for either of us to sit in the driving seat to get down there.



We did want to fly our small smack of big jellyfish - apparently, other collective nouns can be swarms or blooms - as Jon and Gill would probably know.

They were a big hit in Spain earlier this year but their very strong pull and a tendency to go walkies once the wind gets to about 14mph may have meant they would have stayed in the bag.

These are a comparatively cheap way of filling the sky but there are different versions around so double check before ordering and buy through someone like Ali Express to protect your money.

I know I have mentioned these kites before in earlier editions but just as a reminder you can expect a delivery time of up to three months and get no reply to any questions you may send.

Allan and Marilyn  
kitedisplays.co.uk

## 'Times they are a changing' - Hugh Blowers

'As applicable now as they were when the 'sainted Bob sang them back in 1964. Sad news to have it confirmed, but not a total surprise in the circumstances, that the Bristol Festival is no more. As new arrivals to the festival scene in the very early nineties (was it that long ago), the four great International festivals that were held in this country attracted our attention from the start and were eye opening extravaganzas of new experiences, seeing people in the flesh that we had only read about in magazines, and the unbelievable and spectacular kites that were on show. Of course, in those days, we were just gawping members of the public, strictly observing the arena limits, as we were somewhat reticent about the protocols of joining in.

The four festivals shaped our year, the ability to attend depending, not on desire, but entirely on the logistics of work, travel and accommodation. The prime factor was work and not being able to be on the road until after 6.00pm on most occasions, and the small matter of each festival being well over 200 miles from home. If arrival at near midnight was not possible, then we often left at silly o'clock in the morning or even at lunchtime on the Saturday if that was when Lynn could leave off. Indeed, for our first ever experience of Bristol we arrived just as everyone was packing up for the day and wondering quite what we were doing there. Not being part of the festival also meant shopping around for somewhere to stay, not easy in the pre Internet days, hence discovering the delights of the Easton Gordano service area, not the only ones there either.

Similarly, leaving a festival was not governed by when it finished, but when we needed to be on the road in order to make it home before the car turned back into a pumpkin. Bristol was a 530 mile round trip and the M4/M25 became something of a bete noir for us. The only thing that could be guaranteed was that traffic would be horrendous until we headed onto the M11, yet such was the draw of Bristol and the other three festivals that we were prepared to tolerate this. Bristol also had the added delights of the queues to get out of the site if we left it too late. So it has to be said, that in our earlier days we were more observers, and participated when we could, but getting there and back were our primary considerations.

Through The Kiteflier we discovered that we could become more involved via the application for arena and parking passes, which also provided the way in for accommodation at preferential rates, either on site camping in the 'crew area', or for many years the Redwood and the one delightful weekend at the Marriot in the centre of town. That was just one of many occasions when I managed to fall foul of Bristol's road system. When coming in from the M5, Ashton Court was a doddle, but from any other direction, a multitude of opportunities to get lost. Even the M5 could be a problem at times, as most found out to their detriment one year. A change of job for 'herself' finally allowed us the luxury of travelling down a day or so before the festival, often making a holiday of it when combined with Portsmouth. On this occasion we were happily ensconced in the 'crew area' and decided to walk

down into Bristol for the day. We gradually became aware that the entire town was becoming grid-locked and nothing was moving, either in the centre or on any of the approach roads. Having walked all the way back to Ashton Court past miles of stationary cars we found that the Avon bridge on the M5 was closed and every bit of motorway traffic was being diverted through the town, chaos.

To complicate matters, we were meeting up at the Baltic Wharf for an evening meal, and with little hope of driving, we walked the whole way back down again. It is lovely going across the Clifton Bridge, but my goodness, it's a steep old hill between Clifton and Bristol. We earned our tea that night, and when we eventually made it back to the Redwood for a sherbert or two we found fliers that had been stuck for nearly five hours trying to get there.

Having the Redwood so close was thoroughly convenient, either as a camper or resident, as refreshment could be taken without having to get in the car, even if the lane was a bit daunting in the dark. The Redwood though can garner very mixed responses from fliers, especially the on going electronic key saga, the odd unwanted visitors in the beds and some of the catering arrangements. Yet the two pools that we took advantage of on many occasions and the wonderful bonhomie as arriving guest were greeted by other fliers made it such a convivial place to be. There were many evenings that became mornings as the drink flowed and the reminiscences and anecdotes were traded. Somehow we always made it in for the best bit of the day, the breakfast buffet, as much as you like of whatever you like. How the place was not profitable I do not know, yet after several changes of owners it closed, just prior to the last festival, to become another part of festival lore to be recalled over a beer or two.

Some may be of the opinion that I have wittered on too long on the peripherals of Bristol, but to us, the accommodation, food, travel and sociability of an event are vitally important elements and without these, ten or more hours driving for a kite festival is questionable. However Bristol as an event never disappointed, either in the people we saw and met there, the kites and displays, and the dozens of little 'do you remembers' that will become the currency of future reminiscences. We missed the World Cup by a year yet the nineties provided an amazing kaleidoscope of kite making talent on a regular basis. It may seem strange to some, but actually meeting the people behind the images and stories in Kite Lines and American Kite was quite special. I suppose we are a bit more blasé now, but what was on show at Ashton Court and the three other international festivals during that period was almost beyond comprehension.

One of the first notable meetings was with Randy Tom. His kites and quality of stitching were legendary, yet little could prepare me for the first site of the 'Cheetah' parafoil. That it was a George Hamm parafoil with a Patrick Nagel image, used totally legally, did not intrude at the time, as this, along with the 'Seven Sisters' was a Randy Tom kite. Par-

## 'Times they are a changing' - Hugh Blowers

afolds were my 'thing' for many years, so it was with some regret that we missed Doug Hagaman's visit, but thanks in the main to the White Horse Kiteflyers, many of his folds were already in evidence. If this did not represent an excess of 'toys in the shop' then Stretch Tucker added to it with his range of appliquéd parafoils. What we initially failed to understand was that most of the international guests made kites for a living and would actually sell 'on the field', either from the bag, or off the line. Initially it was the traders that took our interest, and again, how times have changed. It was not unusual to see nearly thirty kite traders lined up tempting us with their wares, mostly affordable, just, unlike the telephone numbers being mentioned on the field. Sky Bums made parafoils so they collected a disproportionate amount of my disposable income.

We did discover intriguing phenomena at Bristol though, and that was the 'reluctant seller'. Very nice, hand made kites for sale, all priced, yet customer after customer was turned away with little or no explanation. Then of course there was Foskett Kites, with metres of dowel being cut on an hourly basis. Sadly, little of what we bought from the traders has survived, most of what we now fly arriving at a later date through deals done on the field, or contacts established there. Once we figured out that this could be done, Bristol was a happy hunting ground. Yes, much was still totally unaffordable, especially if it was new, but end of season, the odd hole, prototypes, these were, with a bit of judicious negotiation. It was all just too tempting, and often, foreign guests were happy to do a deal to avoid having to take things home, especially if you were prepared to let them hang on to whatever it was until the end of Dieppe, which conveniently made up a triumvirate of festivals on successive weekends. Now that did involve some organisation and travelling. Portsmouth, home, Bristol, home, Dieppe, home, back to Dieppe, home, 2,500 miles in the month, must have been mad?

Until Cleethorpes introduced the concept of the daytime 'night fly', Bristol used to do it properly, and the one thing it was, was dark. This in turn led to a few interesting diversions. Stretch Tucker had 'borrowed' one of Bobby Stansfield's award winning Navigators, this in dark purple, but edged in Scotchlite. With a strobe light suspended underneath it, the edging was all you could see against the jet black sky. Quite mesmerising as I discussed the kite with Stretch until the strobe, and the line crashed to the ground just feet from us and a dark purple kite drifted into the dark and almost infinite void of Ashton Court. Kite flying abandoned and a long search undertaken, as Bobby would not have reacted well if it had not been found. That we did was something of a relief, as I then felt bold enough to contact him with a view to buying one.

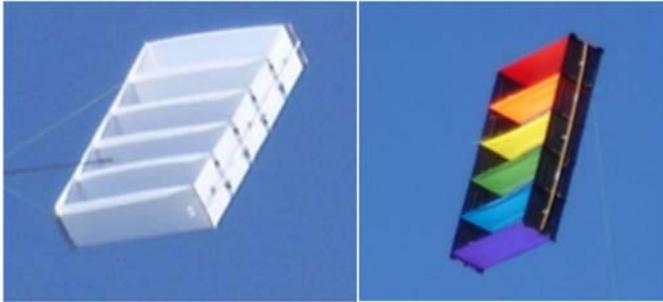
The darkness also contributed to one of the most confusing evenings I have ever spent on a kite field. Nick James had undertaken to prepare and provide much of the material for a properly choreographed and organised series of mass launches. A crew was assembled and all the kites that were to be flown were pegged out, with lines in groups, and

then we were all walked through the series of launches and the cues for each. The opening would be the launch by George Penney of a large warrior rok, pulled up by me, before moving on to the other groups of themed kites. So far so good, but it all took a turn for the worse once night fell. Firstly, with 150 feet of line out in almost impenetrable darkness, I did not have a clue where George was or how he would know when to launch. Some might say the lights of Bristol are amazingly bright, well yes they are, but they do not illuminate Ashton Court, which is at very much higher altitude. Anyway, the music started, Nick said to launch, I yelled at the top of my voice and pulled, hoping that the duel communication would work. That the kite went up meant we were on a roll, but then it all went horribly wrong. The first group of kites were OK as the flyers were stood with the lines, but trying to locate the lines of the other kites in the pitch black was impossible. In the end, if you stumbled across a line, you tried to fly whatever was on the other end. Poor Nick's carefully detailed display was reduced to chaos as far as the fliers were concerned, but luckily, the assembled crowds were none the wiser. Explains why the LED head torch came into being.

The Bristol night fly nearly had a much more serious outcome on another occasion. Like many festivals, fireworks for the night fly were an essential part of the display, either enthusiastic amateurs or proper professional outfits, but most of this was pre electronic ignition and involved humans wandering round with fuses and in imminent danger of the odd singe here and there. Rather than individual kites rigged with pyrotechnics, this time it was two kites with a string of fireworks between them, quite spectacular, until he wind eased sufficiently for the line to droop that is, and the kites sink gently. At this point panic set in as the ground was as dry as it is currently and there was soon a merry blaze, happily and through lots of stomping, beating, some hurriedly improvised 'human fire extinguishers' and any available liquid, anything more serious was averted and Avril breathed a sigh of relief.

Of course, like any festival, Bristol has had its fair share of the 'weather' over the years, none more so than the last incarnation on the Downs. It must hold something of a record though, as it was the only time I ever saw Peter Lynn refuse to fly because his anchors were not secure enough as the ground was so waterlogged? It is unfortunate that the final festival was dominated by the weather and the numerous soakings we all received; yet an entire issue of the magazine could be filled with wonderful memories and amusing, amazing, scurrilous, bizarre anecdotes and incidents from our visits. That it is gone is sad, but we have all this to look back on, so thanks to everyone who worked so hard and put so much on the line to keep Bristol in the forefront of International kite festivals. How lucky we were to have a season that started with Weymouth, went on to Washington and concluded with Portsmouth and Bristol.

## Ladder Kite 5 Celled Design—Mark Harding

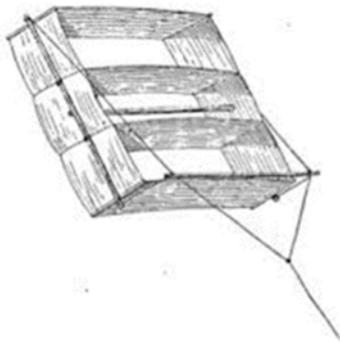


Traditional White

Rainbow Colours

Lecornu's original 'Etagere' (meaning shelf) kite consisted of 3 rectangular cells stacked on top of one another it is also referred to as a 'Bookcase' kite.

It is more commonly known as a 'Ladder' kite.



Lecornu's Ladder Kite 1898

In my design I decided to increase the number of cells to five.

### Materials:

- Ripstop nylon for the sails
- Wooden dowels for the spars (I recommend using pine dowels as ramin is hard to get now)
- Plastic tubing for the joints
- Garden bamboo cane for the inserted spines
- Aluminium ferrules (optional for greater collapsibility).

### Construction

- Cut 6 pieces of ripstop measuring 8in by 24in (piece A)
- Cut 10 pieces measuring 8in by 8in (piece B).
- 6 of the 10 will need a hole made in the centre to allow for the horizontal braces to pass through.
- Also an allowance of  $\frac{3}{4}$ " at either end will need to be added to make sleeves to take the bamboo spines.

- If edges are hemmed then an allowance will also need to be made.
- Start sewing from the bottom or top part of the kite, the 4 central A pieces are sandwiched in between two B pieces.

### Spar and Bridle

- 3 horizontal spars measure  $25\frac{3}{4}$ " approximately
- 2 side vertical spars measure  $41\frac{1}{2}$ " approximately
- With the vertical spars I have cut these into 3 pieces and ferruled them for greater collapsibility, but this is optional.
- Bamboo spars that will go inside the sealed pockets measure approximately  $7\frac{3}{4}$ " - you will need to cut 12 of these.
- To hold the spars in position 10 brace locators will need to be cut from plastic tubing these are about an inch long.
- To tension up the 4 middle planes of the sail I have used Dacron tape, nylon line and buttons to adjust tensioning.
- On the four outside corners I have sewn tab pockets to take an 8in piece of dowel which will hold a brace locator for the vertical spars.
- I have made small holes in either end of the dowels in order to sew them to the tabs.
- For the tab pockets, these are  $1\frac{1}{2}$ in by 3in and on the 3in length,  $\frac{1}{2}$ " either end is sewn to the sail which leaves a 2ins allowance for the open ended pocket.

When the kite is assembled bracing lines will need to be tied into place in the 2 cells where a spar does not pass through.

The bridle on this kite is a compound type 4 leg to 2 leg and also has a cross bar to stop distortion of the kite, the bar measures approximately 24in.

With this type of bridle I have found that small adjustments can be made for different wind speeds by adjusting the position of the bar.

This is a kite for stable winds of between 8 to 15mph if the winds are not stable it will tend to dive.

See the next page for close up construction details.

Good Luck,

Mark Harding

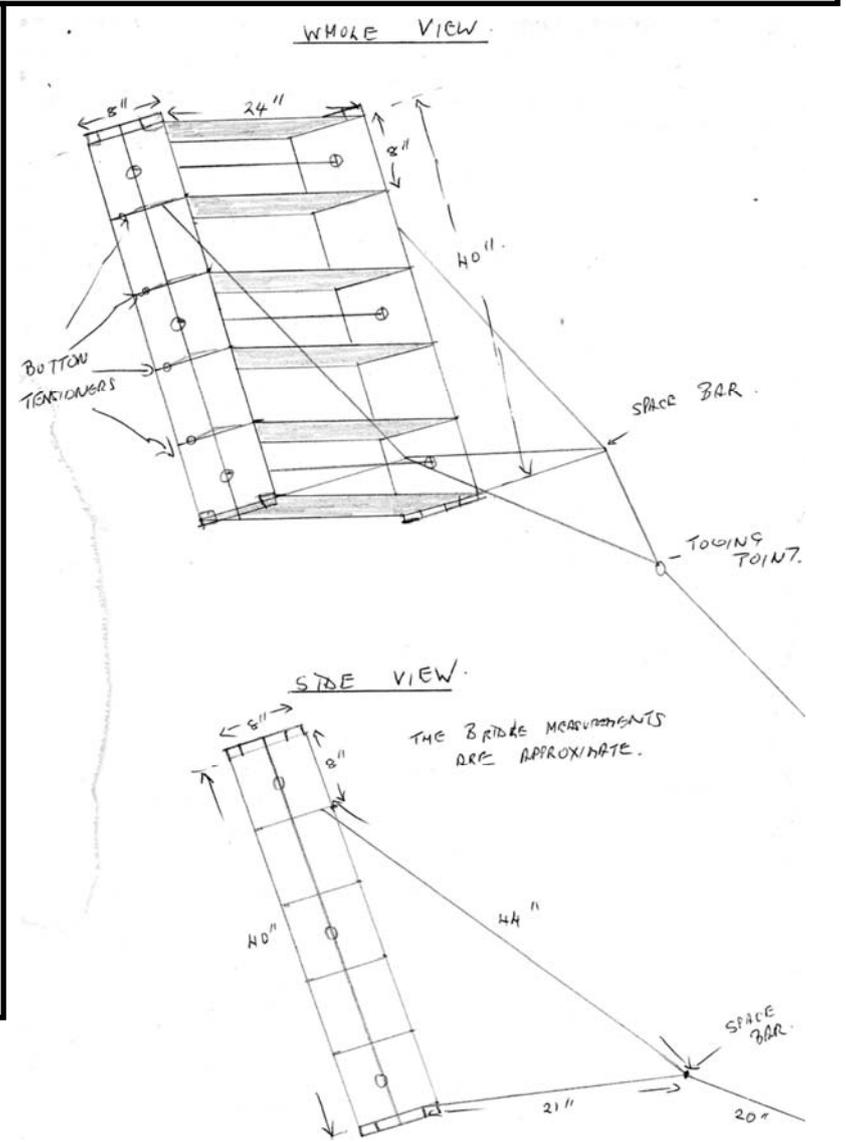
# Ladder Kite 5 Celled Design—Mark Harding



Different pictures of the kite showing how it is made.



Layout of kite, the bridle lines with space bar and attachment to the kite.



## Portsmouth 2018—Hugh Blowers, Photos—Lynn Blowers

Read the small print. Portsmouth 2018

The bottom line of the timetable read 'Of course all events are subject to weather conditions'. Somewhat ironically, given that we are experiencing one of the hottest summers on record, instead of the risk of heatstroke or lack of wind, the 27<sup>th</sup> festival was marked by the first rain for several months. Friday, apart from scuppering our plans, gave the first indication of a change in the weather. Having got soaking wet on a previous trip into the old town, we sat in Rees Hall and watched as the roads outside slowly flooded and then the Common began to take on the appearance of a lake. Not only was it sluicing down, but the very strong winds caused the cancellation of hovercraft services, brought work to a standstill on the Victorious stage and stopped the erection of the festival marquees, not a good start. The rain eventually abated although it was pretty chilly when we met up with Gill and Jon and a chance to catch up with who had made it, who had called off and the inevitable stories of travel chaos, missed turnings to the M25 by Alicja and Szymon from Poland and traffic jams.

A topic of conversation on Friday night again was the marked change in social gatherings at festivals. With no bar in Rees Hall this year and a summer camp in residence, it was a very select group that passed the evening with the help of Dick Toonen's capacious cold box and Jan's potent coffee liqueur. Is it just that we are all getting old or is it the constant travelling for many of the guests that makes sleep a priority? The other topic was as ever, the forecast. Saturday looked pretty good with a constant on-shore wind, whilst Sunday was definitely a bit 'iffy', with rain in prospect for much of the day.

Still not sure what the architect had in mind when designing the rooms at Rees Hall, but I am sure the ergonomic data he was using was not for the average kiteflyer, we had a far bigger shower and toilet on a recent ferry crossing. The place is definitely looking tired now, and judging by the complaints and our own experiences, the plumbing leaves something to be desired as well? Awoke to sun and an unusual sight, nary a single kite in the sky, due to the total lack of wind at that stage. By the time we had partaken of the now self-service breakfast, there was enough breeze for a few lightweight kites and a leisurely walk to the common for us.

The arena set up is now well established and from our point of view works well, with the large inflatables at the west end of the site, the smaller kites at the east end and the main display arena in between. The longest job on day one is putting together all the kites needed for the various slots on the programme, before the call goes out for the 'flyer's briefing'. Jon pun-

ished his vocal chords by introducing almost every guest and invited flyer, and an impressive list it was too, then it was on to the business of the day and flying. Except it wasn't, as the arena was being used by a drone to film the site and crowd, delaying the customary altitude sprint somewhat, leaving TC facing a serious slippage in the timings, almost before we had started. Sadly, and due to the wind direction, we had little idea of what George was saying over the PA so that I have no idea at all of who won the sprint.

It is now thirty years since STACK was formed, and so the festival was a chance to celebrate this with a significant number of displays over the weekend. As well as established favourites the Decorators, Lex and Irma, Carl and Brian Wright, Josh and a return visit from Bill and Graham the Dunstable Downs Old Gents, there was Stephan Fliers from Belgium and Ingeborg Aarts from Holland as Fenix Pair, Twisted Bridle and some quirky four line kites in the hands of Juan and Rafael from Spain. Add to this a sizeable number of flyers from teams past and present meant that there was going to be plenty to keep the crowds entertained.

Sandwiched between the pairs and the four line demos was the first of the art kite slots. David Ellison had the perfect response to my suggestion of a 'bit of colour' in one of his kites. He had used just about every colour available to him, still with his basic design but now there is a triptych, white on black, black on white and shloc, and acronym for 'lots of colours'. What I had not realised until I saw the coloured version was that the pattern on the very long tails of his kites does repeat, but not in a straight line as it is not parallel to the tail but slanted by just a few degrees. I am glad he does not design wallpaper.



Elsewhere there was the usual selection of appliquéd, printed, dyed and painted images as well as Frances Anderson's complex paper creations. What is noticeable is that some artists do produce lovely images, but on kites that are less than stable, not ideal in a festival arena, whilst others are able to combine superb images with utterly reliable kites.

TC was pushing the programme along to get somewhere back on track so the art kites gave

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way to a longer session of four line teams, including Viento Sur who had been flying some of their unusual designs, including a pair that spelled out Portsmouth and a flying bicycle. While the teams were plying their trade, Dick Toonen was readying untold numbers of Drum kites for another attempt to 'build a wall'. This was first suggested as a way of marking the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. The principle was described in the Berck report but here there was a much livelier wind, Dick was going for three layers high and lots of people, flyers and members of the public were required to build and hold the wall in place.



After a short briefing and the long 'Floyd' introduction up they went in pairs from opposite ends of each layer until the sky was a mass of kites. Then it all went slightly haywire as an almighty tangle developed. Such was the knot that we had to give it second best and spend a disproportionate amount of time getting the lines free, even so most of the kites continued to fly without any intervention from the flyers. Thanks to Dick and all the helpers and 'volunteers' for putting this on again.



One person that has to work harder than most at Portsmouth is Carl Wright, as he performs a pairs routine on his own, pairs with Brian and then a three person team on his own and four times in a weekend. I do enjoy Carl's choice of tracks to fly to, the music needs to be fresh, if only for those that have been watching him and other teams perform over the course of many years. Carl Robertshaw was marooned in the West Country with a dead van so it was down to Josh Mitcheson to astound us all with his Fulcrum and Rev displays, aided and abetted by Tom Greenfield. If Carl was one man with three kites, then Tom was one man with lots of Revs as he flew a very large stack each day that gave him some fun. Not often a Decorator is seen with just one line, but Felix was seen hanging on determinedly to the team's Moller Hansen parafoil, a classic Jalbert shape, so it was pulling a bit.

With the three-arena layout there is not too much time to get down to the large inflatables, so recognition has to be done at a distance. Andrew Beattie had all sorts on his line, handling them made easier with the winch system he has on the front of his van. Next along was Jan, looking loads better than this time last year, hope the recovery continues apace. There was a



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solid representation from Germany with Dirk Kruger and his daughter Elaine, Rolf Sturm now fully recovered, Gerd Klaus and Bernard Dingwerth, all benefiting from what was nigh on a perfect wind strength and direction. Even so the odd pilot was falling out of the sky to keep them busy. Guy Reynolds seems to add to his selection of super heroes regularly, but the coup of the event for Gill and Jon was getting Guilherme Linares Palau there from Brazil via Italy who had a line of bright sunflowers up for most of the weekend. He is famous for his pointy hat that caused great merriment amongst the picnickers as he walked back to Rees Hall. Several wanting photos wearing it.

Knowing that George Peters was going to be there we had tried, and failed to get the Midland Club kites down to add to his display. Although only there for just two days before flying back, George had brought an entire festival worth of kites and banners, predominantly black and white. Those of us that go back a long way remember the amazing colours that George used to incorporate and make his kites so recognisable. Without the Midland kites, there was just Natalie, Lynn and myself with the older multi coloured versions, plus a couple of commercial versions. Melanie was unable to accompany George, so he was handing kites around to be flown, which did nearly end in tears as one flyer dropped the handle of the largest example that promptly shot off downwind without a catcher in sight. Visions of the kite and handle whipping into the crowd were forestalled by the unlikely chance of the line wrapping itself round my Turtle so that I now had two of George's kites and a turtle being slowly strangled to death. Disaster avoided and turtle resuscitated we could listen to George Webster commenting on George Peters' latest kite, the cicada. This has a printed body section with wings attached, and a traditional hummer, which offended George W by refusing to hum, so he christened them 'the silent cicadas'.



Growing in popularity of late has been the displays of black and white kites. George Peters was a shoe-in for this as everything he had brought was this colour combination. A Brassington train, David Ellison's long tails and an assortment of Steve Brockett's newer work, all added to the wide range of kites in the air. George W was explaining the concept of 'dazzle' camouflage whilst we had some interesting conversations about the different connotations put on black and white in different countries and how this could cause confusion and even offence if not dealt with carefully, something that would probably not occur to most of us.

Tried out now for a couple of years, but with a new twist was the chance for the public to 'meet the kite flyers'. Instead of the public flying the guest's kites, dozens of George W's favourite kites, the rainbow Chinese Delta were assembled for them to fly and it proved to be as popular as ever, the sky was full. Another popular item is the mass launch of predominantly Robertshaw deltas with the very long tails. A stray Vampire had crept in and high above was the pink 'cancer knot' that Paul Reynolds described and explained the significance of to the crowd.

The small kite arena was looking more like a chandlers with around ten Edos laid out, ready for the off. These are not kites that can be rigged in a hurry, especially if they have the requisite number and length of bridles. Peter



Schmidt had two very complex log cabin style kites while Albert Trinks had his famous Afghan lady and the Hiroshima ode. Steve Brockett was represented by a modern 'feather' Edo and the veteran 'Strange Fruits', somewhat faded, but flying perfectly. David Ellison has built a bigger version of his 'paint panel' kite and the change in scale has made the panels very visible in the air. Lynn Blowers had the painted 'Sisters' that Buzzer made for her many years ago as an ex-

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periment. After initial fears, the paint does seem to be staying on.

A short break while Carl Wright did his stuff again and it was back into the arena to join Steve Brockett. The new 'Angel of the West' flew high above the old and impressive 'Blackbirds are in my dreams' that was commandeered by Gill and all around were Steve's new figure series, an Edo and Lynn flying 'Misty', all was going well, a lovely day until that moment when the festival changed. From nowhere came a heavy rainstorm that soaked everything, and everybody that was out, acres of inflatable rip-stop, chairs, bags, tables, and worst of all, our three cotton Brockett kites. Far too late by then to seek shelter or cover anything up as it all happened so quickly and not a lot of good putting a coat on either. Cleared the queue for the toilets though. Even what had been put away was wet as the kite bags were full of water. As quickly as it came, the rain stopped and the worst could be shaken off and some kites partially dried by flying.

Sports kite flyers are a hardy breed though as they assembled for the first of the STACK tributes, starting at the very beginning with a lone Peter Powell stunter. Something of a leap to a lone Hawaiian flown by Lex and then the iconic team kite of a generation, the North Shore Radical and its attendant noise. To a running commentary, more Radicals joined in, pairs, teams and then a whole line of them to make a mega team. One thing that has changed, and not for the better in my mind is that mega teams have become 'follow the leader' sessions, whereas they used to be clearly choreographed with up to sixteen kites flying a specific routine. This was never going to happen, but with some direction and experienced flyers there were coordinated stacks, lines, turns, manoeuvres and threads, all with a multitude of radicals rattling away. Surely with all these experienced pilots, GB could muster a team or two for the next WSKC?

Lots of lines to wrap up before allowing the hoards of children into the arena for the sweet drop, kindly organised by Rolf Sturm and Gerd Klaus. It represents an incredible amount of work to create four bags full of sweeties with spinners or little parachutes. It does spread the 'stick' and elongate the scramble, hopefully avoiding any major bundles. Oh for the days of the raw egg drops!!! Something of a tradition now at Portsmouth is the Spirit and Angel fly, Nick James had not made it, so the only angel was Karl Longbottom's, a new one, not the ventilated one from Berck. The originator of the Spirit, Martin Lester, was on hand to join in, always a tribute to a kite maker to see so many of their designs at once, especially if they are all legal? Interestingly, Martin is turning his atten-

tion back to sparred kites, both old designs and new.

The strength of the wind dictated that the Rok fight would not be safe so it was on to the final turn of the day for the two and four line flyers and a mass Rev fly. Meanwhile all round the site were desperate attempts to get things dry enough to pack away until the morrow, although the forecast for that looked less than hopeful.

Despite the talk of global warming and the heat of the summer, apart from last year, the evening meal and auction at Portsmouth has been a chilly affair on occasions, especially with the wind coming straight into the tents. Several of the guests sought the relative warmth of Rees Hall well before the activities were completed. Kite auctions are no different to on line and public auctions, in that it is never safe to second-guess how much something will make. An original kite from a famous maker might go for a quarter of its retail value, while a commercial product can make three times what it is available for on a stall earlier in the day. Nevertheless, they are still a vital element in raising funds for festivals, so thanks to those that donate, those that purchase and the hardest of all, the auctioneers who have to extract the money, sometimes from eager bidders but often from the slightly more reluctant. It is an art form.

Sunday's programme was to be a repeat of Saturday's, except it would not be, as Debbie would make her presence felt. No, not a council official or an 'elf and safety bod, but the bottom end of a tropical storm. Started well as I tipped half a gallon of cold water down my trousers that had gathered in the folds of our tarp. The forecast had obviously put a few flyers off, the line of tents in our arena had definitely diminished. A rethink was also called for on what we would be flying as the wind had freshened somewhat, leading to an interesting altitude sprint. About ten seconds would have been enough, but George stuck with ninety, so reels were unwinding at a prodigious rate as kites headed off downwind. Bear in mind that southern rules applied so kites could be pulled up at the end of the time. What was clear was that many were getting very small as they headed towards the dockyard, yet when time was called, they climbed en masse making the judges job next to impossible and probably guesswork as they were so high.

With three pairs on hand and the celebration of STACK in mind a mini competition was set up, with field director and judges marking the flying of Flying Fish, Fenix Pair and Twisted Bridles. Whatever the rest of the content, no one can match Lex and Irma for their finish, with each

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kite being flown out to the edge of the wind and being caught by their partner, fantastic coordination required and rewarded spectacularly. For a more detailed and knowledgeable account of the sports kite flying at Portsmouth the Flying Fish website is a mine of information about this and other festivals. [Flyingfishkites.blogspot.com](http://Flyingfishkites.blogspot.com)

Not long before the rain started and we were wet again, but it did create certain camaraderie as the few of us that were evident, mucked in and flew anything that was available. Somewhat damp and deflated, much like the still impressive selection of art kites, we headed off for a coffee while the sports kite flyers and teams did their thing. By the time Carl had finished his third routine, it had stopped raining and it was time for George Peters to come to the fore. George always has an entire festival in his bag, and so it proved as every available flyer had either a kite or banner to take into the arena. George can be a 'lad' at the best of times, and he excelled himself this time out. He arranged for us to parade the length of the arena imitating the famous John Cleese 'ministry of silly walks' sketch, but then it got even more surreal. Most of us, either through observation or practice have some knowledge of team flying, and it was not long before George called for a 'round the world' and then Dave Ellison had us performing Decorator's moves, although we bridled at the double helix. At the command, all fall down, we did, some degree of madness already creeping in, and then it was a full-scale charge to surround George Webster before we retired, somewhat out of puff.

Just time to marvel at Josh and Tom's control of four line kites and then it was back with black and white, predominantly Steve B, George P and Dave E with add on flyers. The grey sky seemed to set of these kites perfectly, continuing the theme of muted tones. Sad though to see a number of motor homes already making for the exit with more than half the programme still to run, so full marks to all who braved it out. It was not too bad, dull, not madly warm and plenty of wind as the stage erectors found to their cost when they reinvented the playsail. The entire music stage is clad in very large sheets of reinforced plastic that is slid into grooves, pulled from one side by very long straps and guided by two more. One gust caught the sheet with just a couple of feet secured and then a huge fight took place as the poor guy on the bottom tried to control the ballooning fabric, took a concerted effort and lots of manpower to get it under control.

With all that was going on, we somehow missed out on lunch as turn after turn was called up, the only respite being when the sports kite flyers were providing the entertainment, not sure what you do if one member of your team con-

sistently turns the wrong way? Not in Carl's case as he is in charge of all the kites. The last call for art kites and a chance to look around as a Phoenix was thrust into my hand. A while since we have seen Karl and Sara Longbottom at Portsmouth and gratifying to hear how successful this design must be, I bought one. Caterina and Frances were still hanging in, as



were Anne and Peter Whitehead from New Zealand. What they must have thought of our British weather remains to be seen. Flying beautifully, with an exceedingly long and thin white tail was Steve Brockett's 'Angel Of The West' one of his new series of figure kites, but this time with a small pair of wings attached at shoulder level. For me, it was the kite of the festival and I would happily have succumbed, until I saw the price tag that is.



At last a bit of time off as others took over for the 'flowing tails' and 'meet the flyers', not much to be said about these a second time round as they are essentially events for the public to enjoy, and surprisingly they were still a lot of them about despite the inclement nature of the weather, although the concession stall did not appear to be doing too much busi-

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ness. Sales resistance begins to creep in especially at £2.50 for a cup of tea.

Several of the stalls were packing up and closing down by this time, no such respite for the hardy flyers left on site. Edos were next up and Steve Brockett had rescued one of his very early fabric kites from the exhibition tent, confident that the rain was over for the day. 'Wind Offering 3' was one of three themed kites from his very first exhibition in the late 80s. The kites represented the stages of metamorphosis, the first a caterpillar, second a chrysalis and the third a butterfly, originally spars in bamboo, but rigged with modern material for his Cervia Show. The bridles were still original though and both sticky and very tangled.

They were also showing signs of age, so untangling them had to be done with a certain delicacy, even then, not all of them lasted. Finally Steve decided to fly the rest of them out on the way to the arena, at which point I was asked to fly his latest Edo, which was very wet, unbowed and with bridles still brailed. Contrary to my earlier statement, an Edo can be readied in record time, assuming the bridles come out, which they did. With everyone mucking in there was a good show and not a single tangle, something of a record for an Edo fly?

Definitely on the windy side now, so Carl became one man with two kites and the dusting of off the Barcelona track, as George W put it, he must have forearms like Popeye?

Crikey, back in the arena again for the final session with Steve B, a delight to have had him at Portsmouth, even if the weather was not entirely conducive to flying old, cotton kites, but with Moth Man, Feather Heads, the 'Angel' and Edos, there were still plenty of examples of his work on show, so thanks to Steve and Trudy for braving the elements with some serious pieces of art.

Well, that was us done for the weekend, so kites were pegged out to make the most of the dry, although everything else was still pretty wet.

It also gave me a chance to watch the STACK tribute from the beginning, and it was clear that some serious organisation had taken place. Irma was flying the Hawaiian on this occasion while Fran Burstal showed just what a Radical could do as he was snapping one around the sky in a series of quite vicious square corners, remarkable given the strength of the wind. VIPs were definitely the order of the day and it was not long before the sky was full of them being flown precisely and in formations redolent of the 'good old days', although the marked variations in speed were keeping the flyers on their

toes, well, more their heels in that wind. A big thanks to all who had dug these memories out of the cupboards and wouldn't it be nice to see



some well drilled teams back in action at Portsmouth?

A Rok fight was held this time with a dead heat result and another load of sweets were being dropped and then the normal winding down with Spirits and all the multi line flyers creating the finale.

Not the wettest we have been at Portsmouth as it was a long time ago that a day had to be abandoned, and we did finish each day dry, relatively.

Gill and Jon's post festival email summed it up with a massive thanks to everyone who stuck it out, flew throughout the day and was on hand for the arena slots and flying duties whenever required, Yes, it was enjoyable, although around eleven on Sunday morning, doubts were beginning to creep in, but we are all made of sterner stuff, aren't we, well most of us.

The good news, given the announcement regarding Bristol is that Portsmouth is pencilled in for the same weekend next year, (August 10th & 11th) hopefully with a little less rain?

Luckily, three hours of brilliant sunshine on Monday had everything dry and warm again, including us.

### Dieppe Competition—The World of fantasy as in imagination



Junior Competition Winner—  
Yoga Nanda



1st Place Novice—Michel  
Trouillet



2nd Place Expert—Kadek  
Armika.



4th Place Expert—Edith Frank.



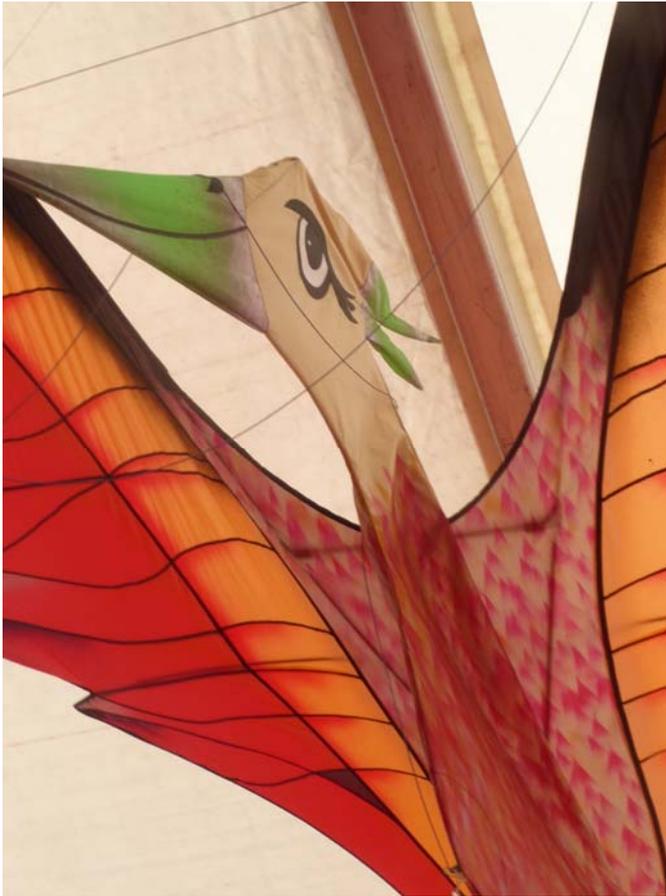
2nd Place Novice—Marco T Aponte G.



Jan van Leeuwen  
Entry



Olivier Reymond  
Entry



3rd Place Expert—Karl Longbottom



4th Place Expert—



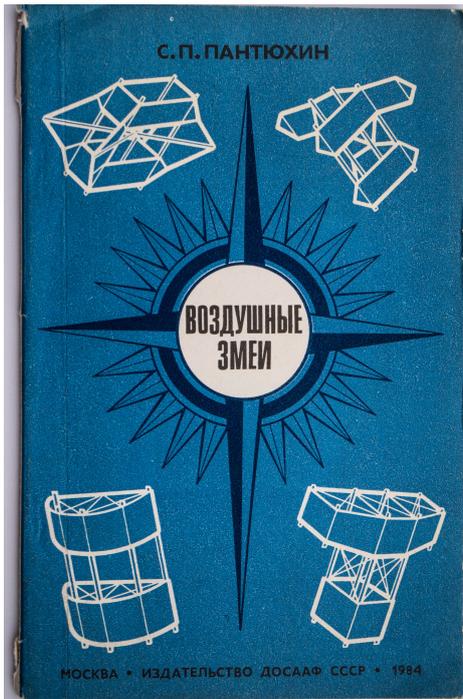
Marjorie Truchet. Entry



Ingo Ratzlaff Entry

# Русские змеи .....Пауль Чепмен

It is quite hard to find kite books from the Soviet era, but there are rewards when you ease them out of the old Bloc. The books that I have found come primarily from Russia and Ukraine and, luckily because I cannot translate the Russian, they are mostly self-explanatory because of the clearly drawn illustrations. Of course not all of these books are purely kite related. Most are aeromodelling...but interesting for that too, especially the ornithopter books.



One of the best is this book 'Kite Flying' (воздушный змей) which is essentially a copy of the 1930s work by Babjuk. The drawing below is for an Ulyanin manlifter.

<http://www.drachen.org/collections/aerial-kites-captain-ulyanin>

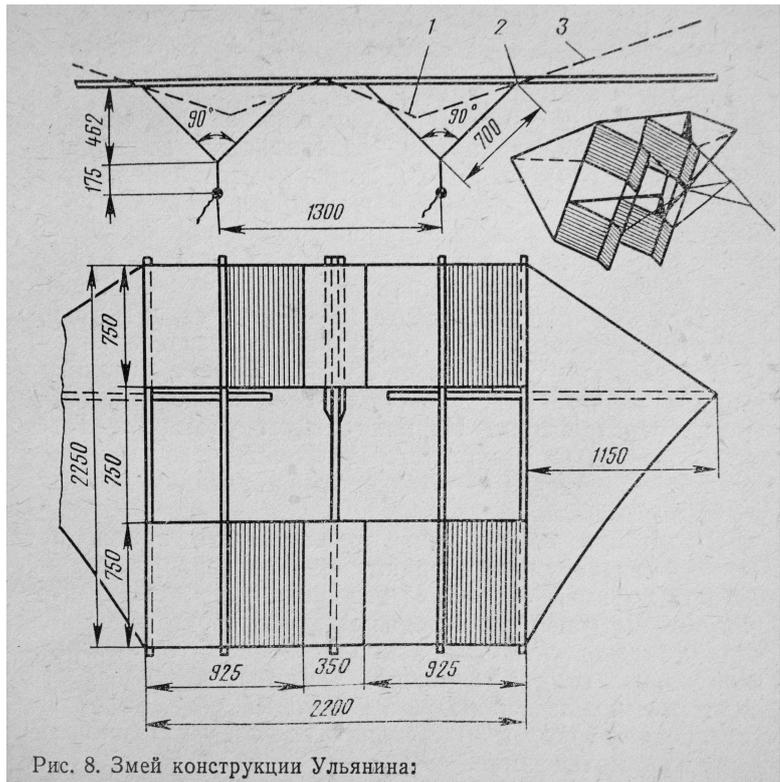


Рис. 8. Змей конструкции Ульянина:

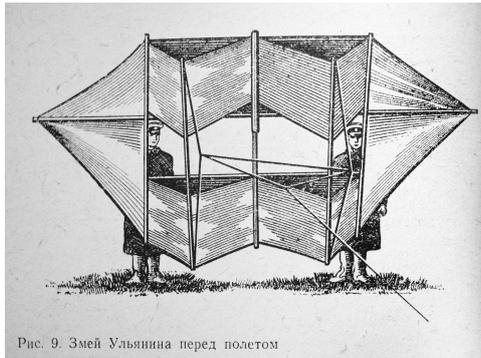
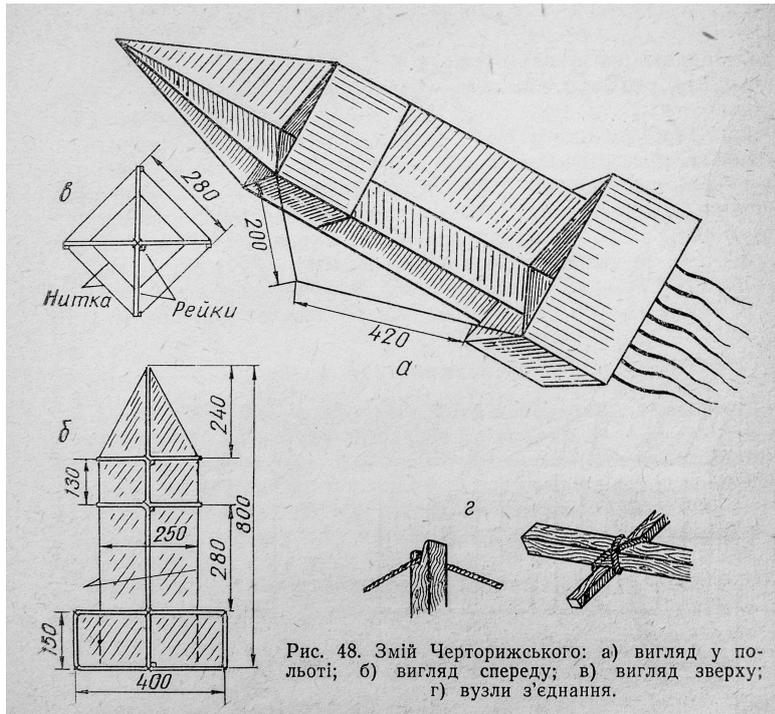


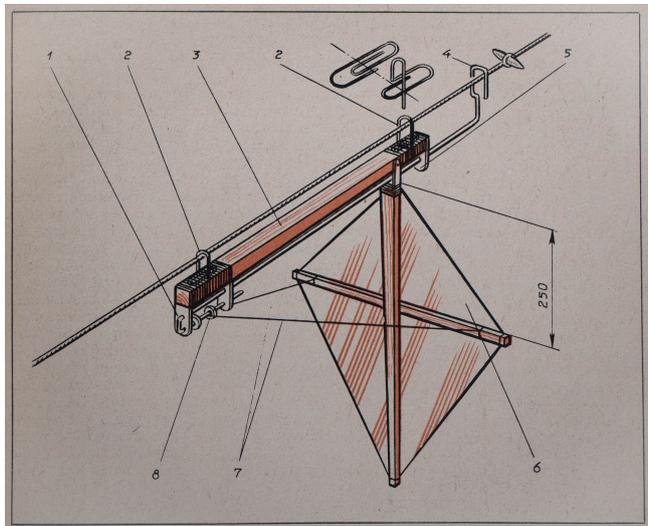
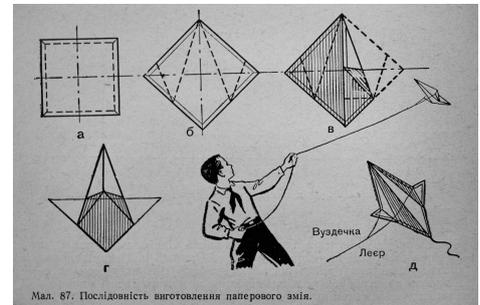
Рис. 9. Змей Ульянина перед полетом

It looks very similar to the Brookite of the same era and I have often wondered if there was a relationship between them. This book, like the predecessor is very good on the enormous Cody derivative kites that were made by the Russians.





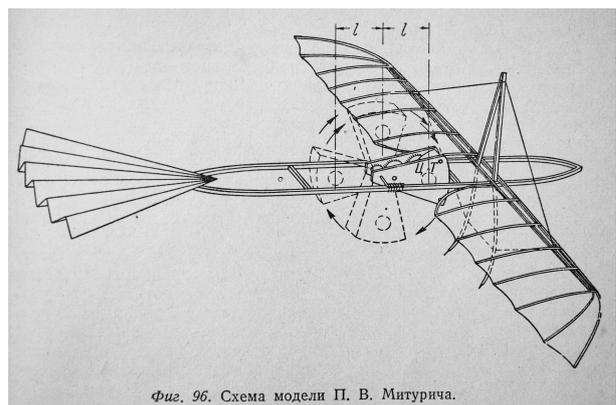
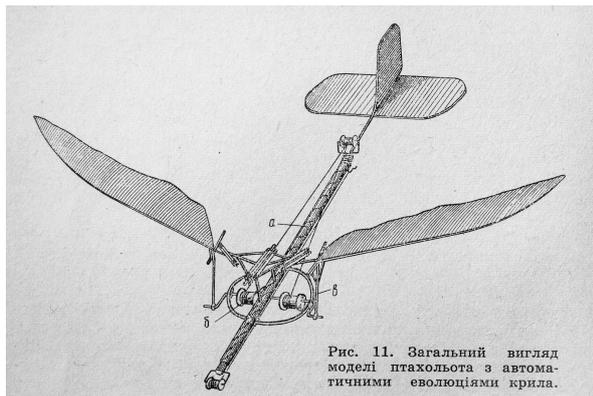
Oleksii is still active in kites and is the Chairman of the Kherson City Public Organisation for the Association of Kites. His book is on the top of the pile in the first photo....thoroughly recommended even if you cannot deal with the script.



And then there are the extras, like this line climber....ideal as a Red Ted Bear dropper!



The 1930s book on messengers has this lovely Soviet Propaganda style cover. I suspect the cover is generic for all sorts of booklets written for the air-minded youth. And then there are the strange model aeroplanes.....



Bits & Pieces

**From the Auctions—Ebay**

*A Boy with a Kite Attacked by a Rook by William Hogarth.* Not so much for the poster (which is a standard A4 sized print) but for the origins of the picture.



The painting was done between 1755 and 1760, oil on canvas and is approximately 36cm x 30cm. Privately owned. Searching for this information led to [www.larsdatter.com/18c/kites.html](http://www.larsdatter.com/18c/kites.html). This site lists some 40 odd 18th century prints with kites.

The print on Ebay is £8.99



*Flying Kites by John George Brown.* Another A4 print. The painting was done in 1867 and, this time is not much bigger than A4—approx. 30cm x 22cm. Oil on paper. Privately owned.

The print is £8.99 but is also available as a Handmade Oil painting reproduction (!) at

[www.dafenvillageonline.com](http://www.dafenvillageonline.com).

*Canada, Political Cartoon, Republican Kite Flying At Cincinnati, Ohio, 1876* From the Canadian

Illustrated News, Montreal Canada, 1876. Title "The Republican Kite Flying At Cincinnati, Ohio: Blane As High As A Kite: Conklin Up A Tree: Others Nowhere.". Approx. 11" x 15 1/2".

£17.00 at the moment plus postage from the USA.



1965 Vintage Rare Peanuts blue two sided Tote Charlie Brown Snoopy Kite Lined Book Bag £23.00 plus postage from USA.



*Lisa Wood Acorn Weevil Flying Kite miniature. Insect glass/wood diorama.* Approx. 1998. Very Collectible in Good to acceptable condition given it's age. Measures 3.5" x 2.5" x 2.5". Features a footed, square glass/wood case.

This is a bit weird to be honest (see picture) but surprisingly sold for £170 approximately.

Bits & Pieces



*Royal Copenhagen Figurine Elsa with Kite*  
 The one on the left (approx. 15xm tall) is on Ebay—price £238 plus £20 postage. The one on the right is called Little Girl with Kite and is 8cm tall. Price £32.00 plus £20 postage.



*Original Indian Miniature Painting Maharajah Flying Kite Harem Scene Large*

This magnificent miniature depicts a Rajput maharajah participating in a kite flying festival. A bird's eye perspective, enables you to see everything that's happening: all the action, colours and life in the courtyard. The distinctive style of artwork focuses on exceptional detail, bold colours, and definitive lines, blended together seamlessly to create a harmonious composition. It is the most joyful of paintings that you will long to own. Price £148.00

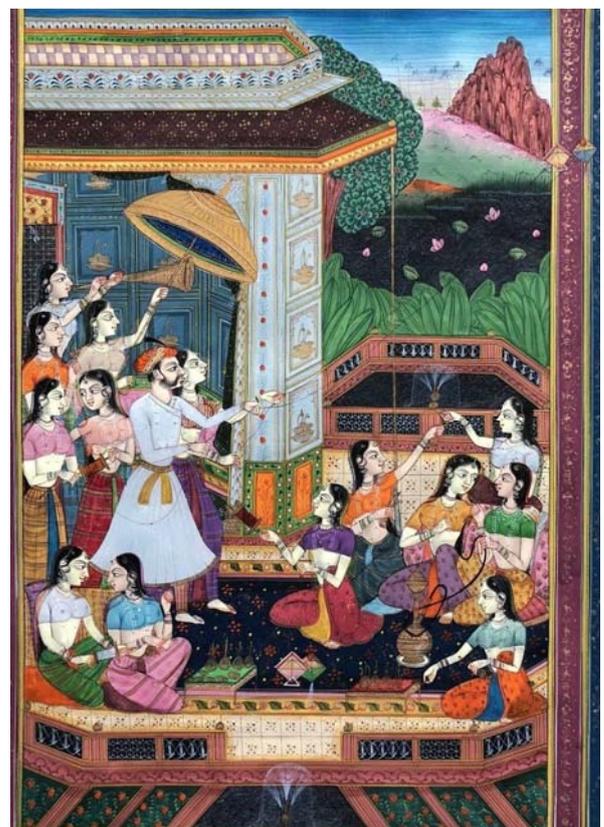


*Wooden teddy bear money box.* The teddy bear is standing by a house and coins can be put in the slot just under the roof and above the window. It can be emptied underneath by sliding the wood away. The teddy bear is holding a kite. It measures 5.25 ins

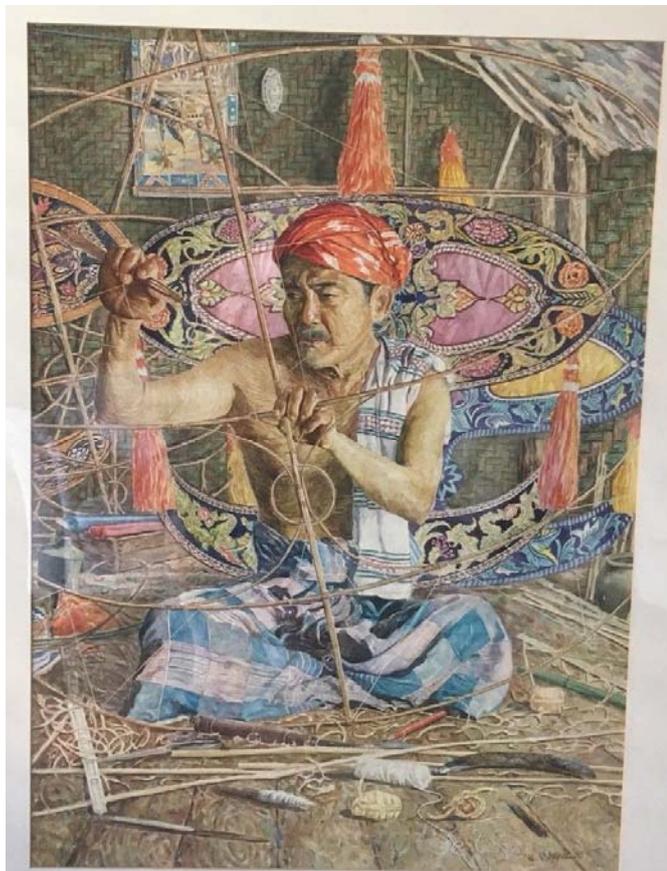
to the top of the kite and 5 ins wide approx. £20.00 plus postage of £3.50.

*Vintage rare Star Trek The Next Generation mini kite spool 300 ft. Flying line spectra star 1993.*

Handle approx. 8" long. £19 plus postage from the USA.



*Framed Watercolour Painting. Malaysian Kite Maker Original by Wan Ismail Jaafar*



This is an original water colour painted by Wan Ismail Jaafar in Kula Lumpur, Malaysia 1996. It is one of a series of his paintings by this artist, portraying interesting facets of Malaysian life in the countryside, especially the East Coast.

This one is called The Kite Maker. It features a local kite maker in his workshop with completed kites in the background.

The painting measure 22 x30 inches, it has a mount and frame in local wood. It cost RM 3000 Ringgit about £700 the original" sale label is still attached. There is some minor water staining on the paper on the back of the painting.

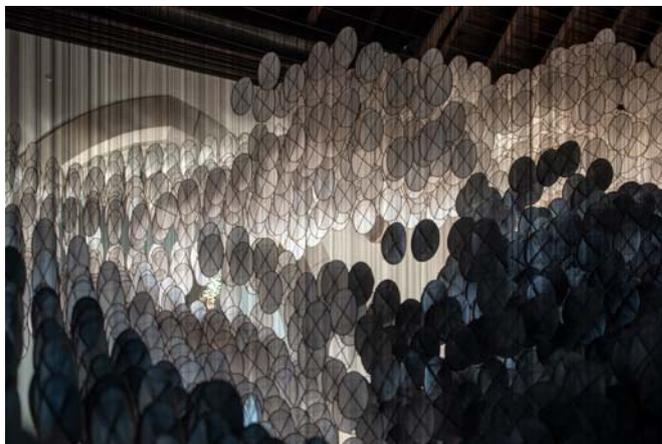
£200 plus P&P.

**Over Fifteen Thousand Paper Kites Create a Two-Toned Cloud Inside New York's St. Cornelius Chapel**

A mass of circular black paper and bamboo kites merges with a collection of identically designed white ones inside Governors Island's St. Cornelius Chapel in an installation titled The Eclipse.

Created by artist Jacob Hashimoto (previously), the paper orbs hang from the ceiling by pieces of string to comprise a layered formation that

appears like roving waves or clouds. This is the second iteration of the labour-intensive installation, which premiered at the Palazzo Flangini during the 57th Venice Biennale.



**Kites soar on breath of life**

Melbourne composer Adam Simmons' concert series The Usefulness of Art – which took its initial cue from a quote by Rodin – has unfurled into an ambitious two-year project featuring five major works. Over the course of the series, Simmons has used these works to explore the value of music and art in shaping identity and fostering a sense of community.

In the fifth and final instalment, The Kites of Tianjin, Simmons delves even deeper, using the kite as a metaphor for life itself. Inspired by the city of Tianjin and its kite-making traditions, the work incorporates elements of Chinese music and, in particular, the exceptional artistry of sheng player Wang Zheng-Ting.

Colourful quilted and paper kites hang suspended above and, at one point, two miniature kites (an eagle and a butterfly) become airborne, gliding and eddying as though animated by the music.

The Kites of Tianjin is all about wind and its relationship to breath – and breath to life – and as the piece comes to an end, the musicians put down their instruments and simply breathe. Simmons looks out at us, issuing a gentle invitation to breathe with them.

It's a simple but deeply moving gesture, signifying the inclusiveness and desire to share that makes Simmons' work so meaningful.

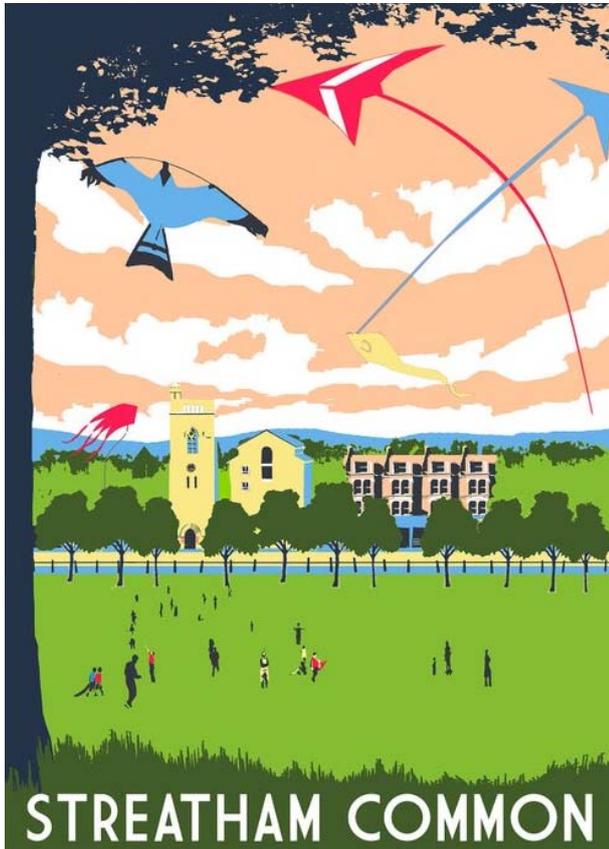
**National Trust**

BOYS FLYING KITES attributed to Godfried Schalcken (1643-1706).

This is available from the National Trust online store . A picture at Upton House in the West Midlands it is available in a number of different sizes starting at £20. Search their web site.

## Bits & Pieces

### Streatham Common Kites Screen Print, South London



"Streatham Common" screen print available on Etsy.com. Limited edition print run of 150 in green, peach. Hand-pulled screen print depicting Streatham Common's Kite Day in a bold graphic poster style.

Vibrant water-based ink on heavy weight fabricano paper. Signed and numbered limited edition run.

Print size 260mm by 360mm  
Paper size 297mm by 420mm

### Go Fly Your Kite provide fun and physics for all ages (From The Irish News)

Not often you see a man running up and down the cafe in the MAC Theatre flying his kite. It happened last week and it was all in the name of science. George Ellis assured me that you can fly your kite without wind. Well, George: prove it. And he did. As he ran through the tables, sure enough, the lightweight kite lifted high behind him, secure in the thermals he created.

I was meeting George and Glenn Heasley who is the founder of Go Fly Your Kite, an organisation that brings education through the fun of kite design workshops to organisations and with schools, often pre-primary and primary, where these STEM (science, technology engineering

and maths) workshops focus on the physics of kites, forces of nature, design and assembly. Glenn refused to take credit for the original idea.

"Strictly speaking when my son Oliver was four, after flying kites on the beach at Ballywalter he said wouldn't it be good if we could draw on kites and the idea grew from there. I thought about it for a few weeks, how you could theme the idea for events and organisations as a fun thing. Then it occurred to me that there would be interest in the mechanics of making and flying and that it could be a valuable teaching instrument for young children."

His research led him to China where kites had their birth and were called Wind Harps. The Chinese had discovered how to weave silkworm thread into a lightweight material and with bamboo readily available they put the two together and so began the fascinating pastime; today apparently, there are 50 million kites sold in the United States every year and this is one of the fastest growing sports in the world.

No wonder the supplier was excited and sent 15 different designs; each one was wind tested until Glenn and George found one that was reliable in all weathers, could cope with crashing into rocks or the sea and dried quickly. A blank stretch of polyester material, a fibreglass frame and a few coloured ribbons and, as Glenn explained, they were ready to go.

"Our next step was to go to government agencies, pointing out the value of such workshops to schools and organisations not as a play thing but as a learning tool. However, we got no positive response."

No interest as they had entirely missed the point.

Despite this, the Co Down business has taken off; their kites fly all over Ireland and Britain, the kits are sold online all over the world, they had record numbers coming to their tent at the National Ploughing Championships in Offaly,



starred at the Edinburgh Festival in August and were heavily involved with groups ahead of the Chinese New Year.

What exactly is Go Fly Your Kite all about? Certainly it's fun but it's a lot more than that. Children, and adults too, are learning the science behind kites. For instance, did you know the fastest recorded speed of a kite is over 120 miles an hour and the longest flying time is 180 hours? And how does a kite fly without the wind? How do you assemble the delicate framework? What is the history? Children learn to tie knots, they work together, share not only with the other young people but often with their parents who can't resist the temptation of lifting one of the coloured pens and joining in.

I learned that wind is smooth until it hits an obstacle, that the aeroplane is a development of the kite and that aviation pioneer Samuel Cody succeeded in crossing the English Channel in a small canvas boat powered by a kite. In 1901 Marconi used a kite to transmit the first radio signals across the Atlantic and Benjamin Franklin used a kite to prove that lightning was electricity.

**Ancient Kite Fishing Technique Makes Its Way Into Modern Waters**

"Go fly a kite" may soon mean the same thing as "go fish," thanks to an age-old technique that's being adapted for modern use.

This specialized kite fishing technique, now employed by coastal U.S. anglers aboard fishing boats, involves live bait suspended directly below a nylon kite. It's used primarily to catch large saltwater fish, ranging from sailfish to blackfin tuna.

Some of the earliest documentation of kite fishing comes via European explorers in the late 1500s, who witnessed Southeast Asian fishermen in a canoe using a kite and two lengths of cordage — one that served as kite line and one that served as fishing line. A large bundle of spiderwebs or a baited noose were attached to the fishing line, with the intent to catch needlefish. The observers noted the method was surprisingly successful. And in the early 1900s during visits to Indonesia, European travellers saw local fishermen using a single, large plant leaf as a kite. There, and in other island nations like those of Polynesia, kite fishing continues to be used as a traditional way of catching fish.

Modern kite fishing, though, involves brightly coloured kites made of sailcloth designed to withstand heavy wind conditions. Occasionally, helium-filled balloons are affixed to the kites, making kite fishing possible on days when there isn't much wind — the practice usually requires winds of between 5 and 25 mph (8 and 40

kph).

Overall, the technique allows anglers to put a number of lines in the water at one time, increasing the odds of catching a fish. Kite fishing also takes the bait fish a greater length from the boat than a traditional pole or fly fishing method might, offering the illusion that the prey is at a safe distance from a potentially harmful interloper.



**Expeditions with Balfour W Currie**

The University of Saskatchewan has a number of articles around meteorology.

"The two younger chaps, Stuart McVeigh and John Rea, took care of most of the meteorological work, which included balloon flights and kite flights with meteorographs. They flew a series of four kites on piano wire into the cloud level, and then we all had to get together to wind them in, especially if the wind picked up... McVeigh would try to catch one of the kites with a meteorograph on it as it came down. If he could not catch it, it would crash on the rocks and he would have to repair it before he could use it again. We had a machine with a winder for incoming wire when we were pulling in the kite."



## Making Magic with Kites

A 10-Year-Old Kid Is Making Magic With His Kites

There's no Xbox or PlayStation for most of the kids in the Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh. But there are kites.



In the late afternoon, a steady wind blows over the hills of the Hakimpara refugee camp. Young boys race to a ridge at the top of the settlement to fly homemade kites. Some of the "kites" are little more than a plastic bag flapping on a string. But some are more sophisticated with long tails and frilly tassels. "This is a new kite and I'm very happy with it," says 7-year-old Mohammed Arfat as he reels out string to a silvery kite 30 or 40 feet above him.

Arfat adds that any day he's not able to fly a kite, he feels upset. I ask Arfat where he got his fancy new kite. He tells me that there's "this guy" who makes them and gives them away. The "guy" turns out to be a 10-year-old named Fayes Khamal.

"It's easy to make kites but I need to find the materials," says Khamal. "And it takes a bit of time."

Khamal uses bits of castoff bamboo and opaque plastic sheeting to fashion his kites — leftovers from the shelters people build and bits of trash he finds.

In the simple shelter Khamal shares with his parents, he splits bamboo into thin strips with a machete and uses the bamboo as a frame for the kite. Then he stretches the plastic sheeting over it, tying it with string to the bamboo. After he's made the diamond-shaped body of the kite, he cuts a plastic grocery bag into strips and teases the ends into frilly tassels. Khamal attaches these to the kite to make the tail and what he calls "arms" — strips of plastic that dangle from each side of the kite and flap wildly when it's flying in the air

"If it didn't have arms and a tail the kite won't fly well," he says. "It would spin around in the sky. It needs these extra pieces."

He says once he has the materials he needs, it only takes him about 20 to 30 minutes to build a kite. Khamal makes four or five a week and gives them away to younger kids. His mother, Yemma Kulsom, sews clothes to earn extra cash. Khamal often borrows her thread and needles for his kite projects.

Kulsom says her son taught himself how to make kites back in Myanmar about three years ago. She says they've gotten more and more sophisticated as he's gotten older. They were forced to flee, she says, after an attack by the military on Rohingya rebels.

"When we heard that soldiers were coming toward our village, everyone hid in the forest," she says. "When we emerged the soldiers had burned down our houses. That's when we decided to come here to Bangladesh."

Kulsom says her dream for her son is that he gets a good education. He attends a school that meets for two hours most afternoons. In the mornings, he goes with his father to the edge of the camp to collect firewood. She says Khamal is a good student and she thinks maybe he could be a teacher when he grows up. Khamal says he'd prefer to be a shopkeeper.

For now, however, he's the "kite guy."

Once he finishes making his latest kite he takes it out for a test flight.

The camp is dry. Powdery beige dust covers just about everything. Khamal starts to run up a path that cuts between the shelters. His kite rises up behind him. It flits through the air like a fish fighting its way upstream. The opaque plastic shimmers in the sky. Its tail darts from side to side. Khamal beams up at his homemade kite. For a moment it's the brightest object in the camp.



## Next Generation of Kite Flyers—Jamie Lund

I often find myself asking when will the kiting world as we know it now end? Especially in the UK.

Being one of the younger kite flyers in the UK, I can only seem to be able to count on both of my hands kite flyers around my age, 3 or 4 of which, including myself, being in the same club (Brighton kite flyers).

There seems to be a lack of younger people getting into our form of kite flying (single line kites, show kites etc) the majority of young people entering our hobby mainly get into power kiting, buggying or kitesurfing.

There can only be a few reasons for this.

Number one is the cost, the kites we all own are expensive with prices ranging from something like £60 all the way up to £3000-£4000 whether that be for a single line stick kite to a maxi Peter Lynn inflatable. The latter being beyond the reach of a typical 26 year old.

Number two is most people around my age would rather be out with friends or have nice cars and expensive holidays or even sitting indoors playing on their games console.

And finally number Three. Flying your first kite on the beach during the summer holidays with your parents, it all goes wrong and the kite ends up in the bin back at the car park which then ruins the fun of flying a kite.

Kite manufacturers can't lower their prices, the cost of material goes up, the cost of labour goes up, therefore it's pretty impossible for the retail price to come down.

More and more festivals are dying away, the councils require more work, hire prices for equipment go up, the typical British weather, all of which make the next year festival harder to organise and run.

So what can we do?

Apart from carrying on with what we all do and help promote kite flying be it at a festival or a local fly-in or even by yourself at your local field I am really not sure what else we can do.

Maybe the same as what has happened during the program at Portsmouth the last couple of years where the public are invited into the arena to meet the flyers.

This year has been a pretty quiet year for me but a enjoyable year. I'd like to thank all the organisers for all of their hard work in organising the festivals for all these years, this year is my 12th year of kite flying (I think) and I look forward to another 12 years.

If anyone has any suggestions feel free to email me, I'd love to hear your suggestions because one day kiting in the UK as we know it will be no longer. And I'd love to be able to carry on kiting for the rest of my days.

Jamie Lund, Age 26.

## White Horse Kite Fliers—Club Workshop

With Ralf Maserski

Making Ralf's Positive, Negative Kites.

The workshop is being held on 23rd & 24th February 2019 at St Josephs School in Swindon, using "The Street" as last time.

The reason for putting this out so early is to try and get as many people as possible attending.

So if you know of anyone who might be interested please let them know.

The workshop will be Ralf's kite the "Positive, Negative" the colour's of which you can choose from the pictures provided, I will let you know when colour selections are required.

You will end up, hopefully with 2 kites not just the one.

The cost of the workshop will be £145, which as usual covers lunch on both days and free running tea/coffee, a £50 deposit is required, could you please pay this on or before November.

If you pay by BACS could you make it known it is for the workshop and also let me know you have paid by BACS.

As per normal a restaurant will be sorted out for the Saturday evening meal, which the price of is not included in the workshop price.

If you are interested could you please let me know ASAP and I can sort out numbers.

Any questions please get in touch with me.

You can either contact me via Facebook or email me at [donald.baggett@virginmedia.com](mailto:donald.baggett@virginmedia.com)

## Bedford 2018—Hugh Blowers, Photos Lyn Blowers

### A touch of meteorology. Bedford 2018.

Reading back through many years of reports from Bedford reveals a couple of recurring themes. Firstly, how enjoyable the festival is and secondly, how frustrating the flying can be. The question might then be asked as to why we all turn up, year after year? Well, it is really down to the first point. Flyers are exceedingly well looked after, the crowds come out in their hoards and the powers that be from the council are always appreciative of our efforts. If you factor in some good weather, then that can make it even more enjoyable. Does not alter the fact that the site is confined and surrounded by very mature trees, but that has to be accepted as the 'quid pro quo'. Now for the meteorology. Of late, local weather forecasts have made much more of where the jet stream is, and for weeks preceding the festival it created a blocking high pressure that had one isobar over northern England and another in the middle of France, indicating that whatever northerly breeze there might be, it wasn't going to be much.



Peter Waldron

Apart from the 'hardy annuals', Malcolm and Jeanette Goodman usually manage to spring a few surprises amongst the invited flyers, remember Jan-Peter Kuil making his first appearance for fifteen years or so or the late Peter Powell. Well, this year it was a pleasure to welcome none other than Peter (Professor Waldorf) Waldron, who was one of the great figures in British kite designing from the late 70s onwards until he faded from the scene. Add a return visit from Jon and Karen Burkhardt and the very welcome return of Carolyn and Jerry Swift (well, mainly Carolyn) and there was the prospect of a wonderful

and varied selection of kites, if we could get them to fly. It is now well established at Bedford, that there is a lot of long-launching, quite a bit of running, plenty of more sedate progress along the arena and a large amount of hopeful enthusiasm that is sometimes rewarded with a kite that has made it above the trees and is flying.

The Mayor of Bedford makes no pretence that the kite festival is anything other than an event to provide space and enjoyment for the public, without any cost to them. Of course there was plenty of opportunity to spend with the funfair, bar and concession stalls, but many chose to picnic in large family groups, either around the arena or in the shade of the trees. Yes, shade as the sun came out midway through Saturday, catching out those of us that had not sloped and slapped, and shone throughout Sunday as well. The public responded in their thousands with the belief by the organisers that this was probably the largest Saturday attendance ever, helped no doubt by the regatta on the river all day. Now the entire Riverside development is finished there are pubs, bars restaurants and eateries all along the north side of the river, all doing great business.

On the field it was very much a case of exploring just what kites would fly, and in some ways, it were the traditional, rather than the exotic that seemed to be coping best as these would hold against the breeze. Anything remotely floaty could be worked up but would then be knocked down almost as if it was coming down a lift shaft and far faster than line could be retrieved. Jan had his new 'swimmers' out, very colourful and quite small and definitely needing clean wind. Two of Michel Gressier's painted rectangles were flying well, as indeed was anything else remotely flat, including versions of the 'Jimmy Penta' designs, the origins of which are lost in the mists of time. Rollers, split malays, roks, birds and all sorts of long forgotten gems that the Bindons, Richardsons and Lesley Baggeley had dug out from the depths of their garages and lofts. With Peter Waldron putting up some of his designs, there was a definite 'retro' feel at times, something I am quite happy with as I do like to see older kites given air time and a new audience. Quite interesting, as many kites of the period were signed and dated by the makers making them twenty plus years old. An Omega Spirit, a Reza kite, not a 'kite by Reza', George Peters' cloud birds and a turtle, early Martin Lester's and a Bobby Stansfield 'Navigator', which brought on numerous bouts of reminiscences

## Bedford 2018—Hugh Blowers, Photos Lyn Blowers

of 'having one of those' or not remembering how to put it together.

There can not be too many kite flyers of 'a certain age' who did not have a Waldorf box in their bag, and this in turn led to further reminiscences of many other designers that have faded from memory or sadly are with us no more. As well as Peter and his designs there were the Clarke's Crystal and Revolver, Jilly Pelham's extensive range of traditional and modern kites as well as Monday Lunch amongst many others, and that is without all the American and continental builders whose names cropped up. Just to bring us down to earth and remind us of the passing years was the oft-heard question, who was that?

Ever the optimist, George Webster decided that there should be an altitude sprint, and given the height limit of 60m and dearth of wind low down, looked like being an interesting spectacle. If you could make it above the trees, then you were in with a shout, but most did not, despite the relatively generous minute and a half limit. Iqbal has a selection of polythene, Biashi inspired kites and one of these did the business for him again as it did last year. Ludovico and Jane were flying two very unusual Ikarex deltas, one of which was challenging Iqbal, even if credited to the wrong flyer.



Simon Kerry

One person who did not seem to be having too much trouble with the wind was a local lad, Simon. He has been around for a few years flying two and four line kites, this year expanding his repertoire to flying two sports kites at the same time, definitely not easy (or possible) given the wind direction. Having smuggled Pete Sturrs out of Northumberland, Team Fusion were on hand with Revs for every occasion and that they were able to fly at



John Pollock—Lily

all shows how far they have come and the levels that they have attained. Even so, it would not be until late on Sunday that conditions enabled them to fly a routine for the public. Two members of Fusion are not entirely wedded to 'the dark side' as they both have extensive collections of unusual and rare single line kites, none more so than Chris Beel. Chris still has the ability to surprise me with what he takes out of his bag. This year it was two painted kites. The large Tosa was a very bold face by Claudio Capelli, which was the subject of several attempts to get the multiple bridles correct as it was obtained sans these important elements.



Chris Beel and Capelli Tosa Kite

## Bedford 2018—Hugh Blowers, Photos Lyn Blowers

At the other end of the size spectrum but with probably as much paint on it as the Capelli was a stunning image of a lily by John Pollock. This had so many layers of paint that the surface was completely smooth as if painted on plastic film. It did raise another interesting topic of conversation, of which there were many, and that is the huge disparity between prices realised at European kite auctions and those in the States. We first saw this at Bristol in the early 90s when one of Scott Skinner's patchwork kites sold for about a fraction of what he reckoned it would have done at the AKA convention, apparently echoed by John Pollock when told what his kite had been bought for. Such are the vagaries of the market.

A somewhat frustrating day all round but compensated for by the sun and the prospect of the usual Bedford hospitality. Readers will be well aware of my dislike of a 'cold collation' or finger buffet after a day's flying, so the promise of a sit down meal at the Park Hotel was most welcome. Ironic that it would have been too expensive for the council to hire the Harpur Suite from the council, hence the Park. A very substantial Lasagne, with the option of seconds, was followed by a dessert of four different profiteroles with hot chocolate sauce and coffee, what was not to like. Well, apparently the bar prices, as the flyers, not always noted for their abstemious nature, were making do with water and whatever was secreted beneath the tables. As a general observation, if every other hostelry and hotel along the Riverside was doing a roaring trade, the business model at the Park does not appear to be working. Even the restaurant with its wonderful view is now closed apart from breakfast. The only other group in was a crypto currency marketing initiative trying to whip up trade, possibly not the best time for that either?

To us, the Park is a great venue, especially if you have a room in the tower and having breakfast overlooking the river, difficult to beat. Trying to explain the concept of English toast to our foreign guests when the raw material is the thinnest and wettest supermarket bread imaginable was somewhat difficult though. One pass through the toaster, still white and steaming gently. Two passes and a bit of colour developing. Three passes and a conflagration, a frequent experience at hotels across Britain, except for one Premier in the Midlands where they were using artisan bread, real toast, butter and marmalade, set up for the day.

Totally unforecast was the rain the previous evening, but a sunny day in prospect with a whole 1mph more wind, yet somehow this did seem to make a difference.

Most people were on the field and assembling kites by 9.00 and a slight shift in the wind did give some hope. Looking back ten years, large inflatables were the order of the day for a while, but the site is not overly conducive to big kites with the attendant trees and confined space. Often it was possible to get a pilot up, but then what was dangling beneath it was not filling, or even at times filling from the back wind. This year, Guy Reynolds, Bernard Dingwerth and Wolfgang Schimelpfenig spent much of the time trying to get pilots up and a couple did stay put for much of Sunday but with little hope of anything flying within the arena space. Ludovico eventually resorted to filling his stylised sharks and then running them down the arena. Luckily not a single kite ended up in a tree the entire weekend, something of a record I believe?

The Sunday sprint took advantage of the slightly more favourable wind conditions with a wonderful range of unlikely sprint kites, most of which made it up into the clear air, even if they were not able to compete with Jan and his malay or Chris Beel's small Ghenki. If athletic sprints are won with a dip at the line, this sprint was lost by a dip as Chris' kite faltered momentarily, leaving Jan the winner. It was great to see Jan almost back to his best, considering how poorly he was just a year ago. Always one to find something odd to use in a sprint, this year it was the Randy Tom 'Nagel' image, complete with tails. Strangely this little kite seems to relish the difficult conditions and flew well for much of



Iqbal—Kite Train

## Bedford 2018—Hugh Blowers, Photos Lyn Blowers

the day, unlike most of what else was in the bag.

Iqbal is a glutton for punishment, usually managing to have the long Malay train flying for much of the time, but it was far from easy. It was up, down, along the arena and across it at one time flying at ninety degrees to the hand held kites. What I have never seen though was a train go vertically up on a thermal of which there were several as evident by the beautiful red kite (real not KL) circling above us. With the train straight up, there was the distinct prospect of it all ending in tears, so there was an audible sigh of relief as it drifted back to a more normal attitude.

That he does like trains is also confirmed by the number of stylised Chinese dragons Iqbal has made over the years. Not sure what the correct terminology is for these as they vary from the almost traditional to the entirely whacky that must take untold hours to build, paint and string. This year it was a traffic jam, with a broken down car holding up a long line of vehicles, yet they were not even the same shapes as there were cars, VW beetles and campers, tractors, motor cycles with sidecars and even a bubble car, an amazing amount of work. He did show us a video of the fried egg train being painted and it was mass production on an industrial scale. Mind you, traffic jams were something of a theme for the weekend as we were headed east west through miles of grid locked north south roads and a blocked motorway on the way to Bedford and then passed a three hour jam on the A11 on the way home.

Jon Burkhardt is a great kite artist and builder, another well-known name that started in the late 70s, but as his designs can be so different kites are not always recognisable as his or attributed to him. He does insist on naming his kites, as he claims that 'all kites fly better with names', a tradition we maintain. As well as his smaller sunsets, sea scenes and sunrises, he also had two large and elongated Edo style kites. On of them used fabric that had been tie-dyed but as well as being knotted, the fabric had been ironed into folds as well that were still evident, giving a texture to the dyed surfaces, fascinating. His stitching reminds me of the workshops we used to attend with Don Mock who regaled us with tales of the degree of precision that judges were looking for when judging at the AKA, even to stitches at the end of a panel having to go into exactly the same holes at they started, not easy with the tiny zig-zag John uses.

What I had not seen before was the use of an overlocker on kites, as Godfrey and Karen Gamble showed me on one of the late Helen Bushell's kites that they had brought. Helen was another great and somewhat eccentric character from the early days of kite making who we saw little of in Europe. Indeed Karen and Godfrey were coming up with a whole list of names of Australasian designers and builders, most of whom are now known to just the privileged few. Only Robert Brasington seems to have survived from the Antipodes as a commercial builder and, sadly, conditions were not suitable for any of his cellular kites being used as ground displays.

Into the afternoon and a change of pace as Mr Cao had turned up and assembled a number of his Vietnamese kites for the well established Bedford version of the Vietnamese kite games. Still the electronic sickles, but no dressing up this year to save a bit of time, the teams identified by the colour of their kites and represented Italy, Germany, USA, Holland and Britain. After the first round, no one had made it through the gap so on to a second round with three teams clear and so on until there was just Germany with Bernard and Andreas and Britain with Malcolm and Jeanette. The decider was who could keep their kites up the longest, but by a strange quirk of fate, the wind came up enough so that both kites were likely to stay up until nightfall, so it was a race to pull down, won by Malcolm and Jeanette adding another set of bamboo flutes to his collection.



Kite Games

Finally, the improved breeze was deemed stable enough for Fusion to put on a display, only to be subjected to interminable delays

## Bedford 2018—Hugh Blowers, Photos Lyn Blowers

whilst some way of playing their chosen track was worked out. That it was Munford and Sons with 'I will wait for you' was somewhat ironic. Eventually the music arrived just as the wind dropped, so they re-set and tried again, and one has to say that they did a sterling job in the very difficult conditions, nothing rehearsed but a good dynamic routine.



Fusion

The last hour or so was occupied by sessions of themed kites being flown or paraded down the arena. A good selection of Willi Koch lattice designs, flying remarkably well, considering that they are more holes than fabric, including one very risqué image, but then Willi is well known for pushing the boundaries and even shocking his customers.

Edos are probably not the best designs to fly at Bedford, yet Jerry Swift managed several gentle passes with the lovely image of Carolyn, superbly rendered by Baz. Francis Pariset and Claude Ragon, with her trademark bright red hair had the 'lady in the shower' edo back, which is something of an optical illusion as the lady is not appliquéd but a separate silhouette off the back of the 'shower screen'. Unfortunately we did not have the George Peters signature pieces, but he was represented with three Cloudbirds, dragonflies, a buzz bee and of course the turtle, all kites from the 90s again.

Come 4.30 and just about everything that was going to fly had, so George called all the flyers together for the presentation of the Eddy Megrath trophy. In keeping with his views on promoting British designers and fliers it is restricted to British citizens who make outstanding contributions to the festival scene.

There is no doubt that an invite to Bedford is



Lady in the Shower

an invite to a great deal of hard work and no one could argue with the amount of flying and the different kites put in the air every year by Ludovico and Jane. Ah yes I hear you say, but isn't Ludovico Italian, and yes most certainly, but Jane Edwards is very British and a deserved recipient of the trophy. It is possibly invidious to single out a person or group in this way as so many people work so hard over the weekend to put kites in the air.

The Mayor of Bedford, Dave, has been a great supporter of the festival over the years but has to seek re-election next year, so whatever happens, we thank him for promoting the event and hope that either he or his successor will be able to provide Andy Pidgeon with the budget to put it all on again next year. It is Andy, Bjorn and their team, along with Malcolm and Jeanette that make this a 'must go to event', just a pity about the trees. Mind you, if this was Sheffield they would probably have come down as a health and safety hazard?

## Aviation Regulations may be Changing

There are some proposed changes in European aviation legislation which could have some serious implications for kitefliers in the UK. At the moment, these are only proposals and nothing has yet changed, but it is important that the voice of UK kitefliers is heard. BKFA has been carefully monitoring the proposals and has been discussing them with the CAA and the British Model Flying Association who may also be impacted by them.

We have written to the CAA to highlight areas of concern. Their initial response was that these proposals would not impact kitefliers, but they have now accepted that, as written, they could catch kitefliers by accident. It is clear that neither Europe nor the CAA intended to change the current rules for kitefliers, but that by ignoring us that is exactly what they might have done.

EASA (European Aviation Safety Agency), who are the pan-European aviation regulatory authority, are introducing a new Basic Regulation which amends the current regulation of European airspace and the aircraft in it. EASA generally does not regulate kites or kitefliers, but increasing concern about drones has led to a major revision that refers to unmanned aircraft.

As many of you will know, CAA regard kites as aircraft. This taken together with the wording from EASA, intended to be a catch-all for drones, is currently being taken to include model aircraft but could also include kites, and there is nothing in the current European draft to exclude us.

The Basic Regulation has legal force, and the set of regulations that each signatory state (including the UK) makes which embodies its own aviation legislation has to be compliant with the Basic Regulation. The Regulation may be silent in certain areas and each state may make its own choice of what is mandated in those areas. In one Annex it also excludes a number of aircraft from the Basic Regulation requiring that they are regulated by national regulators but we do not believe it is sufficient to exclude all kites or kitefliers.

In the UK the CAA as the UK regulator will in due course be issuing an amended Air Navigation Order and Rules of the Air (together known as CAP 393) to comply with the Basic Regulation and make its own legislation in those areas where it is permitted to do so. The proposed timescale for this is currently 2019-2020.

BKFA has studied the Basic Regulation and is concerned that there are a number of possible implications detrimental to kiteflying which are there by virtue of the fact that the Regulation is designed among many other things to control

the operation of drones. This is of course quite understandable in view of the fact that drones are not adequately controlled under the current EASA rules or the Air Navigation Order; but unfortunately the Basic Regulation does not distinguish clearly enough between drones and kites. (As noted above, this is possibly because the rest of Europe does not view kites as aircraft in the way the CAA does.) So as a side effect kiteflying could become highly regulated too — for example there is an expectation that drone fliers with drones above a minimum mass would be required to demonstrate competency (probably through an online system) and hold the relevant permit. This is, of course, a situation we all would wish to avoid; indeed this is precisely the sort of situation which led us to set up the BKFA in the first place: to protect the activity of kiteflying when it is threatened, as indeed it now is.

Our response to this threat has been not currently to seek to amend the Basic Regulation, since it is now probably too late for that — the Regulation is scheduled to go before the European Parliament within the next few months — but to convince the CAA that any resulting legislation in the UK should take into account the differences between drones and kites. We have written a long letter to CAA setting out in detail our desired consequences for kiteflying of any amendments to CAP 393. The letter has been noted, but we have been told it will be at least a year before the new amendments will be drafted.

In the meantime, we are considering lobbying an MEP (on advice from the MP in Scarborough) as within the last week there has been some correspondence that suggests not everyone in the European Parliament is as happy with the proposed Basic Regulation as we had been led to believe.

There is also another initiative which is being discussed by airspace policymakers, who are trying to produce a new structure of airspace and constraints on what may and may not fly in each type of airspace as newly defined. A draft of the new structure has been sent for comment to interested parties such as BKFA, and we have responded to it from the kiteflying point of view. At the moment we have no concerns of any serious consequences but we are on the mailing list and will maintain a watching brief. For more information on the Basic Regulation see <https://www.easa.europa.eu/faq/19107>. Note, this has not yet been updated to reflect the latest version of the Basic Regulation.

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