

THE KITEFLIER

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



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Front Cover
Nick James at his happy place—Cervia.
Photo: EX3 Kite

Dear Reader

That is the end of another year of kite flying festivals in the U.K. It has been a pretty good season with some amazing events taking place and the welcome return of the Dunstable Kite Festival. The calendar is sparse for 2025 at the moment, mainly because dates are not yet confirmed. Let us all hope that we have a good 2025 kite season.

Editorial

One event for which the date has been confirmed in the Kite Fly at Hampstead Heath on 29th June 2025. If anyone (or group) are interested in attending get in touch.

One of the stalwarts of British kite flying sadly passed away after a road accident—cycling to a kite event. Nick James was well known for his Angel kites and has supported many events and kite fliers in the U.K. and around the world. He will be sadly missed. Our thoughts go out to his family and friends at this time.

For Sale

Paul Carline (of Windthings back in the day), has a collection of kites he is looking to sell.

Just a few examples of the Weifang dragon kites: 4 sizes. And 1 example of the various Weifang animals - mostly birds. I made the bags to put the spin socks (and other products) into. I have 5x8', 9x10', and 3x12' rainbow spin socks (mostly top quality Catch The Wind). All of these are pristine. The shop prices back then were £25-£30 (8'); £45 (10') and £60 (12') - based on the dollar exchange rate at the time (early 1990s).

A number of soft parafoils: 5xD7 with handle, line and tail also in bags. 4x5' sq foils again with the kit. 3xD15 reel and line, 200lb line. J15 multicolour parafoil in bag.

Lots of different Weifang kites - nearly all pristine.

Unopened reels of Spectra and Dyneema

2 or 3 small bears with parachute packs. Couple of release mechanisms.

Boomerangs (including indoor ones).

... and that's before I get to the bigger kites ... including an unflown An-geletti Millestelle ... and the giant stunt delta (including handles and line for quad-line flying).

... but I have yet to decide which ones I really want/need to keep

Contact Paul for a full list and prices. pcarline1@gmail.com



Membership Type	Fee
Electronic Subscription (Individual or Family)	£5.00
Household (Individual, Family, Senior)	£15.00
Overseas (Europe)	£25.00
Overseas (Rest of World Airmail)	£30.00

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Pothecary Corner—Allan Pothecary

Happy Chappy

Sad to start with remembering another good kite buddy, Les Storey, probably better known as the Hippy Chippy, who passed last month aged 67.



Les was an avid flyer of Revs and we had many good conversations, from a drummer's point of view, on various forms of music.

We got to know Les back in the days of Winter Leagues and he attended many of them.

Admittedly, Marilyn and I have not seen much of him in recent years but he will be missed nevertheless.

July 2024

Was it me or was Portsmouth one of the really good ones this year?

Undoubtedly the most photographed kite would have been the three headed dragon flown and supported by so many different flyers over the two days marked by a distinctive 90 degree wind direction and a fortunate placing of the anchor which *just* worked for Saturday and Sunday headliner spots in the main arena.



I don't remember the last time I saw so many stalls with all sorts of goods and Knic Knacs although, unfortunately, not so many kite traders as we were once used to.

I am told they did extremely well and were sold out of the low priced stuff by the middle of the second day.

Come Back

That's got to be good news for them returning next year, visiting other festivals and generating the interest of potential flyers.

A quick scan of the food vendors' menu boards left me wondering how much stock they would sell but the queues were constant throughout the day.



Fortunately our good friends Aditya and Ian said they would be providing Indian Street Food for our little party and any friends drawn in by the aromas that wafted from our tent.

It may seem ostentatious but it was serendipity in the making - good grub (we brought the chilled beer) a sunny day and a delightful program, flown in kind winds.

All in all, a day well worth getting told off by security for trying to move our cars on site five minutes before the allocated time!

I have spoken to a number of kite makers and kite sellers offering to review and showcase their work and many of them seem keen although very few actually take up the offer even though our help comes completely free - they can have the kites back after!

Some of our videos get tens of thousands of views on social media!

Come on guys - let's get things moving!!

It all helps to fill this magazine and, in turn, this magazine helps you..!

What a Diva!

In the last issue I said that I would look again at the Diva, dual line sport kite.



Pothecary Corner—Allan Pothecary

It really is a nice kite to fly for someone who just likes to wonder at the beauty of playing with the forces of nature.

This is not a trick kite, some are possible but you need to be agile and give massive inputs.

I say again, if you want to do tricks then spend the money and buy yourself something designed to do just that - why struggle?

No, this is a kite that, because of its BIG, 295cm x 140cm (9ft 8ins x 4ft 7ins) sail area, needs only a light wind to launch and will move, as though on rails, harmoniously drawing symmetrical patterns against the sky behind.

The frame is solid and the 8mm rods make it fairly heavy so care is needed at the extremes of the wind window especially as you discover the rather large turning circle (turning down at the edge as is best) - and even though that caught me out once or twice - being the pro I am, I just pretended that dragging the leading edge along the ground and then rising back up was fully intentional.

You need strong lines here in readiness for those gusts - not that you'll like see me on the end of the lines for too long in the recommended max of 35km/hr (24mph) and 200lb minimum is suggested at the lower end.



Also to take note is that anyone invited to fly the Diva is both experienced and heavy enough to take the pull - this is not a toy!

After an extended session of immense fun we then decided to introduce a tail to the equation. HQ do a very nice 80ft long tube tail (not included) that works perfectly with both flight and aesthetics.

Not on the Bottom

Please don't be tempted to fit a tail to any sport kite by attaching it to the bottom of the spine.

By doing that you will create a pull at the bottom that brings tilts the nose forward and alters the angle of attack, thus making flight and control more difficult.

We advise best to put a loop of line on the back around the centre T-piece and join the tail to that - Always worked nicely for us!

I hope the attached photo gives good indication of how well the two are matched.

Tittle Tattle

We have been involved in several projects this year that combined with what seems to have been a year not favoured by too much good flying weather (at least on the days we were free to do so),

This has resulted in a backlog of videos in the can that have not yet been edited and produced and some new products that I won't have time to review until next time.

I resolutely refuse to read instructions and continue to take ages working out which bit goes where - It's what men do!

I had a guy watching me struggle, attempting an assembly up at our local field who quipped he was amazed at how some of these things ever flew.

I agreed, saying that I completely understood as, personally, I was unable to jump more than about six inches off the ground before I started coming down again.

He looked at the mess of ripstop and carbon in front of me and actually said "Oh I can't help you there mate, I don't do fiddly things!"

I thought he was taking the Mickey but no, he was a genuine, non-kiteflyer and had never read this magazine.

I was otherwise tempted to ask if I could borrow that phrase.

Light up the Sky

Another large and brightly liveried goddess of the sky that has caught literally everyone's attention this summer is the 4m, single line, Delta Fireworks.



We first flew this in a sea breeze down at the Poole Kite picnic one (every other) Wednesday.

A nice breeze, yes, coming off the water but amongst the other 14 kites in the sky at any one time the "Fireworks" was sat the most still and was always one of the last, if not, the last, to land if the wind dropped to zippo.

Pothecary Corner—Allan Pothecary

Absolutely no problem in assembly even for me (I won't say it) except that there is a certain amount of strength required to get the second end of the cross spreader in to its pocket.

Maybe a little more thought in packing away as it only just fits back in its bag.

The leading edges are in two sections and that makes transportation a whole lot easier. You have to shuffle the rods by feel around inside their sleeves to push them together.

The afore mentioned spreader comes in two sections with a ferrule that pushes into the opposite side for added strength.

I managed to lose mine.

After some trials and tribulations leaving me more frustrated than a mosquito in a mannequin shop, I embarrassingly discovered that it had merely slipped down inside one of the rods, which I then noted are not tapered along their whole length.

Rant

Using what I describe as water based super glue is something certainly, I have complained about before to this supplier.



Another thing that REALLY grinds my gears as also politely pointed out before is that after all the thought (R&D) that brought this production from drawing board to retailer and the cost of the kite overall, surely, surely!!!! - they could have put a loop on the tow point for the pilot to attach a line to??!!

We have a video on-line showing the "Fireworks" in both light and really really gusty winds.

Durable

If you have seen it already you'll have noted how much it bends with good tolerance under the stresses and strains and can move about a bit too. It's good to know that this is not something that you can only fly this one at the seaside. However, recovery was good and it didn't crash.

We were pleased but not surprised to find no damage when we pulled it down, although you can see in the video that we did manage to completely wreck a spinner we had lifted with it - something that would have worked and looked, much better in a low wind.

There is a lack of places to hang tails from even though it cries out for even more glamour to be added.

When we get a good day I'll do another video to show off some different laundry.

Marilyn liked the 5m multi-coloured tube whilst I thought the 20 m fringe tail doubled up to two, ten metre lengths, leant itself more to the 'Fireworks' theme.

So I guess we will be flying it with the tube then?

The Quad-line Revolution

I have owned a number of quad line kites over the years but they have never held my attention for that long. I suppose my all time favourite was the Carl Robertshaw/SkyBurner Fulcrum but even that is now with a new owner due to it not being flown.

My claim to four line fame was that I showed Tim Benson how to axel his AirBow when it was still in development but it was never long before I was back to dual line. Yes I can fake it with the rest of them flying Revs and the like and I produced a nice video of the "Easy Quad"

Practice

I learned to hold a quad steady, upside down and sliding from side to on holiday in Rhodes, getting up each day and practicing for an hour before breakfast and that was fun for a while but I guess I am not going to be the best person to rave on about the newcomer to the scene from Invento, "The Verve".

The Verve

This is a full size, serious kite that has had studious development and will compete, flight-wise, to most any of the high end kites that I know of out there today.

It comes in a choice of two colour schemes.

"Ready to Fly", indicates that the bundle includes a winder, Dyneema lines (mine matched perfectly) and flying handles.

The Verve Blaze is red, black, grey and yellow along the same pattern lines as the Verve Aqua, shown here.



Pothecary Corner—Allan Pothecary

I had some world class quad line flyers look over our Verve and they were impressed with the build, one of them complementing the manufacturer on the sewing.

They liked the extra protection pads sewn in to the sail for protection against wear when performing flic-flacs which are made easier, along with axels by an unusual, 'active' bridle reminiscent to me of the once revolutionary, Andy Wardley bridle, developed for Benson kites.

Have good brakes

If you fly one of these using the lines and handles provided my advice would be to set the brakes as far 'on' as possible.

That means the top lines will be on the knot closest to the kite and the brakes (the bottom lines) will be on the knot closest to the handles. Don't be afraid to extend the top lines out even further if needs be as you will get better control with more 'brake' set.

I found the fittings to be a little "Heath Robinson" and care should be taken to ensure that all lines leave the kite on their journey back to the handles as they should and not be crossed over or tucked under in any way.

Maybe a little longer than some quads in setting up but I'm sure you'll find it's worth it - especially if you like flying quads more than me!

Lost Cause

I couldn't find one of my kites the other day. I'm sure we've all been there and you'll know how I felt? I turned out all the cupboards, looked in both sheds, the boot of the car and the garage. Marilyn said that I should look harder so I shaved my head and got a tattoo but I still couldn't find the ruddy thing!

Good Time

Even though we rarely get a decent wind there, one of my favourite events is the twice yearly, Jolly Up at Cliddesden just outside of Basingstoke.

Chatting with Roy Broadley on the Sunday there was quite a positive turnaround from the previous event especially the evening social which included some excellent live music.



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The inflatables that couldn't be missed outside of the main reception marquee may not have launched far in to the air but they were certainly magic and even better when they self lit at night.

Apparently not one of Roy's creations but I know that he is thinking about them and could be open to persuasion?

T5 Sale

Approaching the end of another season where we have so many kites sitting in the store never getting to see the light of day, we decided it's time for another sale.

First up is our three lightweight, full size team kites Airdynamic T5's. These really are especially good kites to fly quality made from top end materials. They go in super-light winds and are not troubled for a long way up the wind speed ladder. These are good for both solid precision and encapsulating tails displays.

They come with colour coded Wha-Pad brakes and each has a matching 100ft, wide, black and yellow striped ribbon tail made from a special, lightweight, ripstop polyester. Just one kite, on its own, without any extras, will cost around £250 so the asking price of £330 for the complete set is an absolute snip!

Others

Of course there will be more to follow. I keep meaning to get my WidowMaker out for a final go but there's always something that crops up so I guess time to bite the bullet on that one.

I ran out of time to put stuff here this edition but find me on social media or, if other projects distract me then I'll try to get a comprehensive list for next time.

Thanks to my lovely wife and flying partner Marilyn for her unseen contributions to this article and help in the field.

Allan and Marilyn Pothecary.



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The Kiteflier

Remembering Nick James—David Ellison

We remembered and celebrated our good friend Nick James at the Friday night fly at St Anne's kite festival. Coordinated by our ring master in chief Frances Anderson we filled the art kite arena with a giant Angel.

Using Nick's world famous kite shape we filled 400 paper bags with sand and tealight candles during the afternoon. Marking out a 30 metre angel took a lot of kite line, pegs, discussion, rubbing out and starting again, and laughter.

As dusk fell we lit the candles and waited for the magic to happen. The lanterns shone out and we told Nick stories. Tears, nonsense and above all laughter. Fly high Nick-el-Angelo!



Drone photo by Michael Phillips



The most beautiful people we have known are those who have known defeat, known suffering, known struggle, known loss, and have found their way out of those depths.



Drone photo by Kris Cook

Flights of Kites from China Daily

Traditional arts and crafts are supreme samples of Chinese cultural heritage. China Daily is running this series to show how master artisans are using dedication and innovation to inject new life into the heritage. In this instalment, we explore how traditional kite-makers give flight to their creativity today.

Many people hold at least one memory of a kite from their childhoods — be it a simple yet classic diamond or a colourful bird-shaped kind with vividly flapping wings.

It could be a sunny spring day in a pastoral landscape with family members. As the wind picks up, the flyer runs as fast as they can, until the kite ascends high into the sky and dances in the air.

The kite that Yang Hongwei, 58, from Yangjiabu village in Shandong province's Weifang, remembers, however, is slightly different. It was a gigantic dragon-headed centipede that stretched for 360 meters and took dozens of people to fly.

That was at the third Weifang International Kite Festival in 1986. To celebrate their village's legacy of crafting kites, her grandfather, Yang Tongke, and uncle, Yang Qimin — both master kite-makers — boldly envisioned and created a model 10 times bigger than any they'd ever made.

Weifang is renowned as the "world capital of kites", and Yangjiabu village has long remained at the heart of local production.

Yang Hongwei, who was born to a family of artisan kite-makers in the village, became a national-level representative inheritor of Weifang kite-making techniques this year.

"Here in Weifang, we have a saying, 'there's nothing you can think of that can't fly'. We have the ideal wind conditions, and so many kite lovers, top-notch artisans and different kinds of handmade kites," she says.

Yangjiabu is small enough to qualify as a village, yet is home to two national-level intangible cultural heritage items — kites and Yangjiabu New Year pictures, a type of traditional woodblock printing used to decorate people's homes during Spring Festival.

Both art forms emerged in Yangjiabu in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) and prospered in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911).

"Our kites' decorations draw inspiration from the New Year pictures, so each one carries its own story and auspicious connotations," Yang Hongwei says.

She brought a variety of representative Weifang kites to the recent 37th International Kite Festival in Berck-sur-Mer, France, including a dragon-headed centipede kite with images of 100 children, which are often depicted as the subjects of local New Year pictures.



Yang introduces exhibits to visitors at the International Kite Festival in Berck-sur-Mer, France, in late April 2024.

The kite features a dragon head with a body and tail fashioned from around 50 discs, each of which is hand-painted with images of children, carrying wishes for longevity, wealth, prosperity and other blessings.

"Throughout history, kites have been close to people's daily lives and influenced by folk traditions," says Ma Zhiyao, a professor at Tianjin University who specializes in folklore and intangible cultural heritage.

"They have not only become embedded in folk culture but also provided entertainment and physical activity. This heritage has been passed down, demonstrating the enduring vitality of Chinese civilization."



Miao Bogang, 43, paints on a swallow kite. He is a representative inheritor of "Cao's kites" in Beijing.

Flights of Kites from China Daily

Kites' origins can be traced back to the late Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 BC), with historical accounts attributing their invention to the philosopher Mozi, who spent three years crafting a wooden hawk, which is considered a prototype for today's kites.

Later, master carpenter and engineer Lu Ban made improvements by substituting wood with bamboo.

Kites are considered one of the earliest forms of aircraft. Ancient books recorded their functions in aerial reconnaissance and transmitting military intelligence.

During the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220), inventor Cai Lun improved papermaking techniques, leading to the invention of "paper hawks", which resembled kites as we know them today.

"Kites' origins reveal the remarkable ability and creativity of ancient Chinese to imitate nature and explore its mysteries," Ma says.

"They observed birds and thought of using wood and paper to make objects that could soar in the sky. They were driven by curiosity and a spirit of scientific exploration to understand and harness the power of wind."

During the Tang Dynasty (618-907), the relative stability and prosperity made paper more affordable, and kites truly became part of people's lives.

As kite-making techniques became more refined, varieties adorned with imagery and that produced sound effects were developed.

This period gradually also saw kite flying becoming a custom during festivals. Late Tang-era poet Luo Yin wrote a poem about kite flying on the Cold Food Festival, which then fell directly before the springtime Tomb Sweeping Day and was later merged with it.

The custom was popularized in the Song Dynasty (960-1279). By the Ming and Qing dynasties, significant progress was continuing in design, style, production, decoration and flying skills.

"Many literati liked to make silk kites as gifts for their families and friends. They'd carefully select refined materials and then paint the silk cover by hand. These kites were exquisite and lasting," Ma says.

Novel development

One of history's most famous kite lovers is Cao Xueqin, a literary giant of the Qing Dynasty who



Wei Guoqiu, 63, works on the intricate bamboo frame of a kite. The artisan from Tianjin is known for his lifelike kites.

wrote the seminal novel, *Dream of the Red Chamber*. In the book, kite flying was portrayed as a pastime of the genteel protagonist family and was also used as metaphors for the characters' destinies.

In the book's 70th chapter, a main character suggests kite flying to "let go of bad luck" — a belief traditionally associated with kites.

"In the past, when it came to Cold Food Festival and Tomb Sweeping Day, kite flying was considered a key custom," Ma explains.

"After making sacrifices to ancestors, people would fly kites, which on one hand expresses thoughts about family members and on the other lets go of all unhappiness and ill omens."

And on Dragon Boat Festival, which was traditionally believed to be the most poisonous day of the year — with mosquitoes and flies breeding in large numbers, as well as various bacteria multiplying in summer — people would fly kites, representing the shaking off of misfortune, so that family members could live long and healthy lives, Ma adds.

Cao wrote another book in his later years that compiled the kite-making techniques of both southern and northern China, recording the skills of kite making and flying, using mnemonic rhymes and illustrations to help readers understand and remember these techniques.

"When Cao wrote the book, his main wish was to help people with disabilities or otherwise struggling financially to acquire a skill, so they could support themselves," says Miao Bogang, 43, a representative inheritor of "Cao's kites".

The book, however, was only privately collected and withdrawn from circulation until 1943,

Flights of Kites from China Daily

when Kong Xiangze, who was then a student of painting and sculpture, was assigned by his teacher to transcribe a borrowed manuscript, which turned out to be Cao's work on kites.

Due to time limits, Kong only managed to make records of 14 of the 43 varieties in the book, and later spent decades working on restoring and refining these techniques, which he named "Cao's kites".

Miao was a kite-making enthusiast in his teenage years and was introduced to Kong Lingmin, son of Kong Xiangze and an inheritor of "Cao's kites", who recognized Miao's talent and diligence, and took him in as an apprentice.

"I've followed him in studying 'Cao's kites' for more than 20 years, during which time I've come to truly understand the techniques for making, and the principles of flying, kites, as well as Cao's humanitarian spirit when he wrote this book," Miao says.

"Both masters (Kong Xiangze and Kong Lingmin) told me: Skills belong to individuals; culture belongs to societies. So, we as inheritors have been focusing on passing down kite-making techniques and sharing this culture with as many people as possible."

Flying into the future

Weifang, Beijing, Tianjin and Jiangsu province's Nantong are four major areas that are celebrated for distinctive kite-making techniques. They all boast their own unique features yet share the same dedication to preserving, inheriting and promoting traditional craftsmanship.

In Tianjin, there is a family known as "kite Wei", after late Qing Dynasty virtuoso artisan Wei Yuantai, who's widely known for crafting exquisite, lifelike kites. In 1915, 11 of his works were exhibited and won a gold medal at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco.

The Wei family's fifth generation continues to inherit and perfect the "four techniques" — crafting the frame from roasted split bamboo, pasting such materials as paper and silk onto the frame, painting images on the body and finally flying the kite.

The Wei family is proud to display their raw bamboo frameworks, which are the very basic yet fundamental structures.

"In my opinion, the main features of our kites are their intricacy and details. We exclusively use the Moso bamboo from Sichuan province, and each frame must be crafted using strips from the same bamboo," says Wei Guoqiu, 63,

the fourth-generation and national-level inheritor of "kite Wei". The thin bamboo strips are carefully roasted over fire and bent to intricate shapes, then joined together by *sunmao* (mortise-and-tenon) joints to form a three-dimensional framework that's light yet sturdy. In addition to making kites, Wei Guoqiu also hosts lectures and workshops at schools and universities. His son, Wei Bowen, is now taking up the baton as the fifth-generation inheritor.

"We are still seeking innovations, such as changing the traditional models with more streamlined structures," Wei Guoqiu says.

"The kites may vary in size, but we strive to make the small ones vividly lifelike, and the large ones exquisite and unique."

Ma says the "four techniques" are a test of people's temperament, patience and dedication. Only those passing the test can truly become an inheritor of the artisanship.

"Kite making, among other intangible cultural heritage forms' craftsmanship, tests whether the inheritors can persevere in monotonous work and continuously strive to refine their skills. It is, in essence, a process of character-building and self-cultivation," he says.

"From an item as modest as a kite, we can see Chinese people's attachment to the cultural values associated with happiness, positivity and health. This is why the thin string linking us to kites and culture has endured until today and kite flying remains a cherished part of contemporary life."



Scarves featuring kite patterns are one of the innovative efforts by Miao Bogang's team to promote traditional "Cao's kites" in Beijing.

Fantastic Festival—Portsmouth 2024—Hugh Blowers

Circumstances have conspired so that Portsmouth was our first major festival since Dieppe 2022 and what a wonderful weekend it turned out to be? After thirty two years, the memory starts to fade a bit, but it would be someone very churlish who would not agree that this was one of the very best that Southsea Common has hosted. Kite festivals are totally dependent on the weather, ideally, fine for the flyers and visitors with decent wind so that there is something for the public to see and for us to do.

Well, we scored on both counts, and in spades, warm, blue skies and an almost perfect on shore wind on Saturday with enough to enjoy ourselves on Sunday. An admission, sadly, such was the pleasure to be gained from flying that the photography part of the team fell down on that task, so hopefully Gill and Sarah Bindon have plenty of appropriate images that they will share? Sarah has posted a super video on YouTube showing just what a lovely sky there was and how much was flying.

Where to start, well probably best to get the less enjoyable bit out of the way, as that has nothing to do with the festival but did prove a constant topic of conversation, the delights of the British road system and traffic chaos it causes. Several years ago, we met the late Rolf Sturm at Clackett's lane on the M25. We left about twenty minutes before he did, arriving in Portsmouth an hour and a half later. Poor Rolf arrived seven hours after us having fallen foul of a total closure just minutes after we had passed through, phew? The queues on the trip home were of epic proportions, luckily in the opposite direction. An entirely new experience for us was to find that a large number of parking meters along the prom had been turned off or were out of action, introducing us to Ringo and a very steep learning curve. A stroll along the promenade also revealed that the flood prevention scheme is almost complete, as is the landscaping and seafront regeneration. Oh what a contrast to just a few yards inland though where the previously vibrant establishments of Osborne Road were mostly closed or boarded up, including restaurants that regularly hosted parties of hungry kite flyers. The social centre now seems to have moved to the Palmerston Road area, where all the bars and restaurants have expanded in to the road and the two huge department store sites are in the process of being converted to apartments.

After a few interludes when the Victorious stage provided a serious obstacle to flying, the site with the three arenas is now well established and works exceedingly well. Inflatables to the west, smaller kites to the east with the display arena in the centre, now surrounded by barriers rather than bumble pins and rope. We were however given a stern warning to keep kites within the arena after the incident last year. The drone video of the inflatable arena on Sat-

urday shows a grid pattern established with ranks of kites giving everyone enough room, assuming the pilots behaved. We had a wonderful preview on Friday with Tim the 'dragon master' flying one of Rolf's amazing creations, as this year's feature of the programme was 'here be dragons'. Rolf was flying a giant sea star made from an incredibly fine fabric that allowed it to be packed in to a very small bag and weighing next to nothing. Many inflatables are essentially a linear shape filled with air, but where it gets exciting is when the design goes lateral as well as linear, increasing the design problems exponentially. The dragon is a prime example, as is Rolf's lobster, but having seen the original Pegasus at Dieppe many moons ago, there was one flying and still equally spectacular.

As is tradition, the first arena event is always an altitude sprint. The most difficult aspects of a sprint are firstly deciding an appropriate time limit and then judging the winner. The wind had definitely freshened so the kites were climbing at an indecent rate. I watched one flyer with one of the big wire reels that was just a blur as the line was unwinding so fast. With kites of such varying sizes and spread so far apart, working out the highest was a nightmare. What is certain is that dedicated sprint kites and reels are essential, but even so, there was much deliberation and even the public were inveigled into arriving at a decision. We never did hear the final result.

Much of the programme is given over to two and four line flying, or in Carl Wright's case, six lines. Choreographed flying to music is still an impressive sight, but it all gave rise to a very interesting observation. At breakfast, the main topic of conversation was not related to kites at all, but comparison of ailments, medical interventions, pill and medication regimes along with aches and pains in general. Yes, there is some young blood, but most of us are now of an age. One well known sports kite flyer and designer, who we always looked on as a young blade, was bemoaning his arthritis and the need for hearing aids.

This did seem to be a common theme of the weekend, so it was a pleasure to see Fenix Pair and two thirds of Fracture in action, young, fit and enthusiastic, not to mention, pretty good. Portsmouth regulars, Lex and Irma were on hand, but having a gentle fly with a single line kite after health problems. Defying the years, the original Decorators lined up on Saturday, augmented by other regular and not so regular flyers, how many years ago did Romney retire?.

Sadly, they have also suffered losses recently but can maintain their enviable reputation as the team of the longest standing that are still performing to their usual high standards. Salutory note is that the 'Decs' have been flying as

Fantastic Festival—Portsmouth 2024—Hugh Blowers

a team for far longer than the Portsmouth festival has been in existence. Also in evidence were what we hope will be the next generation of flyers along with some doting grandparents.

Peter Lynn said a while ago that 'you don't need me at a festival now as so many flyers have examples of my kites' and this holds true for most of the world's designers and makers. As the number of these has declined so the examples of their work coming out of kite bags of collectors and flyers has increased dramatically. The 'art kite' sessions of the programme illustrate this perfectly as there were so many superb kites on show. Yes, there were makers flying their own creations such as David Ellison, Frances Anderson, Michael Goddard, Pauline Taylor, Gill Bloom and Therese Uguen from France, but without a lot of work and organisation they are restricted in what they can fly. Add in the privately owned examples and there is a ready made showcase. Numerically it was down to Karl Longbottom with the Phoenix, something of a phenomena as it has an enthusiastic following and even an owners club. Eight examples were being flown, all differing colour schemes but utterly reliable as always, to me, the perfect festival kite. Fifty six have now been made, possibly a record for a British single design display kite? Sadly, a couple have met ignominious ends but number 2 and 3 were in evidence all weekend. An alliterative aside was that Fenix pair also had a Phoenix, although they were late to the party each time.



David Ellison had a train of deltas up for most of the weekend with an alternating colour and shape theme repeating up the train. Interesting that opinion was divided, not about the quality, which was superb as always but the pattern,

some loved it, others did not quite 'get it'. Having produced 'Jack in the Greeny' and the stained glass window David has set his own bar exceedingly high. Michael Goddard's kites all involve abstract images and shapes, both appliquéd and printed, beautiful to look at but with an exceedingly deep, personal interpretation, each having gone through dozens of incarnations until Michael arrives at precisely what he wants. I am never sure whether a lengthy explanation of an abstract painting, sculpture or kite adds anything to the image for the onlooker?

'Here be Dragons' did not quite work as intended as the examples already in the air stayed in the inflatable arena, leaving an odd pairing in the display arena of Steve Hoath with a Revolution sporting two dragons and me with Idris, one of Steve Brockett's amazing interpretations of the Welsh legend commissioned way back in 1994. Idris is renowned for being a bit naughty, but with the onshore wind was on his best behaviour to the extent that I actually pegged him down for a couple of hours, and that does not happen often as my nerves are seldom up to it? Kite trains offer a wonderful opportunity for flyers as almost any kite that can be flown singly can be linked together, single line, two line or even four and anything from Flexifoils and parafoils down to multiple plastic Eddys flying on

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their own or with a pilot. A master of this art is Robert Brassington as he combines shapes and colours into the most attractive trains, many with shimmering organza tails. Mind you, multiple tails can be double edged sword as I found with an Angeletti Enif train. Untangling eighteen fluffy tails getting the train up and keeping the tails untangled proved more than my limited patience could take. Fluffy tails are still capable of taking prisoners as was demonstrated on more than one occasion.

The programme then took a bit of a lurch to accommodate an unexpected and ultimately spectacular addition. Bernard Dingwerth and his Baltic Kite Friends had brought no less than forty flow tail deltas in red and white. The plan was that these would be set out along the arena and then volunteers from the assembled flyers would attempt a choreographed launch. An immediate problem was that the boundary of the arena could not accommodate them all so they were having to overlap. Then it was decided to do a sequential launch from the right hand side so that every kite had to be reset with the left hand tip in front of the next in order to prevent total chaos. When all was set, up they went, one by one with Alan and the crowd counting out loud until there were something like thirty four all flying on short lines, a wonderful sight. The accompanying music was an exercise in nostalgia for many of us as it was Wagner's Ride of Valkyries that Aircraft used for their fabulous routine back in the early nineties. Was Le Touquet really that long ago?



Whilst we were wallowing in nostalgia, another piece of irrelevant memory was stirred by what was happening to the commentary. Alan Poxon has done a great job taking over from the legend that was George, but he suffered a 'curse of the commentator' that was worse than kites falling out of the sky. Those who might remember Norman Collier who made a whole routine at the Wheeltappers and Shunters Social Club with the 'dodgy microphone' will appreciate what Alan was having to cope with, an electronic glitch that cut the sound dead, mid word. The

man with the PA was tasked with curing it on Saturday evening, but it returned with a vengeance on Sunday, very frustrating for Alan especially. The deltas were supposed to replace a Rok fight, but such was the demand that a tip or pull down fight was organised to avoid kites being cut. The winner adopted the cunning ploy of staying out of the way until everyone else had fought to the death, mmm.

Two events unconnected with the festival did cause a great deal of interest. The first was the ceremonial arrival of the round the world yacht race competitors after 46,000 miles of sailing. The flotilla was headed by the Brittany Ferry, 'dressed overall', followed by two harbour tugs with their fire monitors spraying columns of water to either side. In an orderly line behind were the eleven yachts with their crews lined up, banners and flags flying as they passed ferries packed with cheering families and supporters. The second was more personal to many of us as Malcolm Goodman had been gifted a flight in a Spitfire for a significant birthday and would be flying over the festival at some stage. It is only then that you realise just how many Spitfires now fly over Southsea in a day, so which one was Malcolm, we will never know?

More art kites with the Peter Lynn philosophy much in evidence, a Patrick Nagel Cleo parafoil looking stunning against the blue sky, Claudio Capelli, Robert Trepanier, John Pollack, George Peters, Ron Gibbian, Karin and Roger Stevens and more, as well as the two, multi-coloured 'dazzle kites' from David. Michael Goddard had another varied selection of printed and appliqued kites of varying sizes, including my favourite 'Cityscape delta'. There were tie dye, batique, printed, and painted images from even more designers, just so much to look at and admire. Alan did a great job in identifying most of the creations along with interviews wherever possible. This time, 'here be Dragons' was going to be a doozy as Rolf had brought his three headed Dragon into the arena. The three headed dragon is called King Ghidora from a 1964 Japanese fantasy film, where each head represent a different person. It was big and an amaz-



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ing piece of kite design and building, spoilt only by a pilot that insisted on flying to the right. To one side of the field was a couple all the way from Thailand, the Taihtan Team, who had flown in especially for the weekend with their large inflatable 'deities', and their iconic pointed hats.

Those of you who have waded through my other ramblings will know that it is not only kite flying that is struggling to attract participants, but many other activities and sports. The European President for our 'other' activity has produced a superbly put together set of proposals for encouraging people to participate. These can be condensed into Exposure. If you don't know it exists or is happening then you are unlikely to become interested. Portsmouth certainly had the exposure with plenty of online and social media publicity resulting in huge crowds, no doubt helped by the weather. The Common was absolutely packed with people enjoying the festival and the opportunity to get out so a huge cohort will know about kite flying in all its aspects.

The second is Opportunity. Is it possible to get involved, and here Portsmouth and other festivals have taken a lead with a session for the public to come and fly kites with guidance from the flyers. No second bidding as they come in their droves, and the sheer joy and enthusiasm is a joy to behold, especially when it is an entirely new experience for them, and that applies to the adults as well as the children.

The third is Availability. Is it possible to get the basic equipment, ie a kite that will fly and somewhere to further the experience. When there were twenty plus traders, most of them selling proven products, it did not use to be a problem, but this year there were just two traders, and they had been wiped out in short order, such was the demand. The public even resorted to asking flyers if they had 'small kites to sell'? There is a lot of 'Iffy' stuff on eBay and from sea-front traders, but the opportunity to buy a guaranteed product from a kite shop is now no more than a memory. Sadly there is also now a dearth of events to keep peoples interest or allow them to follow the path that many of us did, club, local event, national event, international event and so on.

The flying of Spirits, Angels and Doves also brings people together as Nick James, with Angels and Karl and Sara with Doves always have a bag full to hand out. Unfortunately, Simon's usual, eloquent, description of it all was overshadowed by the microphone malady that made it all a bit more comical than reflective. Multiples do get people involved and look good, just needs a bit of investment and effort. So, on to that good old favourite, not seen for a while, the mega team. There is a natural limit as to when a mega team has so many kites that it

becomes impossible to fly any meaningful manoeuvres, resorting to a grand 'follow my leader', but here, just the right number so that it looked choreographed, marvellous.



Gill and Jon had organised food for everyone at Rees Hall, followed by an auction. Our own enjoyment of auctions has cooled somewhat over the years for a variety of reasons. Obviously they exist to raise money for the festival or a charity, but judging from comments on Sunday, it is possibly now time to reassess how they are organised. (I seem to remember originally writing this many moons ago and getting roundly condemned, but there was a degree of disillusionment expressed on several fronts).

Sunday was just as sunny and even warmer but started with zero wind before beginning to fill from the east this time. Always on the light side, but for sparred kites, almost perfect as the display in both arenas attested to. Bit more difficult for the inflatables as the anchors were now in the wrong position and there were several instances of bags of washing falling out of the sky that were once pilots and the odd Manta turning sharp left. A very large Octopus was flown close to the ground with the bridles anchored. Splitting the bridles and flying on two lines is certainly stable as long as the wind does not change direction.

From where we were standing, the altitude sprint looked even more difficult to judge with

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at least four kites that could justifiably claim to have been the highest. Never volunteer to judge as you can only ever be wrong. Fenix pair produced a couple of routines, first as a pair and then as a threesome. Oh how I long for the days of TOTL, Aikraft, Tsunami, Sky Dance etc where the music was the key to the routine rather than an accompaniment. The Decorators had downsized overnight so were now six whilst Flying Squad decided on numbers depending on the routine, whether it was called when all could join in or learned, when those that knew it were in.

The programme was very similar for the day with a few minor variations, Carl Wright flying two kites with one long tail joining them together, 'here be Dragons only happening' once, but this time with King Ghidora being hoisted by a Manta that also had a pilot above as the wind was a bit on the light side for so much ripstop. Rolf also brought a 15 metre Lobster in to the display arena to fly alongside the Thai Deity, two versions, red or yellow. Trying to understand the graphics on art kites can be mind boggling, especially when Steve Brockett is involved. Of the three kites rescued from under the stage at the Wellingborough Theatre, 'Blackbirds are in my dreams' is the least faded, but with a 38mm, tapered and telescopic GRP cross spar can be a bit exciting to assemble and fly. Easy to launch but something of a mind of its own when up there, so one to be watched constantly, especially when considering the following from Steve. "The graphic is inspired by the work of Paul Klee and plays with the ideas of dreams, depression, internal struggle and freedom with the symbolic Blackbirds and the eyes closed dreamer at the centre". I just think it looks great.

The mass launch of flow tail deltas went across the arena this time so there was room for another couple more. The simple contrast of red and white worked really well, but we did feel for Bernard and his friends having to rig them all and then roll them up afterwards. Probably quicker than assembling drum boxes though?

Frances Anderson's kites may be small and delicate, but they are beautifully made and fly so well in a wide variety of wind strengths. At the other extreme was one of Michel Gresier's largest Dagues with its long, flowing tails, quite happy in the relatively light wind. It was sad to hear that Michel is suffering health problems, so we wish him well. Also small but relatively bullet proof are Karl's Doves, being flown with great enthusiasm by members of the public, but it was one couples attempts to get a Spirit flying that had me transfixed. Inflatables do not fly too well when they are being held up by one of its legs with the top half flopped over, was never going to work. Sometimes, as we and assorted manufacturers have found, the material that has been used is so porous, the air comes

out as fast as it goes in, something some of the Chinese copies are renowned for.

A finale with Fracture, Fenix and the Flying Squad putting together a mega team brought the curtain down on what had been a wonderful two days. The public were out in force with queues right back to Tipner on the M275 and parking at a premium. Trying to cross the promenade was something of a lottery, depending on motorists taking pity. The queues for the toilets were impressive, but the Mandrake Services lady did a super job of keeping them clean throughout. Even the man on the gate was cheerful as he had not been soaked on regular occasions.

Thanks to Gill and Jon for organising it all, TC who walked miles to ensure we were where we were supposed to be at the right time, and all the flyers who made it such a sociable occasion, although the very convivial Friday evenings at Rees Hall now seem nothing but a fond memory. After a year's absence, it reminded us what we had missed. Even the trip out of the town was trouble free, an added bonus.

As we sat on the patio of our hotel with a cold Stella, we were able to reflect on what had been a great weekend and we hope that Portsmouth Council are up to making it 33?



East Anglian kite Flyers at First Light—Colin Roberts

We had been first asked to fly kite's at the first light festival in 2022. After people told the organisers they missed seeing the kites in 2023 we were asked back this year, as we had enjoyed our time flying there before we were happy to return.

The first light festival is held on the beach in Lowestoft over a weekend to celebrate the rising sun as its the most easterly point in the UK. Going by the number of people asleep on the beach when we arrived early Sunday morning it must have been a good Saturday night. Those that were sleeping in our designated flying area were politely woken and asked to move, all apart from one young lady who could not be woken despite our best effort. So we let her slumber on in her sleeping bag as the only safety implication we could see would be if we tripped over her.

We had decided at our club AGM to do things slightly differently at our larger flying displays. One would be the use of walkie talkies so we could be in contact with each other. We had also decided that each set of main flying lines would always have someone in attendance keeping an eye on things. Jonny and Lou (Red Kite Crew) would be looking after one set of sand anchors and Jonathan and myself would be looking after the other set of anchors. Peter and Lyn would be flying smaller kites attached to single anchors or hand flying a selection of kites during the day and, when I wasn't needed by Jonathan, I was able to have some time flying one of my Rev's, during the day. This approach to safe flying worked well.

In a light onshore wind Jonny and Lou (J&L) set up by the waters edge while the main camp was a bit further up the beach with other sand anchors placed a bit further along from J&L. A foil lifter was soon up to test the wind direction and it's lifting capacity was tested by attaching a large fish. The lifter was only just holding it aloft so J&L replaced one fish with another to see what worked best. Meanwhile Jonathan with my help had up another foil and as the wind had picked up slightly three Aliens were attached, and Jonny had also got up an Octopus on another lifter but it wasn't up for long as the wind died. So everything was laying on the beach including Pete's Hula Hula girl that is normally very reliable in light winds.

Fortunately after about half an hour the wind returned and was a steady onshore for the rest of the day which was good as by then the crowd was becoming very big. Folk in large motor boats were also passing by close to the shore to have a look along with paddle boarders and kayakers etc. Pete was entertaining the crowd with an ever changing display of smaller kites including a Gecko, large butterfly, skeleton and very big snake and when not needed by Jonathan I was showing folk what a Rev kite can do.

A kite arch had also been set up to add some more colour.

With the better wind Jonny and Lou were in full display mode, a large and impressive Manta Ray was flying high to which Sponge Bob was attached along with a variety of sea creatures and to the gasps and applause of the crowd a Maxi whale was also flying and to prove the Red Kite Crew travel in style. Their car was also set up by some flags allowing for some selfies to be taken, meanwhile Jonathan had also launched a large Manta Ray to which more sea creatures were added including a few squid and fish etc and to keep an eye on things a very large bear was also flying.

We had drawn quite a crowd with the display and lots of folk were taking pictures and video and coming over to ask questions about the kites. With the sun out and live music from the nearby stage it had turned into a perfect day. We flew on until the festival was coming to an end at approximately 5pm. As we sat down waiting for the promenade to quieten down allowing our cars to be driven along we all agreed that it had been a great day as did the organisers.

I cant help but wonder what sleeping beauty must have thought when she eventually awoke from her slumbers to be greeted by a sky full of weird and wonderful creatures but then again I got the impression that it may not have been such an unusual sight after all as she had obviously fully partaken in the revelry of the previous night.

Pictures and video can be found on the East Anglian Kite Flyers web site and Facebook page and the Red Kite Crew media pages.



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Introduction to kite making

With Michel Gressier



We spotted this on the web, and if your French is up to it and you are going to the Tours area of France, you may want to see if you can organise this.

Michel Gressier will warmly welcome you in his workshop to discover the making of his spectacular kites. During this one-hour visit, the artist and craftsman will present the different stages of his creative process. From the notebook where he sketches all kinds of ideas, to the different fabrics he uses, the implementation of materials and the importance of weather conditions, participants will have the chance to gain valuable insights into the craft of kite making. If the weather is favourable, Michel will end the visit with a demonstration of an outdoor flight, offering visitors the opportunity to try handling the kite. For a simple workshop visit, the tour is 14 euros; for the workshop visit and demonstration outdoors, the tour is 25 euros.

This takes place at 48 Avenue André Maginot, 37100 Tours, France by appointment only. You can email him michel.gressier@le-ciel-pour-cimaise.com.

There is a short interview with Michel at www.homofaber.com/en/discover/michel-gressier-kite-making-france

His web pages are also a fascinating look at his work le-ciel-pour-cimaise.com/

Kite Downs Helicopter in South Bali

A potentially dangerous situation miraculously ended without death or injury on Tanjung Benoa Peninsula in South Bali when a local tourist helicopter made a successful emergency landing 1 July.

While complete details of the event, including the helicopter operator, remain vague, the Head of the Bali Airport Authority (District IV), Agustinus Budi Hartono, explained that his staff had reported how a helicopter flying in the Tan-

jung Benoa Peninsula had its rotor blades become entangled in the string of a kite, causing the aircraft to make an emergency landing.



Fortunately, none were injured in the helicopter's emergency landing. At the time of the mishap, it was ferrying passengers from Melasti Beach to the Lembongan Peninsula.

The helicopter was carrying three tourists and one pilot. Like past emergency landings, the helicopter's blades became entangled with a kite, compelling it to land.

Hartono is calling on the public to spread the word about the danger of kite flying in any area frequented by aircraft. Warnings have also been broadcast to district chiefs and schools in Kuta about the potential threat to aviation posed by kite flying.

A "no kite flying zone" has been in effect for several years, delineated by a 5 km radius surrounding Bali's Ngurah Rai Airport.

Another similar incident occurred which resulted in a crash landing. Both of these despite a long-standing provincial regulation published in 2000 restricting kite flying within a 54-kilometer radius of Bali's Ngurah Rai Airport.

The restrictions are zoned—within a 9 km radius of Bali's Ngurah Rai Airport, no kites or "similar airborne apparatus" can be launched into flight. No kites or "similar airborne apparatus" can be flown at an altitude of more than 100 meters within a 9 km and 18 km radius from Bali's Ngurah Rai Airport.

No kites or "similar airborne apparatus" can be flown at an altitude of more than 300 meters within a radius of between 18 km and 54 km of Bali's Ngurah Rai Airport.

These rules sadly remains largely ignored and unenforced. Those seeking proof of any blatant failure of Bali officials to enforce the laws addressing kite flying and traffic safety need only look southward of an arch stretching east-to-west from Tabanan-Kintamani-Manggis all fall-

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ing within the airspace restricted for kites flying.

Amy Adams spotted on Marshfield beach filming movie scene with kites

We had been contacted by a film production company to organise some 'training' for a Hollywood actor who was in the UK and returning to start filming. This was the result of that training.

Among the creatures dancing in the wind over Rexhame Beach on a Monday afternoon were a giant purple octopus, two species of whales, a scuba diver and a frog.

The spectacle dazzled Marshfield beachgoers as dozens of kites small and large soared above film crews ahead of Oscar-nominated actor Amy Adams' arrival to the set of an upcoming movie titled "At the Sea."

Later, Adams could be seen standing near the dunes taking direction with a child actor. She wore a long black and white dress and the child carried a kite of his own for a scene at a "kite festival."

Last week, Boston Casting put out a social media callout for "kite flying experts," who would be paid \$226 for eight hours of work. Participants in the movie shoot included Kites Over New England and Blue Hill Observatory.

"At the Sea" follows Laura, played by Adams, who goes to her family's seaside vacation home after rehab. She must grapple with moving on from a career that was integral to her identity.

Kites Return to the Olympics?

A kite flying event was an unofficial sport at 1900 Olympic Games in Paris, held as part of the ballooning event. The often reported strong gust of wind that blew most of the competitors' kites in to a tree is probably just myth. The 1900 Olympic Games Official Report (in French) gives many details of the competition.

The report from the games mentions two different competitions, one for altitude and another based on several factors. The competition for altitude was held over a one hour period, the winner was the kite with the highest altitude (as verified by instruments recorders attached to the kite). The other competition category required the kite to remain in the air for two hours with 200 meters of cable. The ranking was done by measuring the angle of the line from the kite to the point attachment with the horizontal, the bearing surface, the cable tension dynamometer, and appreciating the stability of the kite.

Originally just two categories in the kite competition was planned, however due to the large number of competitors who came with a large range of kites, the Organizing Committee decided to split the competition into three categories - small, medium and large kites. The small kites were mostly toys flown by children, and the prizes were reduced accordingly to a single bronze medal and to small rewards of 20, 10 and 5 francs

Results

Small Kites

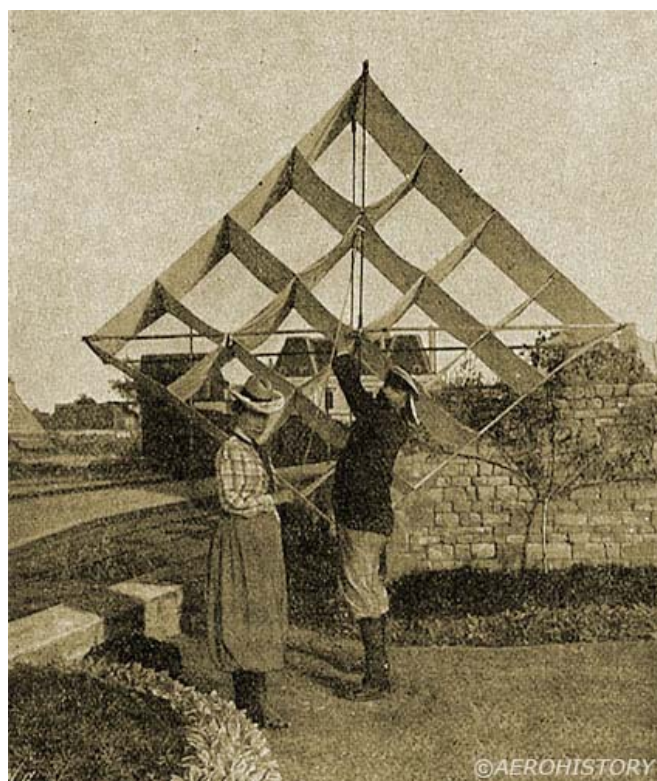
- Flecheux (France)
- Mademoiselle de la Dunard (France)
- Heurteau (France)
- Mention honorable : M. Bonfils

Medium Kites

- Rouillard (France)
- Stoenesco (France)
- Mademoiselle de la Dunard (France)

Large Kites

- Lecornu (France)
- Louis Baillod (France)



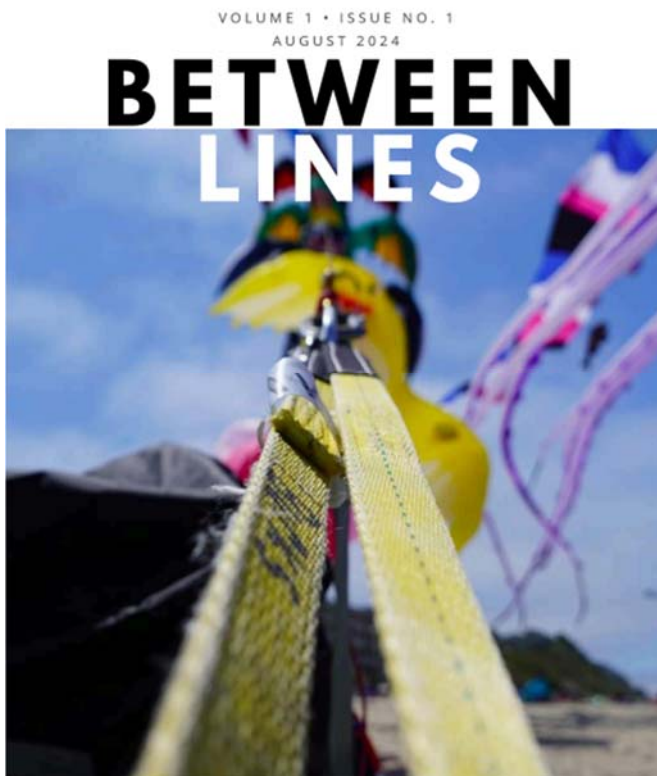
Kite Magazine

For those of you not signed up to receive regular emails from Fortuna Found. They have published the first digital magazine. The press release says:

Alright, it has been a long time coming, and took a bit of work to prep and make happen, but the new fully digital kite magazine is here!

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Between Lines will be published every few months and will contain not only articles about kites, kite events, and kite building, but also videos and interactive challenges. This first edition is out and meant to showcase what is possible, and we are looking to grow significantly from here! Go have a look, tell us what you think, and let us know what you would like to see in future editions!



www.fortunafound.com/magazine

Kite Fighting in Brazil

Whilst it is fairly well known that kite fighting is pretty much banned in Pakistan due to mahnja what is less known is a ban may end up being put in place in Brazil.

On this July morning in the impoverished neighbourhood, groups of men were using taut, sharp-edged kite lines — known as “cerol” in Portuguese — to slash their opponents’ lines, ripping their kites from the sky.

Kite fighting has caused horrific injuries and even deaths, and a bill moving through Brazil's Congress is seeking to prohibit the manufacture, sale and use of the razor-sharp lines nationwide, with violators facing one to three years in prison and a hefty fine. Cases of motorcyclists having a limb severed or throat slit remain common.

The lines are already outlawed in some congested areas of Brazil, including Rio, but that didn't appear to trouble the men jousting with their

kites above Ipanema; indeed, some of those flouting the law were police officers. A couple of them called kites their therapy.

“We always try to fly the kites in suitable places to not put anyone at risk. There's no risk here, because the kite falls into the woods,” Jarro said, pointing to the tree-covered mountain above which the kites were dancing. Still, there were narrow pedestrian alleyways below.

Kites have a long history in Brazil and are particularly popular in Rio's favelas, the poor neighbourhoods often clinging to the mountains overlooking and surrounding the city, where a cottage industry uses bamboo and tissue paper to produce kites.

For many, kites evoke childhood and light-hearted diversion. And some do fly kites simply to feel the wind's tug upon a harmless cotton string. But attached to cutting lines, kites can be fatal, particularly when sweeping across highways where speeding motorists struggle to spot them.

While kite-fighting competitions are held safely in designated areas in countries like France and Chile, in Brazil, its widespread, unregulated use has caused numerous accidents over the years. To try to fend off the danger, motorcyclists affix thin antenna-like posts equipped with razors at the front of their bikes to snip wayward kite lines. The company that administers one of Rio's main highways regularly hands them out to motorcyclists.

But cases of motorcyclists having a limb severed or throat slit remain common, leading several Brazilian states to pass laws regulating the lines, according to political consulting firm Governmental Radar. The federal bill to outlaw the razor-sharp lines nationwide was approved by Congress' lower house in February, and is now heading toward a Senate vote.

In Brazil, kites are ubiquitous, with kite flying even recognized as a cultural and historical heritage by legislation passed by Rio's municipal assembly in 2021. Some say kites were brought to Brazil by the country's Portuguese colonizers. But others note they were used in Africa, and that the legendary Palmares community of runaway slaves in the northeast deployed them to warn of danger. Kite flying was so popular that kids called school vacations “the time of kites,” Luiz Antônio Simas, a historian who specializes in Rio's popular culture, told a packed bar near the Maracana soccer stadium during a lecture on kite history.

For decades, children filled socks with glass shards and put them on train tracks to be ground up. They mixed the resulting powder with glue to smear on their kite lines, often bloodying their fingers. Artisanal methods have

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mostly given way to large reels of industrially made lines that are even more efficient at cutting.

"Often, the police don't even stop criminals. Imagine someone flying a kite," said Carlos Magno, president of Rio's association of kite fliers. In July, Magno travelled to the capital, Brasilia, to lobby lawmakers to reject the bill moving through Congress. It allows competitions, but without the sharp lines he and other kiting aficionados say are essential.



Magno maintains that cutting lines can be used safely in designated areas, just as guns are at target-shooting ranges. "It should be banned in the street; we recognize that it's dangerous," he said. "But millions of people practice this sport and hundreds of thousands of people earn a living directly or indirectly from it. So we can't do away with it."

In 2020, Leonardo Durães was riding his motorbike when a razor-sharp line slashed his chin; he got 33 stitches and a deep scar is still visible today. Even he supports kite championships as long as they are held in suitable places. "As soon as a situation is inflicting harm, including causing fatal victims, that's when your play-time's over," he said.

Kites to fly high to generate electricity

The Physics Department at Colombo University plans to generate sufficient electricity for home use using kites, Astronomy and Space Science Unit, Colombo University Director, Professor Chandana Jayaratne said. During the recent kite festival in Nuwara-Eliya, Professor Jayaratne announced plans to generate electricity using kites. This decision followed an experiment conducted during the festival, he said.

"While generating electricity with wind power is common, using kites for this purpose will be a new initiative in Nuwara Eliya. Although this concept is new to Sri Lanka, it has already been implemented in the United States, where at least four houses have been powered by electricity generated from high-flying kites," Professor Jayaratne said.

To advance this initiative, discussions will be held with kite-fliers' associations across Sri Lanka. Renewable energy is increasingly essential for many regions in the country. As part of this effort, Colombo University plans to introduce new methods for electricity generation in the future.

"Recent experiments have shown that kites flying at heights above 500 metres can successfully generate electricity. If done correctly, up to 1,800 terawatts of electricity can be produced," he said.

Recent Cody Exhibition



Jan Desimpelaere presented a beautiful and unique collection of kites, made by none other than Samuel Franklin Cody (1867-1913).

Cody was not only a showman, but a brilliant aircraft developer and one of the pioneers in aviation. He experimented with planes for military use and later developed a motorized aircraft. Did you know that on 16 October 1908 he performed the first official controlled flight with a heavier-than-air aircraft in Great Britain?

This was a rare opportunity to admire the original specimens of this fascinating aviation pioneer up close! Come experience aviation history and be inspired by Cody's inventiveness.

It took place September 14th and 15th.

Maybe there will be an opportunity to see this exhibition elsewhere.

Kite Event for Ukranian Children in Great Britain 2024

In mid-August a series of events was held in Durham. A training summer camp of Tomorrow Summer Camp was organized. The camp involved almost 200 children of our Heroes who were killed, captured or missing during the war with Russia.

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The work of the camp was attended by English language teachers, psychologists and all lecturers -physics of the project online physics school, several of which are members of the association.

During the camp, children had the opportunity to meet special guests: Ambassador of Ukraine to the UK Valery ZALUZNY, world-class cosmologist Carlos FRANK and another special guest... This mysterious special guest was a great friend of uapz and the project online physics school - Peter Hartt.

He arrived in Durham on Aug 10 to give a special talk to children on the topic of kite flying and a build-your-own kite workshop with Alexander. The preparation involved wind exploration on the Durham University campus, which is ranked among the top 5 UK universities and top 100 universities in the world, as well as preparing a location for kite launches with almost 200 participants.

The scenic Observatory Hill location was chosen for the launches.



Spotted at the Auctions

Rare K.W.G. Coffee Coffeyville Kansas Kite.

Early 20th Century; Original, frame 23" height, 18.5" width, professionally framed under glass. Paper and wood kite. Artwork of K. D. G. Brand coffee



fee by The Kansas Wholesale Grocery Co. Coffeyville, KS.

Estimate \$100—\$10,000, Sold for \$170.

The Kite, Hiro Yamagata (b. 1948)



THE KITE, 1992, color screenprint, signed and numbered 7/250 in pencil, artist's blind stamp lower left, image 9 x 11 1/4", full margins, frame 23 x 24 1/4" with plexiglass.

Sold for \$190

Francisco Marrero's Village, Mario Sanchez

A hand-carved and painted wood panel folk art painting titled "Francisco Marrero's Village." Sanchez, a self-taught artist, presents a naive yet detailed depiction of a bustling Key West, Florida street scene, filled with lively activity.

The artwork features key elements such as the "Lindbergh Grocery Store," with signage advertising meats and fancy staples, a small mobile cart labelled "Jack's Crawfish Co.," and scenes of patrons and children playing baseball and flying kites adorned with American and Cuban flags.



Estimate \$20,000—\$40,000. Sold for \$60,000

A Modern Dilemma—Hugh Blowers

Recent copies of the Kiteflier have illustrated a dilemma that is becoming increasingly evident, and not just in the world of kites, the disposal of collections.

The term collection can cover a multitude of situations from the cupboards full of 'stuff' that has been acquired over the years to the targeted and carefully built up, and more accurate use of the word, collection.

A very close acquaintance in our parallel discipline was less than complimentary about 'collectors' and the effect they were having on prices until it was pointed out to him 'you have two of them, you aren't going to use either, so you are a collector'.

In this respect, we are often asked to advise on the possible routes for disposing of collections, which range from just a handful of items to many thousands, and even entire houses full.

Depending on when the bulk of 'collecting' was carried out, the values are not insignificant either, both on what had been spent and what the worth might be on the open market.

Herein lies the problem though, as we have discovered. There are three basic reasons why disposal of items may be considered, thinning out or downsizing, realising assets, or the most difficult of all, when the owner has passed on.

Here it may be that the family wish to clear it all out or that an executor is required to in order to deal with the estate. If we are thinning out or downsizing, then of course, we have a certain degree of control over how we do it, and here it might be anything from a philanthropic gesture where items are distributed between fellow enthusiasts, passed to charity shops or donated to club and association auctions, through to outright sales via adverts or commercial and online auctions.

Over the years, we have all been witness to these various methods, and certainly participated to a greater or lesser extent, donating, selling, and of course, buying, which somehow defeats the object of downsizing or thinning out. I like to excuse this aberration by referring to it as 'trading up'.

Where it becomes more difficult is when it is a large or even extremely large collection that, for whatever reason, needs to be moved on.

Again, readers of Kiteflier will be well aware of a number of these over the years and those tasked with the disposal, but having been responsible for one such, it isn't easy. The kite world is a generous church, but even so it took a very long while to place all the kites, materials and assorted associated items that can be

acquired during a long term hobby, six estate cars full in total in this case.

This was not made easier as there could be no philanthropic gesture, having to maximise the prices realised as far as possible to support the partner of the 'departed'.

It was something of a shock to her when she found just how little his huge assemblage of sports kites would sell for? Top of the range (Line), out of their bags just once, new over £200 but struggled to make £30.

We are all well aware from society auctions that sports kites have an extremely limited market as they tend to be acquisitions rather than collectable, although whether that changes with time, we don't know? Is my original Spyrojet Tandem now worth more or less than it cost when new or now even less than the few quid I paid for it?

Single line kites on the other hand can maintain their value really well, and even exceed the original purchase price, especially if the original builder is no longer in business or has left the 'kite field' permanently.

It has been no surprise to see what kites from builders we all remember so well have been making on eBay and one wonders what an original Randy Tom might now realise if one was offered for sale?

Any Trekkies out there will be well aware of the Ferengi concept of the 'great continuum', a huge river of 'stuff' that flows on forever, where we put in and take out items as we do, but not altering the overall quantity.

Apart from those kites and associated items that have died of old age, there is an absolutely huge amount of stuff out there, but as we are well aware, and those wanting to dispose of the aforesaid even more so, the supply far exceeds any potential market.

We have now been to three events where traders had boxes of run of the mill items for free or a box full for a fiver and at the end of the day, stuff was being put in a skip, rather than having to transport it back home as it could not even be given away.

Definitive collections present the biggest problem as museums are not interested as these are closing at an unprecedented rate at present and at best the material would end up in storage as those of us that saw at the Wroughton open days, a bit like the closing sequence of Raider's of the Lost Ark.

Often museums that are willing to take on items are looking for a bursary or endowment to go with them and are unlikely to purchase any-

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thing, unless it is of significance or national importance.

There is an alternative view that the breaking up of collections benefits more people as they have a chance to own a small selection or individual items that they would not have previously. Certainly, the sum of the parts truly does exceed the value of the whole in this case, although whether this exceeds what was paid originally is open to question?

There are individuals or dealers that may be prepared to make an offer based on the collection as a 'job lot' and we have been party to four of these where the vendor was more than happy to be shot of it all for a wodge of cash, whilst the buyer is faced with either absorbing it all or cataloguing and selling on.

Executors and families do not always have the knowledge or the time to take a leisurely approach to disposal so a commercial auction house or a deal such as described above may be the only way out, leaving someone else to do all the work, including packing and postage.

Otherwise, it is a case of identifying and cataloguing every single item, establishing a realistic price, listing and then placing ads.

As we discovered, kites are not the easiest items to pack and post, with the cost being prohibitive in some cases, leaving an arranged collection or delivery as the only viable alternative, and we made plenty of those, including supermarket car parks, motorway service areas and festivals. Mind you, what profit there was after driving down to Brighton, making a delivery and then driving back home when bad weather caused the festival to be cancelled is open to debate?

In the end, it comes down to simple questions, do you just want rid, want to make some money, need to maximise the asset, or the oft made statement 'I want it to go to someone who will appreciate it (them)'.

We have advised and been involved in each of these scenarios, and in general, the more the return required, the more aggravation and work is required. Good luck. We follow Alan's adventure into this procedure with interest.

We Are Not Alone—Hugh Blowers

I feel somewhat guilty in that I have not contributed to the Kiteflier for a while, for which some may be grateful, and well aware that my last effort was trying to understand where kite flying and festivals in general were heading, followed most eloquently by others in more recent editions? It is ironic in a way that I then wandered, head first, into a parallel and almost identical situation.

Our absence from Portsmouth last year was due to a conflicting European event held over from 2020 as a result of the pandemic. This involved competitors from many countries including the US and Australia. Part of the official business is an international delegates meeting where both the European and World federation Presidents addressed us. Echoing what is currently being said in many other sports and hobbies, the European President said that he 'may upset people with what he was going to say, but it was vitally important'.

The gist of his statement was quite clear when he pointed out, that unless every individual, club, association and national authority went out and promoted the sport by getting new people involved, then we may well be the last generation to be able to participate? Quite a stark message but one we should all take heed of, whatever activity or pastime we currently enjoy. The Swiss representative went one stage further and stated that unless we collectively got out and made the effort then 'we might just as well get a shovel and bury the sport'.

So, we are far from alone, and Gill and Jon's appeal for more material for the magazine is a timely reminder that we must support this, otherwise, like so many other printed newsletters and magazines, that will vanish as well. I may be part of a fast disappearing minority, but I do prefer a magazine to peruse, absorb and refer back to, rather than a web based one. Being part of a monthly web publication, I know how much easier that medium is, no worries about filling the pages, whatever we get is what goes out, no worry about the cost of printing, and bless the Royal Mail, certainly no worries about the cost of postage, which could well yet put the kybosh on what few printed newsletters remain. That is only part of it though, as any medium requires regular contributions, and it is here that most are struggling.

From our own experience, it is people 'of a certain age' that are more prepared to put pen to paper or fingers to the keyboard, as they have acquired years of experience, knowledge and background, know people, been places and are prepared to pass it on.

I freely acknowledge that with kite flying and building it has been my experiences, good and bad, that have been the basis of the articles what I wrote (was it really that many) rather than any, in depth knowledge.

The other magazines and the website I write for require a much more authoritative approach, as

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any incorrect or erroneous facts or statements will be jumped upon from all points of the compass. This in turn involves hours of research, days and weeks of trawling through existing material and ongoing searches for existing items, photos and recollections. Good as 'tinternet is, it cannot replace nearly 130 years of magazines that are the foundation of this research.

Even given access to all this material does not make an article or series of articles happen. Sometimes it is a direct request for a contribution on a certain aspect, either for a general readership or very detailed for a more dedicated set of readers who will be well aware if I get it wrong. Even this can be of interest as previously held truths can be found to be nothing more than urban myths and established facts found to be anything but, as they are oft repeated pieces of information that were wrong in the first instance. As an example, a standard reference work that is used by auction houses all over Britain has numerous errors in it that are repeated regularly by those compiling catalogues who have no specialist knowledge. Imagine being in a very high end, fine auction house, on the day of the sale, explaining that their descriptions are completely wrong? They do not take it kindly.

The easy articles are event reports, of which readers will be well aware of the kite related ones that have appeared, as they are my personal observations and take on what has been happening, usually entirely factual, but occasionally with a bit of personal opinion thrown in, mostly positive, but sometimes a bit less enthusiastic. I collect what I consider are 'interesting situations', people, kites and occurrences to give a flavour of the event to those who were not there or a reminder to those that were.

Many will be well aware of my thoughts on the 'disappearing flyer' syndrome and registered flyers not doing what the name implies. On only the very rarest of occasions I have commented about failings in the organisation. I do try and avoid these as organising anything in this modern day and age is something of a nightmare, but sometimes it would be remiss not to.

I well remember two reports from the same festival where I had to wonder if either of us had been there given the disparity in those reports, we thoroughly enjoyed the event, but that was seemingly not the case for the other correspondent who laid all the blame firmly on the shoulders of the organisers.

The more difficult articles to write are those that require a significant input of some sort or a catalyst to set it all in motion, and here lady luck has been on hand time and time again to provide that item, piece of information or con-

tact that gets the words flowing. In our alternative pursuit they are known as 'hadnabinfas', the stroke of luck or coincidence that could never be anticipated or explained, which provides the impetus for a new article, line of research, and in some cases, an entire change in direction. I find this quite liberating, especially if what I produce is providing a new insight or information to whoever reads it, as this will often produce more material from the most surprising sources. It can even cause a few upsets when it is discovered that what families thought to be true wasn't, even with their own relationships, oops.

What this amounts to is that of late there have not been too many festivals to comment on, and nothing emerging that has stirred the synapses enough to provide new material, apart from one 'hadnabinfa' that illustrates this phenomena perfectly.

Readers will recall the legend of the Welsh Dragons that was the basis of the commission for Steve Brockett back in the 90s with two dragons and Merlin the magician, that many of you will have seen flying. Well, to précis, two warring Welsh dragons, one red and one white were causing havoc, so they were buried in a Welsh mountain. Unadvisedly, King Vortigen chose this very mountain to build his castle on but the dragons kept knocking it down until Merlin decided that the only way to resolve the war was to dig the dragons out and let them sort it out, once and for all. After a right set to, the red dragon won, to become the symbol of Wales and all was well. Just a legend though?

Last year, on a holiday in North Wales we came across a sign to a very old mine, so partial to going down holes, we paid our money, were issued with hard hats and a warning and off we went. That is as far as 'elf and safety goes in the principality, as after a couple of hours crawling through wet tunnels and climbing steel ladders, we were spat out half way up the mountain. Immediately in front of us was an information board that pointed to the flat-topped hill the other side of the valley stating that this had been the site of Vortigen's castle and where the two dragons had been entombed until liberated by Merlin. Now that was the sort of coincidence that we thrive on.

As for Llundud, Llefeleys and Merlin, they are now back in their home land, hopefully not causing havoc, but dragons on Southsea common was a perfect excuse to give Idris an airing. Although an innocent bystander at the punch up between Llundud and Llefeleys, he is not above causing a bit of chaos himself.