



Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 112

February / March 2019

Hello once again dear hopper fans.

Welcome to issue 112 of your favourite lighter than air Newsletter and as the weather improves so should the activity within the hopping world.

Right now, (I'll be honest), not a hell of a lot has been happening within our world. Whilst there are some events (listed here) for you to enthuse about, the winter months haven't really given me the supply of information I would have normally expected. Let me give you one example. Neil Ivison travelled to the winter meet at Tannheim and didn't see a single hopper in his time there.

Photographs from Chateau D'oex had everything but the kitchen sink and a hopper, so another blank there. Filzmoos (Austria), came up with another no show. It seems people were either not bothered this year or just didn't ship their hoppers with their main rigs.

Fret not dear people because in the midst of all this nothingness there are a few shoots of progression with things to immerse ourselves with whilst we await the big adventures starting.

So, without further wasting of time let's see what we have for you in this edition.

- Greg Winker unearths Oceanic.
- News of events such as Temecula, The Solo Meet+.
- News of balloon sales.
- Editors photos of choice
- Kim Magee, more records.

Sincere apologies for the delay of this issue. I was promised content which hasn't arrived.

Please send to me your items for inclusion in future editions of the newsletter to the email address below

Steve Roake- Editor,
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Contents

Ed Speak -
Waiting to start
The Features Section -
Events-coming up soon
Greg Winker finds Oceanic
Kim Wooge Magee-more records.

Homebuilding.
Andy Marshall Bottom end
Interesting Photos
Temecula
New Balloons
None

Second Hand Balloons
See feature section
Gallery Pages
G-CKVE
Manufacturer News/ Events
So many events they are in the feature section

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Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 112

February / March 2019

1, Ed Speak- Waiting for the season to start.

The waiting is nearly over. Winter planning is more or less complete. You sort of know where you are going this year and you just can't wait to start. For me, I'm like a coiled spring, ready to unleash myself into a new season with new events, some good trips planned and starting with something very special, (More on this when it's happened).

Personally, I find the layoff recharges my desires to fly. I sense a renewed desire to get the hopper out and reacquaint myself with the things that made her exciting in the first place. I recently spent a lovely day up in Llangollen North Wales being entertained by Model balloonists and had the opportunity to see a brand-new build Hopper by Andy Marshall(G-CKVE). What a nice piece of Kit, with quite a different bottom end on it. Needless to say, I spend some time picking his brains and taking photographs with the newsletter in mind. Results are here for you to read later in this edition.

One trend that has become apparent recently with the lack of overall numbers of second-hand hoppers around is the distances buyers are now prepared to go to in order to find good stock. As you will see in the specific section later in the newsletter, good well priced bargains are now moving greater distances than ever to new owners who know a savvy buy when they see one.

I see that Kim Magee fresh from her exploits in her hopper (setting new records awaiting FAI accreditation), has not sat back and has gone and done it again this time with a 42,000 cubic foot balloon and a collapsible basket. More on this later.

I have also placed a fresh list of events in the features section since some aren't that far away and its good to highlight the up-coming events hence the idea of highlighting them for you all to plan.

You are probably wondering why the newsletter was late this month. There is a reason for this. Somebody who will remain nameless promised me an exclusive launch. This failed to materialise and so having waited an extra week for them to get their stuff together I've run out of patience. Apologies for the delay.

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Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 112

February / March 2019

2, The Features Section. -

Forthcoming Events

With the season practically upon us, I thought it would be good to highlight the up and coming events as some of them start real soon . Here in no particular order are the ones I know about .

In the USA

Temecula (California) Easter weekend

Now into its third year , this Easter based meet is run by Ernie Hartt and is run on the same basis as previously. From what ive been told it's a very casual affair over the Easter weekend with some exciting new additions planned for 2019 so I'm told. Last year I think 8 hoppers flew together and they are expecting more this time around. Dates for Easter are 19th- 22nd April. for more details and to let Ernie know you are coming contact him directly please .

Brian Bolland Experimental Balloon and Airship Meet (Vermont), May 17-19th.

The annual gathering of the great and the good of homebuilding happens over the weekend of 17th-19th May at Brian Bollands airfield in Post Mills Vermont. For anyone who has never been , it is a mecca of all that is good in homebuilding hosted by the great man himself. People come from all over the world to attend and generally go away after enriched with knowledge and great flying in some of the most spectacular scenery that you will find. People stay in a variety of ways, ranging from available places on site , to motorhomes, camping and local accomodation. This is the place to visit if you want to tap into all that is good within homebuilding, and at some stage in the future, I will return.

Some even turn up in their planes with hoppers onboard. Now getting more popular with the Brits, expect to see some from this side of the Atlantic at this years event.

Newsletter supported by





Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 112

February / March 2019

UK Events

All Fools Balloon Meet -Great Missenden

Peter Gray advises that the All Fools Balloon Meet will once again happen at The Black Horse Pub in Great Missenden over the Easter weekend. Whilst not specific to hoppers , they are very welcome. More details from Peter at peter@bmss.biz .

The Solo Plus Meet

Now this is a hopper orientated meet once again held at The Black Horse Pub in Great Missenden over the weekend of May 31-June 2nd . Once again coordinated by Peter Gray and the BHBC, this popular meet is bound to be larger than last years event. It is a great event , very sociable and camping is available on site by prior request. Once again please contact Peter to advise of your interest on peter@bmss.biz

Greg Winker finds a piece of history -Oceanic

Greg Winker's father used to work at Raven Industries , and many years ago Greg would tag along with his father when he went to the offices at the weekends. In the early 70's , there was this photo hanging on the wall depicting two balloons named Enterprise and Oceanic. These two craft were used in a Walt Disney Film called "High Flying Spy". This was about a character called Thaddeus Lowe and is set in 1861 at the opening of the American Civil War.

Fast forward to the internet age and whilst perusing Frank Prells website, in a for sale section Greg found that "Oceanic" was listed. It had survived ! Finding himself in the neighbourhood in Louisville, Greg asked to take a look at the old piece of history, in the knowledge that it is now old and condition was unknown. Fortunately after a quick evaluation the balloon appeared as though it might be airworthy. So Greg purchased the balloon and once the local repair station had confirmed his thoughts, the intention is to return the craft to the air once again.

The history is pretty amazing . Paperwork included the original flight manual from 1969, and contained the logbook.

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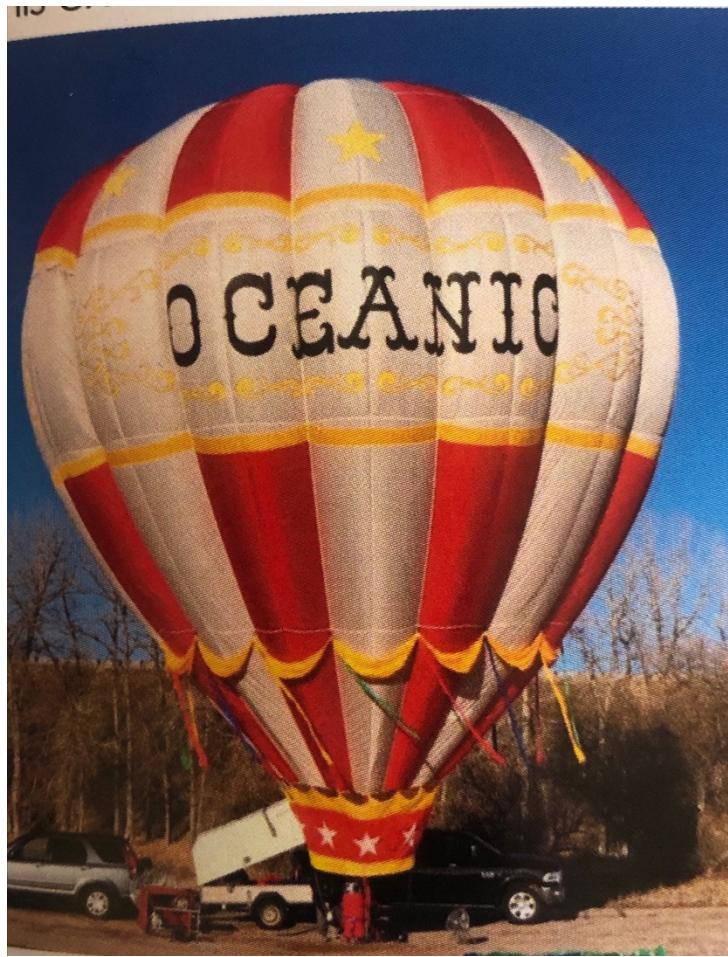
Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 112

February / March 2019

First inflated on 3rd september 1971, this vintage craft was registered N3MM (the MM for Mickey Mouse) , as a S40A-121. Greg notes that people who have flown the balloon reads like a whos who of early USA ballooning with such notable entries as Bill Berry Ravens then west coast distributor, Deke Sonnichsen (the first Ballooning Journal editor), Paul Woesner (two time world champion), Chuck Foster and Frank Prell amongst others.

Last entry was in 1996 , so this envelope has been out of sight for some 23 years. With only 56hours Total time , Greg remarks there is plenty of life left in it and plans are a foot for it to attend the Temecula Meet this Easter. Ed- it makes you wonder what other treasures remain Hidden .



First inflation in 23 years for N3MM

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Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 112

February / March 2019

Kim Wooge Magee does it again

Not content with setting (subject to ratification) 3 world records in her last flight, Kim Magee has only gone out there and done it again . Subject to the FAI recognising her claims the American pilot has this time flown a 42,000 cubic foot envelope with a collapsible basket on a record flight. This time Kim achieved the following.

Launching from Mitchell , South Dakota , Kim flew at 15,000 feet at an average of 57mph for a duration of just under 6 hours covering 365 miles total. Im not sure which records are being claimed but whatever they are you can agree that this was an epic flight.



Second record flight in quick succession for Kim Magee

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Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 112

February / March 2019

3,Homebuilding Section- The Andy Marshall bottom end.

As you know this section suffers more than others from lack of content. I never understand exactly why this is the case but when you do find new things of interest , its always a pleasure to share with the community because you never quite know when something you post will be a eureka moment for someone contemplating a similar build.

Such is the position over the subject in this months section. On the 23rd March, I found myself in North Wales attending a Model ballooning day hosted by Andy Marshall . Andy has recently completed a hopper build program of his own and registered a beautiful craft in G-CKVE. However Andy wanted to use a specific small collapsible basket that he can easily use in his vauxhall car on his own. Looking at what has been built (by others for him), the solution is very nice with details that at first don't appear very specific but when you analyse why they have been done it becomes apparent that much thought went into the details of the design . Alex Court and Dom Beresford are attributed to the build in the name of Courtford Balloons. The basket itself has a couple of features not normally seen in collapsible baskets hence the reason for bringing it to your attention. The size of the basket was dictated by two specific non changeable facts. One, the basket needed to go through a specific sized door at the owners house and secondly the size of the boot space on his vehicle also dictated size.



Andy Marshall's bespoke basket

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Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 112

February / March 2019

Feature number one , is the wheels which are rotating on the lower tubing and can sit inside the velcro'd fabric bottom end. This simple yet unique idea suits the application perfectly assisting with carry out situations. Whether or not this is also the reason that there is a bracing bar half way down on that side of the basket remains unknown. The poles at that side of the basket are offset allowing the continuous wires to flow seamlessly through D rings to the floor.



Single Tank sits centrally(bracer bar clearly evident halfway down the tank)

The design of the bottom end is such that it accomodates one tank Centrally, in this case a V20. The burner is a tried and trusted C2 Thunder and Colt affair. It is a snug fit for most but the owner is very happy with the result which weighs around kgs.

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Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 112

February / March 2019



Action shot

The key to any homebuilt bottom end is getting the result you want out of what has been achieved and in this case Andy is happy. After this inflation was taken some minor adjustments to the parachute were required and im delighted to say , since these pictures were taken Andy has free flown the balloon.

Interesting Balloon comes up for Sale

It's not very often a Cameron H-34 comes up for sale as firstly they didn't appear to make too many of them. Then it is advertised with a period shyhopper bottom end which features a twist grip (making it even rarer). Then you check back against its history and you realise that this particular balloon is in fact ex british (G-RAPP), so dating from

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Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 112

February / March 2019

1990 and with the twin tank set up .This is something that a real historical fan would be interested in. Now residing in the USA with Mick Murphy , N505XS is now for sale complete, having arrived in the USA in 2014.



Cameron H-34 N505XS (ex G-RAPP) taken years ago,
Photo by Sandy Mitchell.

As you can see from the bottom end picture below , the kit appears in very good condition and will probably sell quite quickly at the offered price of \$5500. The twist grip control is quite a novelty and the unit has multiple buzzer settings to ensure you don't run out of gas which was state of the art in its time.

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Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 112

February / March 2019



For further details contact Mick Murphy either via Facebook or via www.aerblarney.com.

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Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 112

February / March 2019

Advertisement

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Fact 1
Easy to inflate and pack away, Cameron Hopper units are extremely simple to operate.

Fact 2
The Cameron Hopper Base Unit is a fun way to fly while having reliability, ease-of-use and comfort at its core.

Fact 3
Hoppers operates at a fraction of the running cost of a conventional hot air balloon.

Fact 4
Superb for those who want a striking visual impact for marketing campaigns and promotions.

Fact 5
Extra harness padding enhances comfort and suits all pilot heights.

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Small but significant benefits make a world of difference to your flying experience.

Our design and build technology combines safety with ease-of-use and exceptional comfort.

A padded head-rest, enhanced cushioning, adjustable seat, and an adjustable light-weight, foot-rest ensures pilot comfort.

Stainless-steel hinges, on all Base Units, make transportation and storage even more convenient; the whole back-frame system folds and packs neatly, even if you prefer to leave the harness attached.

The larger "rear-view" mirrors with an independent rapid-cut-off fuel system allow the Pilot to control the Hopper effectively and safely.

There is even a pocket, a perfect space for a coat or tasty snacks!

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Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 112

February / March 2019

5 Interesting Photos



Expect more Temecula Balloons like this at Easter.

6. New Allocations This Month / Changes of Ownership

Nothing has come to light in the last three months on either front which isn't surprising considering the time of year.

7. Second Hand Balloons

The demand for second hand hoppers never fails to amaze me. The lack of supply means that savvy buyers are now looking even further for their bargains. Two examples of this have recently changed hands and have travelled to their new owners.

G-LEAU This 1981 vintage Cameron N-31 was up for sale by Martin Axtell and ended up being bought by Kevin Stephenson from Glendale Arizona USA. Kevin who has been flying balloons for some 35 years is new to hopping having only had one previous experience with a Bonnano solo. "Perrier" will be lovingly looked after for most of the year due to the temperature in Arizona, but once he has got a Cameron bottom end for it will start winter flying her but has vowed to look after the balloon and maintain the UK registration.

Newsletter supported by





Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 112

February / March 2019

G-HTEC on the other hand is a 2014 Cameron Z-31 with very low hours total time. Dave McCutcheon has recently sold the envelope to a new owner who happens to live in Australia.

G-FFFT. John Tyrrell has reported the sale of the Lindstrand 31A. This 2000 year-built envelope started life publicising Financial Times. In John's stewardship the balloon has accrued over 100 hours of flying time and yet still represented great value for the new owner, who is Graham Dey of St Albans who quite recently bought the ex -Belgium LBL31A G-CKYU.

8. Manufacturer / Event News/ Industry News

Direct from the latest Aerostat magazine. Hopefully I will be attending.

30th Aug - 1st Sep

Hopper Championships

Hippodrome de Thouars

Montgolfière en Thouarsais
le partage d'une passion

CAMERON BALLOONS

You are invited to the Championnat International de Montgolfières Monoplaces, Mongolfiade de Thouars 2019. Places are limited, so please contact the team to confirm your attendance ASAP.

Cameron Balloons are supporting this event, please contact Charlie Rawson with any initial questions: crawson@cameronballoons.co.uk

- Fly over the beautiful Loire Valley
- Four tasked hopper competition flights
- Envelope limitation 42,000 cu ft
- Hopper team of two can share flights & crewing
- Free host family accommodation for a team of two
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- Facilities available Friday evening until Monday Morning

@ www.mongolfiade.fr jbernardin2@orange.fr +33 06 86 726 526

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Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 112

February / March 2019

Advertisement

Cameron "Stock Hoppers" for sale exclusively to Cludhoppers.org. These two beauties are both available with the regular discount using the code CAM01SJR and come in either 26,000 or 31,000 sizes to suit all. Prices start from £7335 excluding VAT and delivery for the O-26.

To purchase the current offerings please contact Cameron Balloons directly on +44(0)117 9637216, quoting the code "CAM01SJR" and ask to speak to either Craig or Simon about the Cameron O Types that are on the Cludhoppers page.



Cameron Super Lightweight O types are currently the best-selling lightweight hopper envelopes available and whilst most purchases require three-month lead times minimum, these are a lot easier to purchase and are available immediately by request.

Newsletter supported by





Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 112

February / March 2019

7. Gallery Pages –

Your Editor's choice of New and unusual balloons. This month we feature a Homebuilt design by Andy Marshall. G-CKVE is a Marshall Aero 31 AM9. And very nice it looks too in the flesh. (You can see the LBL influences from Andy's previous work).



Andy Marshalls Hopper G-CKVE on only its second outing
In Llangollen in March.

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Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 112

February / March 2019

Facebook membership continues to rise with the current level of 1274 (correct to 6th April), current and still rising. Let's hope this trend continues as the popularity of hopping embraces even more people. All articles for inclusion in future issues will be gratefully received by your Editor. Please forward them to steve.roake33@gmail.com

Feedback good, bad or indifferent is always welcome.
Views aired by contributors may not be those of the Editor.
Safe and happy hopping! **Steve Roake.**

For all previous newsletters visit www.cloudhoppers.org/newsletters

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