



Cloudbopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

Greetings again fellow Aviators.

Firstly, apologies for no September Newsletter. In this case I had plenty of content and no time which is a first for me. Therefore it means that this combined double issue is jammed packed with stuff to appeal to all you enthusiastic pilots, crew members and spotters.

To summarise what we have in Edition No 66 we have,

- Event News from Dave Such
- Neil Ivison reporting from Twente Festival Holland
- Steve Roake reports from St Niklaas Belgium
- The One Man Meet report by Steve Roake
- My favourite three photos and why –Shane Robinson
- Cameron Hopper News- Andy Austin
- Your Editor wins an award!
- Sackville happens.
- Jack Klein RIP.

So without prolonging the agony, let's crack into the Newsletter and get on with the important stuff.

1, Ed-Speak – Recognition from Pilatre de Rozier

As we all knew, The festival Mondial air Balloons or Metz to you and me was slightly weather affected this year, and due to some uncharacteristically high winds it was not possible to have the planned Solo Challenge (hopper event), which for the first time ever was sponsored by those Lovely people at Ultramagic Balloons Ltd. Having been recognised in the brochure for efforts in publicising the one man section of the event since 2007, the organisers decided to award the prize for this challenge to Steve Roake for his efforts in promoting this facet of the festival, and midway through September a parcel arrived at the Roake residence from the Pilatre de Rozier organising team with the award in it . Naturally your editor whilst humbled to be selected as worthy for recognition, is delighted to accept it as it's only the second thing he has ever won, (the other being the Pietro Contigiacomo picture from the One Man Meet a few years ago which

Contents

Ed Speak –

Winning an award

Essential Extras

The Features

Section –

Twente, St Niklaas, and the One Man Meet.

Updates

My interesting

Hop

Danny Sjkovist

Gallery pages

Manufacturer

News/Events

Cameron's

New Hopper

Adverts/For

Sale



Clouthopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

quite rightly now resides in the clubhouse at Welshpool Airport in loving tribute to our sorely departed friend Bob). Therefore with thanks to UM themselves and Pilatre de Rozier I indulge in some cheesy grinning.



With the control of Cameron Balloons Limited shifting to Hannah , it seems that there is what can only be described as a concerted effort to bring the brand bang up to date utilising all the latest media . They are also freshening their website and looking to see what needs improving in the product range. Now don't get me wrong, anyone who has been in the business as long as they have, must be doing something right so the broom doesn't need to sweep the whole lot out. However with some senior management retiring there has been a chance to internally promote and one outstanding new director is a chap by the name of Craig Moore. He and I are collaborating in a small project that I hope will benefit our community, more on this whenever I am allowed to say so.



Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

Whilst we all went to the festival Mondial Air Balloons at Chambley, France (otherwise known as Metz), with great expectations, the nature of the event was such that there were very hot days (up to 36degrees Celcius), and generally stronger winds than expected. I was out there with a friend sharing my 90 and hopper when, on one evening slot, we flew from the launchfield north towards Hannonville Souzement. Nothing special about that, with the knowledge that less crop had been cut than usual for that time of year (so locating a landing field was more critical), but I wasn't prepared for the 15.5 knot landing I was to experience. The evening met forecast had predicted 6-8 on the surface but flyable conditions and I have to say my inflation and launch were unremarkable. However once airborne and at 200ft I turned on the GPS. Bloody Hell this is fast! This was going to be a short flight, over 15 knots at 200ft. for twenty minutes I assessed my situation. I had achieved 13knot plus landings on grass before but lack of options lead me to look for the first field with other balloons in it. This emerged as a ploughed one and as I approached, luckily for me three Frenchmen appeared to be heading for my touchdown point. Coming in very low over a tree line, the first did a brilliant rugby tackle of my legs, whilst his two colleagues grabbed onto him. I still dragged the four of us 60-70 feet across the field. To say this kind of flying focuses your mind is such an understatement. I thanked my gallant "Ami's" and packed the envelope away and stood by the seat unit waiting my slightly under experienced crew to arrive. Within half an hour, I needed to lay the seat unit on its side, and hunker down behind the envelope bag as it was too strong to stand up. The torrent of winds that came through was amazing and eventually I was retrieved around 10-40 pm, certainly was a flight to remember.

Jack Klein RIP.

It is with much sadness I learnt on the 22nd October of the passing of Jack Klein, aviator and inventor of the klein mini fan. Jack was passionate about his lighter than air flying and loved hopping. He also actively supported this Newsletter by advertising through this medium, we understand he was involved in a car accident in Hawaii whilst on a holiday and we pass on our condolences to his wife and family.

Steve Roake



Cloudbopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

2, Essential Extra's / Tech Talk-

This section is empty for this month.

3. The Features Section

Twente Balloon Festival 2013

During a conversation at Bristol Balloon Fiesta with Nick Purvis and Colin Wolstenholme and it transpired that Nick had a space on his team with the Up balloon and was asked if I was interested. After a couple of days working out if logistically it would work I accepted the offer to go as part of the Cameron Balloons team.

A couple of days later Nick asked if I would like to take my hopper along to fly and do a double retrieve. On the basis that it would only fly if conditions were really good for double retrieve, keeping in mind I was there to crew for him, I agreed.

Twente Balloon meet is held at Oldenzaal on the eastern edge of Holland. The event is organised by Rien Jurg Promotions, one of the Dutch Cameron Balloon dealers, with flights from Wednesday to Saturday evenings. As with most Dutch meet there are no morning flights as generally there are no public around to see the balloons. It also means that pilots can enjoy a drink in the evening without worrying about being legal to fly the next morning.

With Nick and myself on the trip was Cameron employee Mark Knightly. Mark has worked for many years in the artwork department when envelopes were hand painted, and more recently producing artworks on computer. I dare say he has produced visuals for a lot of people reading this. Recently he has recently moved into the unenviable position of being responsible for applying for Certificate of Airworthiness paperwork with the CAA.

We were also being providing a local crew man, Peter who turned out to be a local policeman. This proved very hand as Peter knew every road in the area. To complete the team we had another Dutch crew, Joeren, who also proved to be a very helpful member of the team.



Cloudbopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

The first evening was a light wind and perfectly good for a hopper and shapes, but I decided to jump in with Nick in the Up balloon and check out the area. The direction we flew in [North] was really good, lots of open grass fields, but some the other directions did not look so good. To the south was a lot of forest, and airfield at where we were not permitted to land, beyond this was the city of Enschede. To the south-West was the town of Hengelo. Both directions would mean at least an hour's flight before the first landing opportunity would come along. Not the end of the world as long as daylight allowed.

Flight one ended in a nice cut field alongside a road with the land owner present and happy to see us. Also flying this evening were the Festo upside down balloon, Aston Martin. Collection box, Angry Bird, and for the hopping interest, Rick van Veen flew PH-BKB, ex G-TPII Trivial pursuit colt 21A hopper, whilst Ron van Houten flew his very pretty PH-EPE, all hyperlast Cameron Z-77 as a duo-airchair. Ron has both basket and duo airchair to fly with the envelope depending on conditions. The envelope has both turning vents and RDS so with the extra lift a 77 provides should fly really well over a duo airchair.

As well as the balloons, the two Festo Hot Airships were flying guests round the launch site. These are also operated by Rien Jurg Promotions.

Thursday evening was a perfect evening for hopping so we decided to fly both balloons and see how it went. Typically I was inflating close to a tall row of trees which I had to clear, so decided to go off hot. With the balloon buoyant and unclipped from the restraint a five second burn saw me going up like a rocket, much quicker than I was expecting so a little light careful venting on the parachute was initiated. Once under control I settled back to enjoy the flight, now being closely followed by Nick and Mark in the Up balloon. It was a nice 4 kt wind drifting in a similar direction to the previous evening, meaning I was happy not to need to juggle the map in an unfamiliar area. Nearly a mile ahead I could see one of the other balloons had come down low over a grass cut field and had slowed to a stop, I decided to aim for the same field and have a play. Getting to the ground there was 0.5 to 1kt so I stayed for a 5 minute play in the field, having now been joined by Nick, close enough to talk we decided to fly on a bit further. After 50 minutes of fun flying, we both landed in the same field - perfect for a double retrieve.

Ron van Houten also flew PH-EPE as an airchair again this evening.



Cloudbopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013



Mark Knightly

Beyond Thursday evening the conditions didn't really allow for any further hopping activity.

The Friday evening was a little quicker, forecast of 10-15kts at 500ft. Not really enjoyable hopping weather so Mark and I decided to retrieve whilst Nick flew Peter and his son.

Saturday evening was forecast to be similar weather so again I binned the hopper flight, mainly as double retrieving could be a pain if we were separated by any distance. Nick allowed me to inflate and fly the Up balloon with him and Mark as passengers which was very kind and trusting of him. We limited ourselves to a 30 minute flight as we were heading for the German border and not really wanting to cross it. We had a nice gentle landing which I was happy about as Nick had warned that because the small inflatable balloons on the outside seem to hold heat, keep the envelope inflated for a few seconds extra giving a tendency to drag a little further than expected – interesting quirk to the shape.



Cloudbopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

Festo, the main sponsor for the event had a trailer with a few of their more interesting projects on display. Some of you may have seen the flying penguin's videos on the internet. Since then they have made some radio controlled birds which mimic real bird wings for flight, and more recently have used 3d printing to create some dragonflies. We were given demonstrations of both products, which I have to say from a distance the birds really did look great and close to the real thing.

The ballooning side of the event closed with a nightglow, which is done at the side of the lake in the park. This makes for a very spectacular sight with the envelope colours reflecting in the water. With 5 out of 5 flight the event was deemed a success.

Sunday morning saw a survivor's brunch with the usual thank you's and each pilot being presented with a Cameron Balloons art worked ornament, a nice touch I thought.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hql5e7H-UpA>

Festo smartbird

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nnR8fDW3llo>

Sint Niklaas Balloon festival

On the very same weekend of Sackville, I was on a ferry heading to Belgium for my third annual trip to the Sint Niklaas festival with the hopper and friend Clive Cooper. This very well run event is organised by the Sax family who have for three generations run all 66 annual festivals.

It was an interesting weekend with the weather gods not looking too kind with a busy anti cyclonic pattern driving in rain to the UK and the prospect of a mixed bag in Belgium.

Arriving in good time for the Friday briefing we had checked into our 4 star hotel for the weekend and started to get into the mood of the event with some local beverage.

The met briefings at this event are second to none and this year was no different with the predictions of waves on wind with troughs over the weekend, flying would be difficult but possible. Some Belgium pilots were more fearless than me and prepared to fly immediately after a rain shower so some flew up to three times over the weekend. The Friday evening slot showed that the weather



Cloudbopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

was going to be fickle and as predicted the slot that we thought we had, eventually disappeared as the rain arrived with the unsettled winds around launch time. I for one wasn't bothered about not flying as I was ready for Belgium beer and a relaxing rest after our travels.

After a decent night's sleep, we returned for Saturday mornings briefing which was not dissimilar to the one the night before. The weather wasn't too bad for flying but as the locals took to the air, I thought twice about it and actually began assembling the hopper only to think again as the raindrops started to soak the seat unit. These we were assured wouldn't amount to much but with the overnight rain and a bright yellow and blue envelope I decided that it might be better to wait for the evening slot. Funny thing is that, you always ask yourself are you missing a great flight once you have made your decision, but I find I rarely think to reverse it once I have weighed up the factors involved. The balloons that flew were primarily passenger rides balloons and those of the sponsors so it was easy to let the professionals play by themselves.



This nice interesting perspective of me departing in front of the large crowd was taken by Koen Verwimp.



Cloudbopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

Saturday evening briefing was also slightly iffy with weather considerations, but once again good communication by the met people assured us that if we waited, later on we would probably get some flying done. This is exactly what happened and it was nice to get a flight in, which once in the air was a lovely speed in the direction of the wind turbines at St Giles. The flight which was just short of an hour covered 4.9 nm.

Most of the flight was low level to ensure I got the left from the wind which had some considerable variation in track, but enjoyable flying? alongside Don Cameron in the "UP" Balloon. The landing was a consideration in itself as the availability of fields without animals appeared to be zero on my path and yet on the one hand I wanted to enjoy the flight, but on the other I didn't particularly want to go past the motorway if I could ensure I didn't. In the end I thought I'd fly low over a field of sweetcorn and see how much left was on the surface, and by being patient and waiting there was just enough to push me across a small lane and into a field with a wind turbine that was switched off yards before the major road. Not often in life you feel so satisfied when you have worked for something, and having worked for my landing spot, I was also pleased that my crew was there to affect a quick pack away. Then back to the college for dinner and then some beers before bed.

Sunday morning came with some light fog and occasional spits of rain again. Those who flew (mainly Commercials), and little breeze to blow you away from the city, I made another easy decision not to fly and the majority of pilots tended to agree.

However with people around and fellow hopper pilot Neil Ivison drying out his immaculate Concept 90 from the previous flight; I thought a tether might be of interest. Andy Austen had also expressed an interest in having a closer look at my system and so having inflated it, I swapped the tether rope for a larger one and Andy got some burner time in the market square. It never fails to amaze me the interest that is out there for hoppers with loads of prospective owners queuing for a closer look and to pick our brains. This would ultimately be my last action of the weekend because the Sunday night slot was another um /err decision making process and ultimately the slot was cancelled for free flight but some shapes entertained the vast crowds whilst Clive and I showed off our vast (not vast) frisbee skills.



Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

Just the gala dinner remained to finish another lovely weekend in Belgium. Many thanks to our hosts for a lovely time.

Steve Roake



Amazing the amount of interest Andy Austen tethering generates Lol! – photograph by Bob Garnett.



Cloudbopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

The 29th annual One Man Meet- by Steve Roake

The most bizarre One Man Meet in years took place in Stratford upon Avon over the weekend of 11-13th of October with a weather forecast that made most of those who attended ask themselves "why did I even pack the balloon". I guess it is a legacy of the previous 28 that have managed at least one flight during the weekend event that people who had read the weather forecast, still packed their kit in the knowledge that there realistically wasn't a hope in hell of doing any flying. Normally the reasons behind the successes of previous events have been down to the location within a valley environment which generally leads to micro climate weather and the ability to launch when elsewhere is usually pants. The choice of the Stratford area was questioned prior to the event as it didn't feature a valley. However to be fair to Phil Dunnington, there was probably nowhere in the UK where it would have been possible to fly over this weekend and nobody could have predicted the wind direction to be towards Birmingham and the controlled airspace zone.

It was with utter amazement that I saw teams appearing at the Friday rendezvous location of the airport café at Wellesbourne Airfield for four pm and the most amazing statistic is that those who were coming the furthest generally turned up and those who stayed away tended to be locals. The first long distance visitor was Andy Davey who whilst had no balloon for the weekend still decided to motorbike ride all the way from Austria for the event. Second to appear was a team featuring Edcar Vermeulen from Holland (to be joined later by Peter Van Haarten whose early morning flight had been cancelled).

The briefing was started around 3pm and the only thing to fly the whole weekend was Phil's centred map which made a bid for freedom. To be fair, if there was a flyable slot, Friday was it, and whilst Edcar was definitely up for a quick hop in his basketed 56 after much discussion with the ops guys at the airfield, it was established that the wind was gusting between 8 knots and 11 which with little shelter meant no one was looking to fly. Some delayed teams arrived later but by this stage the evening's entertainment at the local pub had become the subject of discussion.

Phil's number one hostelry of choice was The Ferry at Alveston, but unfortunately by the time most got there, the place was fully booked up and so eighteen of us descended on the second option, The Crown at Tiddington.



Cloudbopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

Prospects for Saturday morning were worse than Friday pm, so my team chose to have a lie in and miss Phil's 7am briefing for all newcomers. A late decision to have breakfast at the airfield was decided to coincide with a run of the Vulcan bomber that is located at the site. Twice a year it gets to stretch its legs along the 4000ft runway, and today was one of those two days. This eventually happened at the end of the afternoon by which time all ideas of flying had totally evaporated and my team had decided to go walking in and around Stratford. Earlier that morning Steve Burden flew in from Munich via Shennington in his friends light aircraft. Phil Hebden (the pilot) had arranged for us, to use an alternate take off venue at his home airfield of Shennington which is further south than Stratford and would on the prevailing winds have given us an extra 30-40 mins of flying time on our map.

Bearing in mind the fractionalised evening the day before, we decided having heard from others that they were doing their own thing, to enjoy a Chinese meal in town and enjoy ales at the Garrick hostelry which dates from 1464.

Sunday morning, the prize giving had been brought forward to 10-30am at another pub called The Bell in Alderminster. Whilst the event had seen no flying there were categories by which prizes could still be awarded. And so to the prizes. Phil was delighted to tell all present that Nick Godfrey had managed to win nothing this year.

The Super Sonnet

All weekend being in Shakespeare country, Phil had us trying to write a Sonnet and this new category attracted 13 entrants. In second place and receiving the runners up trophy was Megan Chadwick.

The winners who received a Bust and a bottle of Maiden flight Wine were the team of Banks / Orchard. Their oldie worldie sonnet even came on Parchment style paper (burnt around the edges, held together by a ribbon).

The Fearless footprint (wellies) were awarded to George and Kate Ibbotson who stepped in to the breach to assist Phil in Aliie's Absence.



Cloudbopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

The Cock Up Award (made by Mandy Moore)

This prize is awarded to an individual or team who make a sizable mistake over the weekend and this year's recipient was Ian Chadwick who managed to set off his hotel's Fire alarms at 7am.

The Out of the Woodwork Award is given to individuals who haven't turned up at the OMM for a few years, and this year's winner was Ross Powell.

The Wooden Tit is given as a "Wish for the Future", and as the event had flown for twenty seven and a half times in 29 years (the half being Barry Newman who flew on a Friday and hurt himself in the process), there really was only one winner who tried beyond every effort on Friday to get into the air unsuccessfully, and so it was presented to Edcar Vermeulen and his Dutch team who not only came a long way but showed a determined spirit to want to fly.

There was a late bid for the only hopper to have actually flown at the event from Steve Burden . But as you can see it was tongue in cheek as it was moved from Old Buckenham Norfolk to Shennington in an hour (all 99 miles of it) in the back of Phil Hebdens plane.



Now that is what I'd call making the effort – hopper, plane and pilot (Phil Hebden) photos care of Steve Burden.

Now Next year is the Thirtieth OMM and Phil is open to suggestions for where to host the event. Being the 30th I



Cloudbopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

know of a strong desire by folks in both the USA and Sweden who want to attend and I'm sure that the turn out will be higher than normal. Whilst Stratford is a lovely area, and Phil is keen to congregate around an airfield environment, I for one don't think we can risk not being in a valley somewhere to enhance our chances of flying. This event will be special and I don't want the risk of a blow out ruining our chances of a successful OMM. If you have any strong views please pass them on to Phil Dunnington.

Steve Roake

4, My interesting / First Hops- by Daniel Sjukvist (from Sweden).

My first hopper flight!

I made up my mind in July to buy me a hopper, I have been ballooning for over 10 years, I have flown balloons from the size of 56A up to 240A but the last 6 years it has mostly been the "big" balloons.

I have missed that being alone feeling that I felt when I flew the 56A, don't get me wrong I love the commercial side of ballooning to but there has been something missing.

So when I saw that beautiful Cameron Demonstrator Hopper for sale I couldn't resist! I bought it in July and then the waiting started....And I waited, and waited...It took due to different stuff all the way to the 7th of October before it finally got delivered to Gothenburg, I had have the seamstress on standby from mid September to be ready to change the registration!

So on a few days, and the envelope got inspected and a new registration put on G-STBT. STBT as a short for my company "STENBEAT" ☺ Cleaver so I thought!

We got it all done by the 11 of October, drove a 3hour drive down to Gothenburg to pick the hopper up, and inspected it bought a used 3hp fan and then drove back to Örebro. When back at tank site in the evening we or I should say I was so exited we started to refuel the tank directly just to find out that I had forgot to order propane for our big propane tank... anyhow we managed to refuel the 30kg of propane so we were ready for morning flight the next day!



Cloudbopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

So the morning finally comes and the weather is Perfect for a first ever hopper flight, wind is calm about 1kt on ground, 3-5kt 100m up, and 6-10kt a bit higher. It was one of those perfect autumn mornings you know the ones you only get about two of in a year, the air was clear, temperature was...well "Crisp" :-P After some weather measurements we found a launch site close from HQ and we started to rig the balloon! The excitement, the feelings, the smiles! You remember Christmas when you where a child and finally got to open that big box you had seen under the tree for weeks before Christmas. This was exactly like this but 10 times the feelings! The first thing I had planned for long to do was to make sure I know how to ignite the propane with a lighter if the burner would fail... I had done this many times as practise in my bigger balloons, but still, this was my first time ever flying a Single burner balloon.... A bit nervous.... But It worked like a charm...



Everything got as smooth as planned, cold air inflation, hot air inflation, and there it was...My new hopper! I had spent hours the night before to rig all my equipment to be hopper proof... that



Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

meaning of course strings to everything so it won't fall out... When all was set and done, I gave the balloon that extra burst with the burner (which didn't take much) and I was off the ground!

I just remembered that Erik (the seller of the hopper) had said, first time you fly maybe do some tethering before you free fly. Well too late for that! I was off! The silence, the amazement of being alone, up in the air, wiggling your feet and seeing the ground below you, without having a basket to lean on! I LOVE THIS! From nowhere a loud "WOHOOO" just slipped out, this was so cool!

I remembered that the 56A I had flown many years ago was very responsive... now I needed to try this out...this is a 42 so it should be as responsive too.

As I had flown for a few minutes I started to fumble with my camera I needed of course to document this... and as all the beautiful colours of the autumn leaves competed with each other in which tree could be more beautiful then the next I dropped focus for a bit too long.... Suddenly I was descending, and a bit fast I might add, under me was a big hard roof of a brand new building.... The panic that comes for a brief second before you turn the burner on and start automatically look for the double switch to get that extra power.... And then realise...oh crap...this is a single burner... but to my amazement just as easy as I had started to descend...I started to climb.... HOLY CRAP, THIS IS AWESOME!

This balloon is like an extension of my mind, when I think climb it does!

I wonder if it is as responsive when I pull the red line... I have to try... bam, down we go.... Burner burst...up we go! I LOVE THIS BALLON!

After figuring out how much fun and easy this is I started to enjoy the flight for real, for nearly 1hr 30mins I played around with this lovely aircraft and it was now time to land. Ok starting to become nervous again, how the hell do I land this... wind had picked up some and the direction changed around...hmm thermal...I know I need to land back first otherwise I'll probably end up breaking a leg or two...don't want to do that... I spotted a field, a bit small but what the hell I need to land, tank was on 20% so it was time.



Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

I pulled the rotation line, ok I'm in position...I pulled the red line firm...ok down we go... burner burst to soften the blow... and just as softly as I had started I was down on the ground again! Amazing!

This is the best flight I had ever done in a balloon! My first thought was I will never fly a big balloon again! That weekend ended up with one more flight, in perfect weather conditions! I'm now a hooked hopper enthusiast and will from now keep hopping and build up my hopper experience! Thanks for reading about my first hopper flight!

Daniel Sjökvist
Proud hopper owner and pilot of G-STBT

So that's the format, what happened on your first ever hop or interesting flight and how it felt compared to your expectations? Submissions to me please at steve.roake@ntlworld.com

Three Favourite Jpegs and why – By Shane Robinson

This month's three favourites and why are submitted by Shane Robinson and in his first submission Shane says , "This is one of my favourite Cloudhopper photos and shows my friend Mike Ehrler of Louisville, Kentucky in his home built hopper. At 91 years old, Mike is not only the oldest active pilot in the US (possibly the world) but can still put much younger pilots to shame flying into a target. He's a personal hero of mine, not only a great pilot but a great man"!



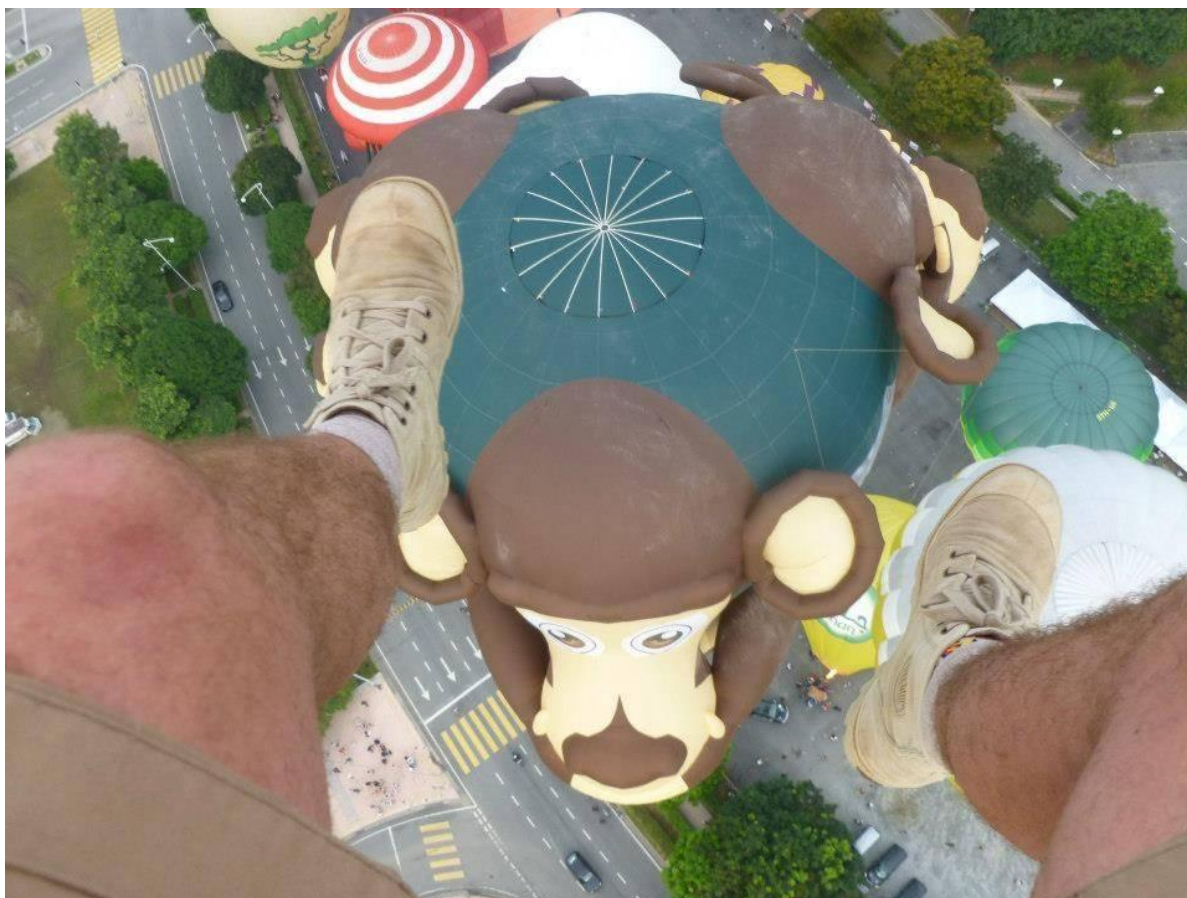


Cloudbopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

Shane's second photo is a different interpretation of the hopper aspect. This shot is by Belgian helicopter and balloon pilot Benoît Siméons and was taken in Putrajaya, Malaysia. He is flying above my special shape balloon, 3 Wise Monkeys.



And finally Shane's third and final submission is this one. Many thanks for these fine submissions.

Lisa and I flying Malcolm White and Pauline Baker's Duo Chair over Lough Key in Boyle, Ireland.



Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013



Contributions for future editions of my three favourites and why to steve.roake@ntlworld.com please. Do it today folks and share those memories.



Cloudbopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

4. Updates to the Website / Newsletter/ Topics of Interest

Cameron Hopper News- by Andy Austen(part 1)

Following on from last month's news of the new Cameron Hopper bottom end, Andy Austin has agreed to buy one with a few modifications .Here are his thoughts.

After five years away from cloud hopping I have decided to return, I completed more than 100hrs with my old Cameron Millennium and so after careful consideration and much looking around I have decided to buy another one.

Given my experience of the Millennium I specifically asked Cameron's for a couple of modifications, first of all I always used to strap my seat in the folded position when hot inflating in order to stop it getting in the way, my new seat now has small Velcro quick release straps. The second modification is to prevent wear and tear to the back of the seat, this used to occur where the wooden seat dragged when landing causing unsightly damage to the chair fabric, my new seat has a reinforced material to prevent this.

In addition to my requests the newer version has also been improved since my old one to include more seat padding, a valve to enable the gas flow to be isolated, bigger mirrors to allow the fuel gauge to be seen easier, a metal ring to allow the pilot to rotate at ease, a Velcro safety devise to stop the harness coming undone easily, a large storage pocket under the seat, a series of handy pockets to store igniters etc, quick release tank straps and small changes to the way that the harness is attached to the frame making the whole thing a lot more user friendly. Sadly the recent weather has prevented me from testing any of these new toys, as soon as the Autumn storms let up I will of course update you all with of my findings.

Andy Austin



Cloudbopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

5. Homebuilt section

Nothing to report on homebuilding this month!

6. Gallery Pages –

This section is the Editor's choice of new jpegs, visuals and older balloons of interest or alterations. If you know of a new or interesting hopper or Duo that hasn't featured in this section, then feel free to forward details of it with a suitable photograph to me using my normal email address.



Danny Sjukvist flying G-STBT.



Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013



Seen recently at Kirchberg G-GELI is Steve Burden's Lightweight Colt 31A and once was G-CDJI "Sloggi". Photo by Charlotte Fraser via Steve Burden.

Finally these two photos were sent to me by David Barker who says that it's Clotaire Castanier flying a Chaize balloon at Kasterlee, Belgium, in 1973. This was the first Belgium Hot air balloon meeting held at Kasterlee, over the 2nd and 3rd of June, organised by a Mr Durant who was a stamp collector. I flew a couple of times in Carousel G-AZOO. Clotaire was a founder of Chaize balloons together with Maurice Chaize. This was likely to have been the first balloon they made. From the photo it appears to have no registration number and may well never have been registered. Clotaire was in the French team for the 1973 World Championships. Not especially hard to get into the team if you were a pilot, there 4 were places in the team and only 4 French pilots at the time. Clotaire moved to the US soon after the Kasterlee meeting and until recently was running a balloon operation in Palm Springs



Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

California. Oh, I remember he got fined for speeding on the way up to the Kasterlee meeting...





Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

Manufacturer News / Events / Updates

Interestingly we have new for you of two proposed new events for next year which I'm sure both the organisers would appreciate swift feedback on.

Little (and Large) Solo Meet 2014

Saturday 31st May and Sunday 1st June 2014 at Sackville

Lodge Airfield, Riseley, MK441BS

Introduction

The first little (and Large) Solo Meet will be held at Sackville Lodge airfield, just north of Bedford. This privately owned airfield and flying club (www.sackvilleflyingclub.co.uk) is run by local farmer Tim Wilkinson. This event is being organised by Dave Such with support from Tim Wilkinson, Peter Gray and Barry Newman. The meet will be run as a friendly, no pressure and enjoyable event that allows the freedom to fly in a great area in all directions with friendly farmers. This is a Not for profit event and any surplus generated from the entry fees received in 2014 will be used to subsidise the entry fee for the following year's event.

Everyone is welcome but to fly your balloon, (Little or large) it must be flown solo! We will be offering great prizes for competitions, plus awarding the newly commissioned Derry Moore Trophy to the newest qualified pilot to free fly from the event. We encourage all those who love solo ballooning- whether that is in a Cloudhopper, a skychariot or in a basket- to attend, placing the emphasis on fun flying and socialising.

Event Information

- The entrance fee is £20 per balloon
- Free flights proposed for Friday 30th May (evening) for those arriving early enough,
- Saturday 31st May (morning and evening), and
- Sunday 1st June (morning).
- We will have refuelling facilities; propane cost will be announced at the first briefing.
- Food available throughout the event with catering provided by Tim and his team of helpers.



Cloudbopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

- Free camping and caravan pitches, (we'll provide limited Shower and toilet facilities).
- After each flight we ask that you give a customary gift (typically a bottle of wine) to the landowner/ farmer when you land.

Further updates will be sent via email to those who have registered for the event. All pilots who intend to fly at the event must have entered by completing a registration form, signed the declarations and paid the £20.00 entry fee.

Please note, the closing date for received entries is 15th May 2014.

Decision to fly

The final decision as to whether to cancel or restrict flying will be made just before each briefing.

Flying will only take place if the conditions are deemed suitable. Pilots are reminded that they are

To fly within the limits of their experience and that the information offered at briefings is given

In good faith and not as a permission to fly in a dangerous manner.

Insurance

All pilots must sign a declaration that they carry insurance, which meets current legal requirements.

Maps

Sackville Lodge is on OS map 153. A fully marked up centred map will be on display. Pilots are reminded to ensure they carry sufficient marked up maps for the flight they intend to make and to be aware of their position.

Other Issues

Dropping of parachutists is strictly forbidden.

It is your responsibility to ensure your balloon is operated in accordance with your balloon manufacturer's Minimum Landing Mass (The Minimum Landing Mass is defined as the minimum

mass of all of the balloon flight equipment, basket occupants and remaining fuel).

Location and Directions

Club House: N5215.72 W00028.75 GBOS TL 038637

Site entrance: N52 15.60 W00028.03 GBOS TL 047635

Sackville Farm is near the village of Riseley in Bedfordshire, 5 miles south east of Rushden.



Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

Directions:

From the A6 head towards Riseley Village, signposted Riseley Road. Once in the village, continue along the High Street passing the Fox and Hounds pub on your right.

Eventually you will come to a school on your right and a garage on your left.

Just after the garage you will see a tree lined private drive with a gate house.

Turn left here and follow the road along until you see a sign on the left (approx 1/3 mile) marked "Wilkinsons".

Turn here and follow the track along past the house called Sackville Lodge and through the farm yard.

After a short distance you will see the airfield on your left.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Little (and Large) Solo Meet 2014 at Sackville Lodge Airfield in May!!

To register your interest and request an entry form, please contact:

DaveSuch, Little (and Large) Solo Meet, Bramley Rise, Burrs Lane, Barkway, Hertfordshire, SG8 8EP. Tel: 01763 849287 Mob: 07989 988082 Email:

littleandlargemeet@btinternet.com

XLTA 9.5 Mick Murphy proposes another XLTA gathering

I have secured a location in Florida to host XLTA 9.5 or 10 depending on timing!! I need to determine how many people would be interested in attending XLTA Florida In March 2014 to beat the winter blues? Let me know the pilot plus crew numbers for planning purposes! Plans are currently under way and I would like you to forward to anyone who might be interested in attending. The format would be the same as other XLTA events just happening in a warmer climate in March earlier in the year! It would be the same format and price structure with a great friends and good flying and AWESOME FOOD! Please advise as I am working to finalized dates if you are interested in attending.

Thanks Mick Aer Blarney Balloons, LLC Mick Murphy Po Box 1528,

Litchfield, CT 06759-1528 203-910-4955 www.AerBlarney.com



Cloudhopper News

Issue Number 66

September / October 2013

Adverts / For Sale / Wanted section

Nothing currently being advertised here.

And Finally.

Membership is currently a healthy 455 members and numbers are Generally stable. All articles for inclusion in future issues will be gratefully received by your editor. Please forward them to steve.roake@ntlworld.com and 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.

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Issue 66 Sept-October 2013