



Issue Number 16

May 2007

Once again Hopper fans it is Newsletter time.

Without a doubt, had it not been for Graham Bell, there would not have been a newsletter this month. Single handedly he has saved the day by supplying two articles for inclusion without which I simply would have had no content to give you. I cannot sustain this periodical without content and I simply do not have enough of my own dribble to fill a worthy edition so as ever I ask each and everyone of you to send me in your contributions .They may be a flight you enjoyed, a story of an event you witnessed or even about a project you have partaken.



Another "tease" shot from my compatriot Chris Dobson who assists with the newsletter editing and formatting process of the Newsletter of his hopper G-CEGG .Would be nice to see it in the flesh in public Chris!

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**1. Ed Speak by Steve Roake** - Good Times ahead, but short term?

A crazy heading I guess, but you eternally optimistic editor is struggling to find content for the magazine .Yes long term we have Metz and the EuroHop to look forward to, and if the OMM goes to Italy in October then I for one will be hopping somewhere in the UK that weekend and inviting you all to join me wherever that is. I am going to work on this just in case Phil takes all the usual participants away so that for those of us who can't go for one reason or another, we will have a choice to still do something no matter how low key it may be. I need things to write about,

God knows how many times I have asked you all (300 nearly) and still I get the "Yes when I get around to it" brush off and nothing comes through my email box. For example as a point to prove my case to you all, Graham Philpot and I asked for feedback about the Solo Meet and whether or not Easter is the right time of year to host the event. ONE PERSON REPLIED! Peter Gray took the time to agree that Easter is the correct time of year and as it grows in stature so people will come to expect it as being on that weekend.

EuroHop is another event designed around you Guys to maximize the potential of a European style hopper meet with a weeks worth of flying in a great location with no land owner issues and simplicity of management of the event to keep it sweet and fun, and what do we get? Flipping Apathy from most of you and then a trickle of interest .Well, we are going and those who can't see the potential of this thing will ultimately lose out. So much hard work has been expelled by others for the cause and we all know it's going to be brilliant, but talk about flog a dead-horse! Come on Commit to it!

It's not often you hear me whinge, but people you make me want to scream some times! Now where is the valium!

On a separate note, we were all sad to hear of the passing of Ed Yost recently, whilst I never met the man myself, the significance of his contributions to ballooning alone means we at cloudhopper.org wish to pass on our condolences to his family and thank him for what he did for us all, sad indeed!

## 2, Features Section-

### Graham Bell reports from The Teotihuacán Rally in Mexico

Out of the blue in early February, I received an email from a Mexican pilot I met in Chihuahua last November, inviting me to a rally in Teotihuacan, near Mexico City. I have been to rallies in Mexico before, and their hospitality is second to none so I had no hesitation in accepting the invite, especially as several friends from Arizona and New Mexico were also going. I also remembered an article a couple of years ago, in Aerostat, about flying over the pyramids in Teotihuacan.



Chrispin Williams in the Kubicek Duo G-DNGA over a pyramid

On offer was free transport for the balloon from El Paso, which is about 400 miles from where my balloons are based, Free airfare from America for the pilot and a crew member, hotel room, propane, retrieve/chase truck and some meals. And as it turned out free

BEER. Our part of the deal was to fly passengers for the organizers; we were asked how many we would take,

And unlike other rallies in Mexico they did stay with the numbers that they were given. We were also told that if they hadn't turned up by the time we were ready to take off, don't wait.

As they were looking for more pilots, I invited Crispin Williams to come and fly my Duo Chariot (Blank Czech) whilst I would fly my Cameron 105 (Square One). The flying was to take place from Sunday through Wednesday, with glows on two evenings. This was to fit in with the celebrations for the Equinox (Wednesday)

We arrived Friday afternoon and were picked up at the airport and bused to the hotel.

Saturday morning about 5 Mexican balloons flew, so I went out to crew and get a feel for the area. The area is dominated by the 2000 year old Pyramid of the Sun (The 3rd largest in the world), and its associated park. We were asked not to land in the park area except in emergency, and to fly at least 200 feet above the ruins. In what turned out to be the prevailing wind direction, we flew over a mixture of town and small fields. The main crop appeared to be 3 to 4 foot high cactus, so landing in crop was not advisable, but the small fields that were clear created no real problem as the winds were generally very light.

If you overflew the town then there were larger fields available. In the afternoon we were driven to the launch site about 5 miles away, to unpack and refuel our balloons. We also met up with our crew and trucks. We were allocated an interpreter, as I speak no Spanish and the rest of the crew no English, but unfortunately he had to go college on Tuesday and Wednesday, but we coped.



The trucks had character; Crispin's was a Chevy of about 1958 vintage. Mine was a mid 70's Dodge. There were about 22 balloons, including 2 local hoppers and the Duo Chariot. The Mexican hoppers were showing British Registrations which have been cancelled by the CAA. Both were Lindstrands, one G-BVZB having a Mk 1 burner/frame with a very non standard seat. As the elevation of Teotihuacan is over 7000 ft, and temperatures over 12C/54F there is no way I could fly my hopper there unless I lose an amazing amount of weight. No chance!



Also participating was John Ninomiya, who on Sunday morning flew a Cluster balloon for over an hour, and then the next day flew his 90 and landed in an adjacent field. Also joining in the fun were a microlight, powered para glider and some parachutists (jumping from the Home Depot balloon) The flying was easy, with a lot of steerage, normally over 120 degrees which

meant that it was possible to fly over both the Pyramids (Sun and Moon) on the same flight. One day I managed to box back to the field and land in my launch square.

We flew all 4 mornings, but the glows were left to the sponsored Mexican balloons as the winds were marginal. The launch field and most landing sites were very dusty, although on Sunday Crispin landed on a nice grassy football pitch inside the Military camp (thanks for looking after my envelope Crispin). He also had a lot of extra crew to help him pack up!



On Monday Crispin was able to use the Duo Chariot to advantage, to take a wheelchair bound passenger to enjoy the delights of ballooning and the amazing scenery. Before we left the hotel we were offered coffee and pastries during the pilot briefing, and after flying and refueling, there was a large buffet breakfast back at the launch field with free water, soda and beer.

The two nights we were booked for a glow, the buffet was repeated in the evening at the launch field, otherwise it was the hotel buffet.

On Monday morning we were woken at 3.30am by a parade passing down the street outside the hotel with a band, and people setting off firecrackers.

The parade returned an hour later. We all had a great time, and I am really looking forward to returning next year.



G-DNGA in Downtown Mexico!

**NEW DUO CHARIOT AIRBORNE- by Graham Bell**

On Friday 4th May, in his home town of Roswell NM, Michael Glen of Tucson AZ made the maiden flight of his Duo Chariot, Elevation 2 It may be remembered that Michael, who is paralyzed

from the waist down, had his trailer and balloon stolen at the 2006 Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta. Although the trailer was eventually recovered, his balloon was not.

Just before Christmas, news of a T&C 56 Duo Chariot for sale appeared in the cloudhoppers Newsletter and Forum. Between them, Jonathan Dyer (JD) and Graham Bell purchased the balloon, JD keeping the envelope G-BVCN, and Graham having the Chariot on Michael's behalf.

With the Chariot safely in Arizona, work began on a rebuild of a Cameron O-65, N1997W, at Bob Romaneschi's Arizona Hotair Repair. The FAA eventually signed off the paperwork about midday on the 3rd leaving Michael with a 600 mile drive to get to Roswell in order to fly the next day at the Old Timers Rally organized by his father. The morning dawned calm, so at 7.15 Michael got airborne for a 55 minute flight.



On the Monday after He was in Albuquerque, at the Eugene Fields Elementary School for a demonstration, the school he should have been at the day his balloon was stolen. Michael has a

website, [www.rollingpilot.com](http://www.rollingpilot.com) <<http://www.rollingpilot.com/>>  
for those who wish to follow his progress.



Another reminder of the power of the forum to assist folks-Ed!

### **3. Updates from the Website / Newsletter**

Fresh from the crash of his hard drive, my friend and web making buddy Les has recovered the information that we thought was lost and so all the work on updating the website continues.

However all is not good for Les. Being an active man the other day he decided to go throw himself off his recreational bicycle whilst out breaking his collar bone in three places. Another set back to both Les and the progress on the site now ensues and whilst I know you all will wish him a speedy recovery , and a slower bike ride next time out(avoiding the rabbit hole that got him), another delay to the re launch will now be predictable. Keep the faith , but it will take time .

#### **4, Homebuilt section**

With Greg tidying up the final section of what has been a remarkable and thoroughly interesting story on building his hopper, and no other submissions in this section, for May the Homebuilt section is blank.

#### **5, Gallery Pages.**

Your Editor's right to submit new and older jpegs that just happen to take his fancy with a view of fluffing up the lack of content.



Now spending more of his retirement in Spain (and looking at the weather who can blame him), here is Tony Bubb in G-EECO the Lindstrand 25A.



A blast from the past and now residing in the BPG collection G-DHLZ is a Colt 31A Sky chariot.



G-ONCB, Lindstrand 31A is currently being re-registered with a change of owner. I could never deduce the significance of the personal registration? Answers to me please.

Final selection for this month's section is *G-MUTE* which is a Colt 31A Sky chariot and Currently Lives in Diss East Anglia.



If your hopper /Duo picture has yet to feature in this section of the Gallery pages, send me a jpeg of approx 600kb size for future inclusion. Usual address [Steve.roake@ntlworld.com](mailto:Steve.roake@ntlworld.com)

## 6, Manufacturer News /Events /Updates



News received from Cameron Balloons recently from Colin Wolstenholme regarding the long awaited new hopper project. "A new hopper bottom end is currently still in the re-design stage, and I estimate it will be August before we test the prototype the burner has been upgraded to include a dual pilot light system, and new fuel shut off. G-CEJT is a new lighter design Z-31 envelope, being a 16 gore configuration to reduce weight and cost. G-CEJT had its maiden flight in Mondovi at our dealer conference in March, flown by Mr Tom Sage no less !" says Colin.(We will no doubt give you more information once we get this directly but I understand the lighter envelope has still some way to go to achieve the weight reduction desired -Ed! )

Received from Mel Kirby recently were these jpegs about the Swiss Hopper fan featured in Cloudhopper News back in issue number 9 (and yes I did have to look to see which one it was).



Made by Jack Klein we only had one jpeg of the product, however following a recent visit to the country just after the Solo Meet ,several members reported seeing the product in action with favourable results .



So here in fuller detail is the fan utilising a new Honda motor the obvious conclusions are how small the product is compared with alternatives. Whilst we have no pricing details, I understand that following his visit, Jack returned with several sales and would suggest that anyone who has an interest in one of these contacts Jack directly using his email address [JKlein@bluewin.ch](mailto:JKlein@bluewin.ch)

.Perhaps we can then deduce the pricing structure.



My only quibble about small fans "full stop", is that the nearer to the ground they are , the more susceptible they are to being less efficient in longer grass which nullifies the usefulness of being portable in comparison with a stronger output fan.

### EuroHop News

Firstly let me apologise for all the recent cock ups with the place name. It is Chauvigny near to Poitiers in France and Barbara Reed must be pulling her hair out every time I get it wrong, so sorry for the confusion. What isn't in doubt is that it is happening and that for the duration we have a full list of events both pilot orientated and crew orientated . The full details, plus registration form etc and a list of accommodation is available directly from myself at [steve.roake@ntlworld.com](mailto:steve.roake@ntlworld.com) and that for £35-00 it represents fantastic value for money. Hardy souls like

me are camping on the airfield and you are most welcome to join my crew and me where the camping is FREE. Numbers are increasing for the event but it will be intimate and rewarding so come and share the experience.

## **7, For Sale /Wanted section**

Nothing new has come to the marketplace recently for second hand sale. Clearly there is a lack of second hand items of reasonable quality with the ever present requirement for hopper fans amongst the ever present list of desired items.

I believe that the LBL35A of Richard Seargent is still available in Switzerland (I have had no news to say it was sold). I believe the complete kit was up for about £5500, but try him on [Richard@lindstrand.ch](mailto:Richard@lindstrand.ch) for more info.

Other than that please send you items for sale to me for inclusion Yes, we ask for a donation for posting them should they sell, but this is to help further the newsletter and website and ultimately If you feel we have assisted you in selling them, then it is your way of giving back for the service, which is not charged as such.

Membership stands at 299 currently and still rising .thanks to all who contributed to this issue, you all know who you are!

## **And Finally**

I went last weekend to a new venue for a Balloon festival in the UK called Bowood House in Wiltshire not far from Chippenham. The venue and grounds were extraordinarily brilliant with the rear entrance to the estate being a road of 2.3miles Long!!!



This venue suits itself to hopping and whilst I failed to fly myself on the Friday evening, managed to capture the spirit of the place and Peter Dalby in *G-CCSI* the Cameron Z-42.





All articles for inclusion in future issues will be gratefully received by your editor. Please forward them to [info@cloudhoppers.org](mailto:info@cloudhoppers.org) and feedback good, bad or indifferent is

always welcome. Views aired by contributors may not be those of the Editor

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