



Cloudbopper News

Issue Number 69

February- March 2014

Welcome once again Hopper fans.

Following on from a decent January newsletter is always hard particularly when the months have been quiet and all it has done is rain so please be realistic in your expectations and when and if you can, please send me something to publish.

There is some content this edition and many thanks to those who have contributed but if you are looking for a carbon copy of last month's then sadly you will be mistaken.

Without dwelling, let's get on with what we have!

Steve Roake

1, Ed-Speak – Go Pro Time

Apologies if some of you are disappointed, having recommended the Mobius1080P camera, I had a change of heart thinking I'd always have the view that it's not quite a Go Pro; I decided to buy the one that everyone compares with and treat myself to a Hero 3 Black Edition. In the back of my mind was the sentiment that id always be saying that it's good but not quite the same. Now I'm looking forward to getting to grips with the new purchase and seeing the results. However I wasn't aware prior to buying, that the white and silver versions are the type 2 cameras in a type three body with a software upgrade.

2, Essential Extra's / Tech Talk-

This section of the newsletter is empty this month.

Contents

Ed Speak –

Sorry - I bought a Go Pro

Essential Extras

Empty

The Features

Section –

Brown shoes

rally

My interesting flight

Chris Dunkley again

Facebook

Roundup by

Dave Westlake

Nothing this month.

Manufacturer

News/Event

news

BBML inflation day

Little and large meet

Gallery

April Fool?



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3. The Features Section

The Brown Shoes Rally- By Paul Stumpf

To say that Brian Boland likes flying balloons is akin to implying that a fish likes water. Quite simply, he lives to fly balloons, and whilst closing in on his ten thousand hour balloon flying mark, virtually any excuse will do.

So my old pair of brown shoes accidentally left in Brian's Post Mills airport home provided him with a perfect excuse to devise a ballooning road trip plan. I felt bad that Brian would have to drive an hour and a half to bring my shoes back to me, but all too quickly the ballooning part of the plan unfolded. "Hey, why don't I bring your shoes down to Andover, and while I'm there, we can do a balloon flight." Brian suggested.



Well, I felt a bit guilty about him offering to drive all that way to bring back my ratty old brown shoes, which honestly weren't worth the cost of the gas (or the postage to mail them for that matter). So, I offered to meet him halfway. The lovely quintessentially Vermont village of Quechee was my suggestion, as it is a great little mountain valley ideally suited for ballooning on a crisp winter's day.

Brian quickly agreed, then proceeded to explain to me that we needed to invite a third balloon, so we could officially call our rendezvous a Balloon Meet. I guess the "two's company,



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three's a crowd" metaphor applies here, as Brian explained, two balloons a meet does not make, but three is the magic number.

A few calls were then made to see who could be enticed out into the frigid Vermont February weather to brave a balloon flight. Chris Ritland, a relatively new pilot from the area agreed to fill the third slot, thus officially establishing "meet" status (at least in Brian's mind).

The fateful morning turned out clear, calm and surprisingly comfortable for 10 degrees Fahrenheit. The three of us had a delightfully sunny calm flight, with a bit of adventure thrown in, as it did end up taking some high altitude manoeuvring and dancing with the clouds to make our way to a field-rich environment for landing.



I hope you enjoy some of our photography from the Brown Shoes Balloon Meet 2014. Who knows, I may just "accidentally" forget another personal article the next time I visit Brian...
Black Hat Balloon Meet anyone?



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All Photos by Paul Stumpf, Brian Boland, & Chris Ritland

4, My interesting flight / First Hops-

Hopping with dinosaurs-by Chris Dunkley

Spurred on by a desire to discover when I first flew a Cloudhopper I have found a couple of my missing logbooks whilst sorting out old OS maps and, co-incidentally, following a visit to the re-opening of the Oxford University Natural History Museum talk swung to a rather magical and, on the face of it, an unlikely flight I made from Crystal Palace. Now this is the sort of thing that gets treated with polite disbelief but assuredly it did happen and as luck would have it is recorded in my logbook. Back then I think we did actually tend to log most flights! The exact detail of what we were actually doing there escapes me but I think it was to support an American Football Series that Budweiser were sponsoring. We certainly spent a season going to these rather bizarre events where the cheerleaders and players always seemed to outnumber the fans. Some were better than others and on one occasion, at Fulham's ground if I recall, we ended up in a corporate suit with goose and draft Budvar imported from Czechoslovakia or whatever it was called then. Then there was a match at Chelmsford where the office, proud as punch, told us CBS would be turning up and wanted to do an interview. Two things of note happened there. As we watched two blokes nailed a shed together with the window removed in the top of the stand and then proceeded to hang a sign board proclaiming 'Chelmsford Broadcasting Service' across the front and it occurred to us that the interview was not going have the same world wide audience that HABC's Press Office was expecting then later, whilst tethering the mighty Budweiser Can and breaking a tether line which meant we ended up over the Stadium and had to cut free, which in itself wasn't too disastrous, but landing after a ten minute flight across housing estates and not being found for an hour wasn't brilliant. The upside was that we were away and homeward bound earlier than planned. Then there was a rubbish tip that we had to tether the Can on but that's another story.

Back to the dinosaurs. Now I remembered the flight but I hadn't realised that we made two flights that day. The



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Crystal Palace National Sports Centre was hosting a match between two American Teams I seem to think, hours trawling the wibbly wobbly hasn't helped mind, anyway it was part of the Budweiser season and we got there with a brief to tether the Can prior to the match on the site of the old Crystal Palace itself and during half time inflate the hopper in the arena. Well as it happened the morning was glorious and we arrived well early and decided that we ought to do a hop across the vast expanse of the Crystal Palace grounds and go and have breakfast. It's always best to get these things out the way so once we'd decided which way the wind was blowing ten minutes later G-BPFX the Budweiser Thunder 21 was up and away.



Now on the journey down I had said that the one thing I'd really like to do whilst we were there was to go and find the dinosaurs that lived in the lake. These days you only need go on Google Earth type in Crystal Place find the Stadium and immediately to the south and at the west end of the lake you will see them. Imagine that, seeing dinosaurs from space! Sorry, back to August 1989 when we used OS maps and as there was little or virtually no wind I thought I'd go up a bit and have a look round, like you do over densely populated areas. Do you know how many miles of houses and stuff there is around Crystal Palace and how high the TV Towers are? I was so gobsmacked taking in the view, picking out the pattern left by the remains of Crystal



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Palace itself, trying to spot the site of the old Crystal Palace High Level Station, exactly where the elusive dinosaurs were in the lakes and whether or not I could spot Auntie Marlene's house that I sort of forgot the intention to stay in the Park and now at a good 1000 foot I was drifting towards the Arena itself and away from the grassy area.



When the Great Exhibition finished in London's Hyde Park the Crystal Palace that housed it was dismantled and moved to Penge Common next to Sydenham Hill and re-opened in 1854 the local area soon becoming known as Crystal Palace. The Dinosaurs were commissioned in 1852 to be part of a hugely expensive and elaborate Garden and Park that would surround the substantially rebuilt and enlarged Crystal Palace. Joseph Paxton, the designer of the Palace was involved with the scheme and so got in Edward Milner, his former apprenticed gardener from Longleat, to sort the Park where amongst other things he designed an Italian Garden, a huge Maze and two spectacular 250 foot high fountains along with cascades fed by two huge water towers designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel after the first one collapsed. The London-based Italian sculptor Raffaele Monti set about designing and building the majority of the stonework for the fountains along with a wide variety of statues, urns and vases that were scattered about. Why Raffaele, famous for his fine veiled sculptures including 'The Veiled Vestal Virgin'

which featured in a Procol Harum single some years later when she left with 49 others and headed for the coast? Well he was



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a mate of the Duke of Devonshire who lived at Chatsworth House where Paxton had built the greenhouse that led to him winning the contract for the Crystal Palace in the first place. To top it off another luvvie, sculptor Benjamin Waterhouse Hawkins, was commissioned to create a lead mine, limestone cliff and supply 33 life-sized models of recently discovered dinosaurs and other extinct animals to adorn the park under the scientific direction of Sir Richard Owen, the main man in his day when it came to fossilised remains, which he knocked up just down the road in his Sydenham Studio. Hawkins was well-respected in the scientific world as he had mounted the first dinosaur skeleton in the world, a Hadrosaurus, to go on public display. Although by modern standards the portrayal of these fine creatures leaves a little to be desired you've got to bear in mind Benjamin was casting them, initially in concrete, then over a framework of steel and brick some six or seven years before Darwin published his theories. There is actually a bit of a myth that a slap up New Years Eve dinner was held inside the Iguanodon in 1853 but it turns out that it was inside the bottom half of the mould. It says so on the information board in the Park but I prefer the myth. Just as interesting is the Pneumatic Railway that served the Station they built but that's not for this story. It did seem for a while that the collection would decay to such an extent that it would be lost forever but in 1973 they were classed as Grade II listed buildings then they were extensively restored in 2002 before being finally upgraded to a Grade I listing in 2007 and before you ask why there isn't a T-Rex in residence, it's because he hadn't been discovered then.

Returning swiftly to the story, there we were about to depart the Park so a big handful of red line and I was dropping handsomely towards the middle of the pitch and off towards the Lake. Then I had this somewhat misguided idea that I was spot on for the monsters so would creep over the Stadium and trees beyond, say hello and plop down on the far side. All was going splendidly as I rounded out just above the stand still heading to where I imagined the creatures to be. Observation and intention were not connected; I could, and probably should, have simply landed inside the Stadium. I didn't and as I drifted gently across the roof of the stand and over the trees by the lake I was suddenly looking down on the dinosaurs in their full glory amongst the trees on the island and in the water. It was dreamlike, how I wished I'd had a camera. Dropping down even lower I turned right and actually ended up between the banks and trees just above them, it



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was brilliant. I have to say they did look convincing and truly wonderful. As I started to run out of lake I popped up a bit and tried to find a spot to land. No chance. Never mind, the winds were extremely light and somewhat variable on the deck with a bit of movement higher up. This is where some of the details get left out for legal reasons but by a bit of judicious whizzing up and down I ended up allegedly landing on a road junction near a bus stop whereupon a large red Routemaster pulled up the driver giving me a broad grin and a toot on the horn. I asked him if there was a café nearby. He laughed and pointed over my shoulder. We had a smashing breakfast during which I bored Greg to death recounting the adventurous flight and the fact that I had seen the dinosaurs like no-one else. He was, of course, most polite.

As planned the logbook shows we did tether the Budweiser Can G-BPFJ for nearly two hours prior to the game and then at half time put the hopper up on the pitch which upset some of the crowds as it blocked the view of the rather fit cheer-leaders jigging about so I took off but by this time the winds, such as they were, shoved me towards the Park and I ended up landing more or less on the spot I'd taken off from that morning, probably for the best. It had been quite a fine day especially as we'd managed to avoid having to watch any of the match and as there didn't appear to be a hostility stand we headed off for a well-deserved pint in the pub that we had spotted over the road from the café we had visited earlier. You know the thing that stands out more than anything else in my memory wasn't so much the incredible view of London sprawling ungainly to the north or the grand view I had of the historic site but it was the Ichthyosaurus which, when I floated over it was partially submerged. I don't really give a tuppenny that it isn't really a dinosaur. That sunny morning it was alive, it looked me in the eye, smiled and I swear it winked.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/simononly/3102572961/>

http://www.ihbc.org.uk/context_archive/75/dinosaurs/dinos.html

<http://www.victorianweb.org/sculpture/misc/hawkins1.html> thanks to

Jacqueline Baerjee for the picture of the dinosaurs.

For loads more pictures and other great stories visit the Chris Dunkley website at www.easyballoons.co.uk.



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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 – zero again!

This section of the newsletter is increasingly being overlooked and yet it's simple and easy to send in three photos of your choice with some simple prose of why the photos mean so much to you individually.

Please try and dig out some of these to share with the rest of our readers and send them in to me, your editor using the email shown below. Contributions for future editions of my three favourites and why to steve.roake@ntlworld.com please. Do it today folks and share those

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

A couple of balloon changes of ownership caught my eye this month, with the last unregistered Ultramagic H-42 from the red and white series c/n 42/05 finally getting bought unused. Built in 1996, this balloon only tethered at the famous four tether in a Dutch football stadium. Now registered as G-CIGA to Andrew Davidson of Ashby de la Zouch , hopefully it will now get seen soon.

The other one was an export of G-RAPP an old Cameron H-34 to America as N505XS. This balloon will now live out its days in Chesterfield Missouri with David Rapp.

Some of you may not be aware that there are databases of hopper details and I for one keep as up to date as possible with changes, so if you hear of changes of ownership please drop me a line.



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Another in our series of yesterday year Adverts

THUNDER SKY CHARIOT



**More Than One
Good Reason...**

new collapsible frame

More pilots are discovering that flying Sky Chariot offers a unique ballooning experience.

Lightweight and responsive, the Sky Chariot is both exhilarating and fun — yet simple and easy to fly.

Easy on the pocket too! The Sky Chariot costs less than any other production balloon available on the market today.

The new collapsible Chariot frame, means that the Sky Chariot is conveniently transportable, even in the smallest family car.

The Chariot Chair is generously padded for protection and comfort, whilst precision control rotation vents allow safe backward landings — everytime.



Sky Chariot is the no fuss balloon. Easy to launch, easy to pack away, with minimum crew. In every way it's a winner!

So syndicate member, individualist, commercial pilot, and sponsor, when considering your next balloon — think Sky Chariot.

After all, you've every good reason...

For further information
call Chris Kirby/Dick Wirth

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LONDON EC2A 4QS
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THUNDERCOLT



Period advert found by Dave Westlake from 1982



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Homebuilt section- Andy Booth

Heath Robinson is Born

I have built my own car, paraglider and balloon envelope, so I have decided to make my own balloon.

I mentioned this to Andy Elson at work one tea break and the next week he dropped a mini burner coil in my lap and said it would be a good start, so after a number of testing hours in the yard, I stopped the flame blowing it's self out or pulsing like a doodle bug by multiple jet changes. A rummaging through the grave yard at work, I mated magnum liquid pilot light to a needle valve and a ball blast valve.

I had the idea that when flying nicely along I will open the main ball valve then regulate the flame with the needle valve so to fly on simmering setting for better fuel efficiency.



Next came mounting the burner. I used an old crowning and then suspended my paraglider harness with short vee bridles so
Heath Robinson (HR) is born.



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Off to the garage to hang under the eaves to set everything up. I suspended a worthy to the crown ring with Kevlar cored line, next job to mate HR to G-BMKI and test fly.

A few weeks later in deepest Kent, Headcorn airfield was a bit breezy, but as I was committed to the mission, I eventually got BMKI stood up; the scoop took a bit of a beating as the flame is quite short. A bit more heat and I quickly reach buoyancy, checks complete so I pop off the quick release to gently climb away into a frosty clear sky.

I get to 500 feet and all is looking good.



I try out the simmer setting on the burner but can't dial it in very well. The view is great and I love sitting there under the power of my own creation. I after a while become aware the pilot light is spluttering quite a bit, with it being not far from my nose I have a fiddle with it. But no joy, times call it a day. A gentle decent to a landing beside a closed caravan site after 25 minute's airborne .My trusty crew are stood watching me from the gate. What a great adventure can't wait to fix the teething problems and have another go.

Well that was a few years ago G-MKI has now been sold to a chap in Europe. Almost as soon this was done. I realised it was a



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mistake, so I have started looking for a new envelope along the Annex 2 route. But not many 25 or 31's out there. So I am investigating building one at home.

I am constructing a new bottom end, still with the paraglider harness but using an old T&C burner that was bolted to a worthy with the big shoulder pads.

As I tell all My model ballooning friends , build the bottom end first , get it working well then weigh it , this gives us the ball park of what size envelope you want .

I recently flew an old Thunder 22 with a 60l tank on a frosty morning , this went very well with the consumption was around $\frac{1}{2}$ a l per minute, so the exact size is one of those debates for when the bottom end is working. There seems to be 3 big steps in the home build option from my view. (Remember I can sew well and I have already assembled a 70 size balloon)

1) What fabric, careful investigation has to be done here as I have just heard of several home builders in France that build balloons that have now gone porous in 2 years, when I was building paragliders in Oswestry. This degradation was not uncommon with cheap Asian fabric, or fabrics that were not right for the purpose.

2) Balloon design, this falls into the cosmetic and structural, there are some lumpy dodgy shaped round balloons out there.

3) Cutting, accurate and repeatable cutting is a must. A well cut balloon sewn together by an average seamstress will look fine , but a poorly cut balloon sewn together by a great seamstress will still look poor , this can lead to stress points and premature failure.

Balloon design, I m to talking to Cameron Balloons about using one of the old envelope designs that was not certified (so Annex 2 possible) or a scaled up model balloon pattern

I have been offered some Chinese fabric that, 40 OR 60g nylon per Sq m (All my past paragliding and ballooning has been with Nylon aircraft so why change?) I am running Strengths and UV degradation tests on this fabric at work. Early results are promising. That all said I really think that the base material is not that important but it is all about the type of coating. Look out there and see the old hard coated nylon balloons



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that have survived time and damp, it seems like they will last forever. Cameron's are being surprisingly helpful, so maybe they will get interested in kitting up balloons for the home builder. Watch this space, or drop me a line if you're interested.
pyrotab@gmail.com

5. 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.



This cheeky little photo caused a hoot on the facebook page as an early April fools day joke. The premise was she wanted to join , but didn't give her name. In fact it was Pauline Baker in a wig .



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Manufacturer News / Events / Updates

Just a quick reminder that Cameron Balloons have this Z-42 hopper envelope ready to go for purchase at £9275 or Euros 11,130. It's in their ready to go section of their website.



BBML Inflation day

Just a small reminder that the bi annual inflation day is happening at Pidley in Cambridgeshire in April on the 26th at the lakeside lodge golf course, and as ever there is bound to be some hopper content. If nothing else, some members are making the trip so why not join in and come and say Hello.

Stateside, I hear that there is going to be a hopper weekend in So-Cal being organised by Rick Kauffman. The dates are 10th and 11th of May and if you are interested in joining in the fun please contact Rick directly.



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Little (and Large) Solo Meet Update

Lots of interest has been shown in the Little (and Large) Solo meet being held at Sackville Airfield, Riseley, Bedfordshire over the weekend of 31st May - 1st June. Flying is also possible for the evening on Friday 30th May.

A good number of entry packs have been sent out to pilots requesting them and the event has been publicized in *BBAC's Pilot's Circular*, on the *BBAC Members Forum*, *Cloudboppers Facebook page* and over 60 pilots known to either own or operate a solo balloon or have an interest in solo ballooning have received an information flyer by email. The event should also be listed in the April edition of the BBAC's *Aerostat* magazine.

Completed entry forms are slowly coming in but we do need an indication of how many entries we are likely to receive to ensure there are adequate showers, toilets, etc.

To date, we have Colt 56A G-BTZY, Cameron N-31 G-BVFB, LBL 31A G-CDUJ, LBL 31A G-FFFT, LBL 31A G-ONCL, Ultramagic H-42 G-OOCH and Ultramagic H-31 G-UHOP entered with LBL 25A G-CBZJ, Thunder AX3-Sky Chariot G-BKBD and Ultramagic H-42 G-CIGA promising entries imminently.

One certainly for the spotters will be Andrew Davidson's newly purchased Ultramagic H-42 G-CIGA, which Andrew hopes will be able to attend (subject to obtaining its EASA C of A in time) and G-CIGA will join G-OOCH as two of four identical quadruplets.

In 1996, Ultramagic built four identical red, white and black H-42 envelopes that carried advertising banners for the opening of Amsterdam Arena in the Netherlands. Each of the four envelopes were never registered or had a Certificate of Airworthiness back in 1996 and were just inflated to display the advertising banners. G-OOCH is s/n 42/03, D-OOUM is s/n 42/04, G-CIGA is s/n 42/05 and D-OBRA is (or was) s/n 42/06.

Little (and Large) Solo meet will possibly be the first time any of the four envelopes have been inflated together.

Everyone is welcome but to fly your balloon – Little (or Large) – IT MUST BE FLOWN SOLO! The event is open to all and 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.

This event promises to be a lot of fun and to enter, email Dave directly for the entry pack at <mailto:littleandlargemeet@btinternet.com> and you can visit the event's Facebook page by searching **Little (and Large) Solo Meet**



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Adverts / For Sale / Wanted section

Nothing currently being advertised here. If you wish to advertise contact me directly.

And Finally.

Membership is currently a healthy 460 members and numbers are slowly rising once again. 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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