



Issue Number 44

October 2010

*Greetings Aeronauts.*

It's the day after the One Man Meet, and buoyed by the experience, I sit down to write the newsletter with renewed enthusiasm. I always get a buzz from these events, 2010 was pretty good by OMM standards, and both Steve Lacey and Peter Van Harten from Holland achieved 5 flights from every slot! Not as easy as it sounds, but very committed. A good crowd supported the event, and personally I had trials and tribulations to overcome (more of that later), but saw in the camaraderie of my fellow pilot friends, an ability to overcome issues and thanks to them all who attended ultimately flew.



*It's OMM time of year-jpeg by Sandy Mitchell*

The Mendips is an exceptional place to fly period- but in a hopper with 19 others is simply brilliant. Sociability is the name of the game and with plenty on offer we all had a damned fine time. In relative terms, the venue had some good, some bad points but with the idea of relocating in 2011, The Glencot Hotel in Wookey Hole Somerset has served us well, and hopefully 2011 will fulfil all the ingredients required, and attract people who felt Somerset was too far to travel. As with all the planning for One Man Meets, Phil Dunnington welcomes your input in deciding where to locate for the following year. If you have a strong desire to host the event in your region (and it fits his criteria), then indicate it to him for deliberation. I personally love the idea of changing region one year to next to get the various topographies and cultural differences and a sense of local customs and warmth of the welcomes we normally get.

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In this 44th edition I have for your reading the following choice subjects;

- 1, **Ed Speak**- Trials and Tribulations at the OMM
- 2, **Essential Extra's** - A decent basic tool kit
- 3, **The Features Section**-featuring the following submissions:
  - The OMM by Steve Roake
  - Phil Dunnington genius ensures "Have balloon will travel"
  - My Three favourites and why by Ernie Hartt (2<sup>nd</sup> time)
- 4, **Updates for the Newsletter/Website/ Forum talk**
  - Request for help please.
- 5, **Homebuilt Section**
- 6, **Gallery Pages**- Another mixed choice of hoppers, selected by your editor
- 7, **Manufacturer News / Events / Updates**

- OMM 2011 hints at Welshpool venue

## **8, For Sale /Wanted Section**

## **9, Last and not least.**

- Don't Miss this one! Its' a Gem!

## **1, Ed Speak by Steve Roake** - Editors Trials and tribulations

I headed down to the OMM this year hosted in Wookey Hole near Wells, Somerset optimistic that potentially a vast number of the potential five slots would be flown by me; in the end I achieved one slot! Arriving early enough for the Friday pm slot I was planning to fly and whilst the met wasn't fantastic it was clearly flyable as achieved by four of my colleagues. My first mishap of the weekend was to find having assembled for flight that I had total Piezo failure .No spark at all -nothing. Having flown within the last three weeks of now, this phenomenon was new to me. The traits were no spark, which when the burner block was taken into the hotel later (to theoretically dry out) returned all be it weakly, suggesting damp. Whilst some advocated still flying was possible with second source of ignition( which I always carry), my mind set wasn't right to fly with this fault, so I chose to ground myself and seek opinions and guidance from those around me who may have had similar troubles. Having cured the problem- the spark looked weakish.

At the evenings social Steve Burden had experienced exactly the same troubles and offered to look at my Piezo, and Colin Wolstenholme who has practically designed as many hoppers as anyone I know, said he too would bring his extensive tool kit along the following day and assist in getting me airborne again. (Note to oneself - get Metric Allen Keys to be in kit especially 3mm size- which I achieved during Saturday thanks to the local B&Q depot). This I have to say, played on my mind Friday evening -so if I wasn't myself people, I apologise.

At The Saturday morning briefing (with piezo still working), a detailed strip of the device revealed a broken Ceramic casing at the very base of the unit. Colin in his extensive spares had two replacement parts and so fitted with a new one - (Thanks Colin and Steve for your assistance, and to Ken Scott for offer of tools if necessary), I was now back to 100%. Whilst four flew, lack of local knowledge and stronger winds put me off flying this slot. During the day, (with his insistence of not paying for the part), I secured a recommended bottle of wine from a local French expert with which to thank Colin for his help.

Saturday pm slot was also deemed "fast" by my standards and so not flown, knowing that Sunday promised brilliant weather and the possibility of multiple flights. In fact Sunday morning brought tribulation number two for me. Whilst inflating for my flight I took my time on the initial inflation and then transferred my weight into the seat. During this process, the bottom of the envelope cooled enough to draw inwards. Waiting to refill the pressure and shape I failed to see (in my blind spot), the spinakering envelope and burnt two adjoining panels.

Swearing profusely, I deemed the balloon still fit to fly and carried on but calling my aerial activity quits after this flight and fuller inspection. So there you have it from my perspective. After the prize giving at the Queen Victoria Pub in Priddy some elected to fly the afternoon slot but I decided that wounded and kicking myself, I should return home to consider my failings and sort out the panel repairs asap.

As Richard Gahan reminded me later on facebook - fixing panels is a lot easier than burnt limbs and so all in all it could have been worse! I'm glad Wookey is now over, two years in a row I've put holes in my hopper there- and never anywhere else.

Steve Roake.

## 2, Essential Extra's- A Decent tool kit

One point which struck home over this year's OMM event is the necessity to have a good basic tool kit for when you go hopping. Whilst you hope never to have to use it, the experience showed me what was missing from my portable kit. The first item you need and was purchased over the weekend by myself is a set of small sized Allen Keys. Mine came from B&Q for a miserly £3 but were in action twice as Colin Wolstenholme borrowed them to assist with another problem blast valve over the event duration. Next you need a pair of normal pliers (from £3-50) and a set of circlip pliers (from £9) priced from an internet search. The final item that is a must is a combination Socket and Screwdriver set (from £18 on Amazon). So if you do the purchasing on a budget, the total for adequate coverage comes to only £33-50.

Surely an essential extra for any hopper pilot-as used by your editor!

## 3, The Features Section

### The 2010 One Man Meet-by Steve Roake

The Mendips in Somerset are a set of rolling hills which are perfect for hopper flyers, and travelling down to the Glencot Hotel Wookey near Wells (the event HQ); on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October in late summer sunshine thrills you at the thought of flying in the valley around Glastonbury. This year' weather looks favourable and upon arrival for the Friday afternoon slot with Bernie Williams as my crew for the event here from Manchester, the prospects are looking up already for a great weekend.

With other crews present including Peter Van Harten from Barneveld Holland we gathered for Phil Dunnington's first briefing. Whilst we are appraised of the extra points of concern

updating our maps, I'm still amazed how such a beautiful area remains S/A free compared to the horror story that I fly regularly in my home area, I'm told it's because the people here are laid back!

Phil Dunnington confirmed that after discussion, this was the 26<sup>th</sup> OMM and not the 29<sup>th</sup> as thought from the previous year. The Weather for Friday pm showed that Bristol Airport had at 600ft asl 330degrees at 7-10knots with a gradient wind of up to 25 knots. As we were in the lee of the hills we certainly had considerably less than the surface winds and with lower levels further downwind, there was confidence that lower was slower!



*A pair of sky hoppers- Peter Van Harten in PH-ZSL and Julia Dean inflating G-BWOY-jpeg by Sandy Mitchell.*

In the end four flew, initiated by Pete Dalby in G-CCSI the Ikea branded Cameron Z-42. Steve Lacey followed in G-NLCH his new Lindstrand 35A. Whilst I tried and failed to join the others (due

to my Piezo failure), Peter Van Harten and Tony Brown completed the flying contingent. Interestingly Steve Lacey later reported around 12 knots during the flight with a stand up landing whilst Tony Brown had 18.9 knots all throughout his flight including a fast landing.



*Whilst I got two holes in my hopper, Steve Lacey acquired a scorch on Friday night - jpeg by Mel Kirby.*

Friday evening's planned social was held at the Wookey Hole Pub in the middle of wookey itself and around 7-30pm most of those who had travelled that night met up for drinks and "Higher priced" eating. In conjunction with John Hilditch, Bernie and I decided the menu didn't float our boat. Having discussed the merits of my piezo and getting agreement to check it out after Saturday am briefing over a couple of sociable beers, we decided to seek sustenance elsewhere and with our accommodation for the weekend based in Glastonbury, picked a pub en-route for our feeding requirements. The Camelot pub in Poulsham had an extensive menu and a two for one offer and so we ate there joined by Tom Hilditch who had arrived late.

All too quickly, Saturday morning came around and with thermals on we assembled outside the cricket pavilion for the am weather briefing, delivered by our host Phil. Initially the forecast showed winds that precluded flying and no one indicated a willingness to throw themselves into the air. For me this was great- a chance to get the diagnosis on the stripped piezo and learn a bit more about the workings of the burner. With spark present and yet "weak", a strip down showed the reason why. The ceramic casing had broken at the bottom end (out of sight). Colin Wolstenholme's extensive spares box produced two replacement items both capable of doing the job and so he and Steve Burden (on a fleeting visit), got the job done and the craft airworthy again. During this process on the launch field, with copious pieball balloons launched, conditions had improved sufficiently to tempt some to fly. Steve Lacey was first away, followed by Peter Van Harten in his Sky 31-24, shortly followed by Julia in G-BWOY another Sky 31-24. Mike Evans concluded the flying quartet with G-BPUB his old trusty Cameron V-31. Having a balloon fit to fly, I still decided to remain on terra firma seeing fast upper winds and weird directional changes by those who flew which provoked thoughts of instability. Steve Lacey flew a steady track later



reporting 20 knots upstairs, whilst Julia had 9 knots lower level and achieved a 2 knot landing but caused amusement tracking initially right of the launch field, then appearing to go left and popping up again on a right directional track. After this entertainment, we ventured into Wells for breakfast and in search of a tool shop and a suitable off license to find a thank you gift for Colin who had refused money for the part used in fixing my piezo.

Sustained again, and having returned to base camp to disrobe from thermal attire, Bernie and I chose to climb the Glastonbury Tor whereby I phone app, I read gusting winds of 22knots at 12-00pm. With the weather set to improve. I doubted the winds would dissipate enough for the 3-30 afternoon briefing.

Returning to the Glencot Hotel for the afternoon brief and with nothing planned on the initial itinerary, a group of us had decided to be sociable back at the Camelot Pub that evening, but was surprised by Phil's announcement that there would be a gathering at a quirky pub, with limited menu and small space called the Hunters Rest a few miles north of Wookey. By this stage sixteen of us were committed to the Camelot so passed on this opportunity. The weather showed a Bristol Airport actual of 010/14 knots and gradient given as 030/ 19knots but certain of nice Sunday morning conditions. Whilst numbers had dramatically increased, once again only five chose to fly. Joining Steve Lacey, Peter van Harten, Pete Dalby and Tony Brown in the air would be Phil Dunnington in the modified Z-31 G-CBIH, whilst John Hilditch and Crew decided to tether G-BOYO Cameron Viva 20. The fascination of the afternoon was (as discussed elsewhere), Phil Dunnington's Cameron Z-31 modification. A very clever solution to a problem and much praise to Phil for coming up with the solution to his situation.

It was very satisfying having heard the story of this unique modification to see the craft drift off into the sky and to see

the organiser of an event able to partake himself having given time to ensure others had fun.

The evening social at the pub proved to be a big hit, with approximately sixteen people sitting down to dinner together. I'm sure the other participants at the Hunters Rest had a good time too, but we had diverse and varied discussions over lots of topics not all balloon orientated. All too soon we were filled up on food, rhetoric and fine ales, and it was time to get some shut eye because "Tomorrow we would be flying".

Sunday morning dawned, with 4 degrees air temp, and a ground frost on the launch field. Everyone was present to fly and the met forecast whilst not quite as good as expected, still encouraged flying with decent winds and all day availability of the launch field and generally constant winds all day. Phil gave us surface winds of 050 at 6knots and gradient winds of 060 at 10knots. QNH remained nicely placed at 1026. The best thing about the briefing was that we didn't have to hurry. There was no chance of serious deterioration in the wind speed so a leisurely preparation could be achieved and I decided to watch others go first, taking in the ambience. Seeing three of the five Sky Hoppers ever built in the air at the same time was a magical sight, with Tim Dudman bringing the third one along. Eventually space emerged whereby I could start preparation to fly. Everything went as predicted including the transition from horizontal to vertical in the hot burn phase. Where I was unfortunate was upon transition to the seat and buckling into the position I saw the lower section of the envelope go soggy. When I felt appropriate and safe to do so I put a small burn in to reinflate the envelope and pressurize it. Unfortunately there is a small area above and behind the burner block which is a blind spot and I was informed that I had indeed burnt two adjacent panels. Making a quick assessment on the damage, I opted to continue the flight.



*The view after the ridge- captured by John Hilditch.  
Note the mist- simply stunning!*

The view from just above the Mendip ridge was awesome. In front of me, over a distance of approximately 4-5 miles were 18 other hoppers dotted around. Interspaced in the lows were pockets of mist which looked like cotton wool against the morning sunrise. Deciding to concentrate on enjoying the flight and think about the damage later, I descended into the lee side of the hills where drainage winds were drifting the 18 hoppers and one ride balloon, reversing their tracks and heading North again. Getting down to 20 feet agl, I drifted amongst the others and whilst some seemed intent to finish their flights after 45 mins, I followed Julia Dean back up to the gradient trend and onward to the South.



*Welcome addition to the event was Andy Walker in the ex Richard Sergeant LBL 35A G-CFAW- jpeg Mel Kirby.*

It was one of those mornings where quite easily you could finish the tank dry, (it later transpired that both Julia and Pete Dalby had the same idea, with both flying for nearly 2 hours). Flying on gave me time to realise the joy that flying at the OMM brings out

the very best in communal flying and yet another surprise was yet to happen.

After an hour and a quarter, I reached the village of Westhay. Alerting the retrieve to my intention to land in a campsite, I tried for about ten minutes to get some left on the surface and into the field of choice, eventually deciding to pick a farmer's field where Dave Groombridge had already landed. Getting into the field, the landowner wandered over. He asked, "Would I like Tea or Coffee"? I can tell you - I certainly don't get a welcome like that in Surrey. I was shocked. In conversation with Nigel Appleton the local rides operator who had lent us his launch field for the weekend, he alluded to the laid back nature of the locals and this explained the lack of sensitive areas on the flying map. Everyone is chilled out apparently.

### Prize Giving



*Gathering for Prize Giving -Allie Dunnington jpeg*

The prize giving awards were at The Queen Victoria Pub in Priddy which was decked in sunshine when we got there. With great weather, Phil decided to hold the presentation outside, and after a prolonged wait for everyone to arrive the ceremony started with some great awards for those had earned them.

**The Prestigious Cock Up Trophy-** was held over, partly due to the trophy being delayed in returning from Graeme Houston and partly from Phil's insistence that nobody had mucked up that badly during the event.(Ed - I guess he hadn't heard of my exploits-ha ha)!

Second award was the **Fearless Footprint Trophy** which manifests itself in a pair of small detailed Wellies. This quite rightly was awarded to Marie Orchard who had recently had tremendous back problems and ill health and yet turned up to the event, tethered on the Sunday morning slot and then later free flew in G-BVRL.



*Seen accepting the award from our host is Marie Orchard- jpeg by Allie Dunnington.*

**The Paulo Contegiacomo award** is awarded to people who embody "The Spirit of Hopping" and following a spirited effort during the whole event including five out of five flights, this award was graciously received by Steve Lacey.



*Steve Lacey award winner - Allie Dunnington jpeg*

The Last award is potentially the most prestigious. This year the Wooden Tit award, after 25years needed replacing due to too many recipients names and no further room for more, and fortunately Bob Slade had built a second version which was displayed 95% finished.



The winner of the new award deserved it whole heartedly, having travelled from Holland to attend, and flying five slots and thoroughly immersing himself in the event. Peter van Hearten has vowed to return the award next year.

On behalf of all the participants, may I express our collective thanks to our hosts Phil and Allie Dunnington for all their collective efforts, the 25<sup>th</sup> One Man Meet was another success.

Steve Roake

### Phil Dunnington's Genius ensures "Have Balloon will Travel"

I expected some development news from Cameron Balloons at this year's OMM; half expecting Colin Wolstenholme to arrive with a new Cameron Hopper featuring a gimbaled burner block and a concept derived Envelope. Sadly on this front, I was to be disappointed, but there was innovation from Cameron balloons on display but driven by customer need (specifically those of Phil Dunnington), who needed to create a way he could travel internationally with his Z-31 hopper whilst complying with Airline needs to ensure luggage remains below the 30 kilo threshold. Thinking laterally Phil asked Cameron's to slit his envelope above the equator line so that it could be loaded in two parts under the threshold weight.

What drove Phil to ask for this was the desire to have an approved balloon capable of international transportation and yet retain its worldwide certification and therefore have no issues upon registering for events. The solution involves the use of 25 Maillon Rapide links which join to short load tapes in the lower section of the envelope and loops in the upper half of the envelope. The one piece rip line is still retained but is coiled into the upper half of the envelope for transportation purposes.

This is advantageous on the Demo coloured balloon as this Z type has the load tapes on the inside. The join is further enhanced with a fully encompassing Velcro strip that covers the outer two parts of the envelope.





*Maillon Rapide links and Velcro covers -jpeg by Steve Roake with help from my assistant Neil Roberts*

The join is further enhanced with a fully encompassing Velcro strip that covers the outer two parts of the envelope. Total weight increase of the envelope weight is 5kgs and now the lightweight 31K envelope weighs in at 52kgs all in. Split into new travel pouch bags, the two weigh 23/29kgs respectively.



*G-CBIH Cameron Z-31 with slight distortion around the Gold join Line- jpeg by Steve Roake*

As you can see from this pre-flight photo (first following modification), minimal visual difference is discernable. Phil expects assembly to take about 30mins with practise. The best thing about the modification is that it is now EASA approved and so can be applied to any Cameron Z- hopper.

Steve Roake

## Favourite Jpegs and why-Ernie Hartt returns with more.

In this fifteenth selection of my favourites and why, Ernie Hartt is back to select three more favourite photographs with reasons why he loves them.



Ernie says, "My second set of pictures for my three favourite pics all commemorate special occasions with Hoppers. The first picture (above), is of me and my wife Jenny at our Wedding reception balloon rally in April 1997. We were flying a Calvis Air sports 2 place hopper called "Sporty". This was built for a European Balloon School but never made it there. We were the Hare balloon for nearly 20 Hounds.



The second picture taken by my wife Jenny Wolf is of "The Bomber" at the Nightglow in Panguich Utah in June 2009. This was The Bomber's last inflation and probably the most fun I have ever had at a balloon glow. For almost twenty minutes I had a line of spectators having their pictures taken either stood next to me or sitting on my lap. (Ed- Bomber is dead now? Surely in the USA any hopper could be totally rebuilt. Is this a project for someone?).



Ernie's third and final photo was taken by Paul DeBerjois in Gallop New Mexico in December 2009. This was the first time Ernie got to fly his new cloudhopper named "Twist and Shout", at the Red Rocks Balloon rally. Paul got some great shots as Ernie was headed towards Church Rock.

**Now I may be biased, but I really like this section of the newsletter. However, like every other section of the newsletter, it lives or dies only with your contributions. If Ernie can find the time to contribute twice (many thanks), then it's about time some of you contribute for the first time. It's not hard to find three photos you like and why so send them in to me for future inclusion.**

Contributions for future editions of my three favourites and why to [steve.roake@ntlworld.com](mailto:steve.roake@ntlworld.com) please.

#### **4, Updates to the website / Newsletter/ Forum Topics**

Yes, I have a request .I'm always looking for ways to enhance the newsletter and website and this month I am requesting someone who can help with the look of the newsletter to contact me.

Visually, I would like this newsletter to have a softer look to the edges and appear more like a periodical when you read it. Even the Titles Could do with a 2010 makeover, but this is a field I know nothing about. Specifically what I would like is a template page into which I can add the content. So if anyone is feeling creative or can assist me in energising the look of the newsletter please could you contact me and perhaps I can send you a sample newsletter to play around with .Many thanks in advance .

#### **5, Homebuilt section**

Nothing again this month- you must all be busy constructing!

6. **Gallery Pages**-This section is the Editor's choice of new jpegs, visuals and older balloons of interest or alterations.



Sent in by Malcolm White, whilst on holiday in the Caribbean (nice), here he is seen at Albuquerque in Lindstrand 25A, N40287 (C/N 363 ex G-BWNW), which is called "Hang Time". Thanks for

the submission. There is potential for this balloon to revert to its former registration and return to Europe.



*News from Sandy Mitchell that the ex Germany based G-BUPH Colt 25A has been sold and reregistered in Lithuania as LY-BUP*

Another balloon seen at this year's One Man Meet and yet fairly rare these days was G-BXYI the Fairy Liquid Hopper. Following

some time in storage, it was flown on Sunday morning by its previous owner Dave Groombridge. The Cameron H-34 is seen here taking off with photo credit to Martin Freeston.





## 7, Manufacturer News / Events / Updates

### OMM 2011

Whilst in no way confirmed at the OMM this year, strong hints were dropped by Phil Dunnington that next year's OMM may be held at Welshpool in North Wales. Not only does the valley exhibit most of the desired attributes for the event, there is Welshpool Airfield site that could be fantastic as a base to fly from. Phil is now investigating whether or not sufficient Hotels are available to cater for our needs and whether local supplies of gas can be obtained. If you can assist with knowledge of this region or you have strong views for or against this proposal please forward these views to Phil Dunnington directly.

[phil@gonewiththewind.uk.com](mailto:phil@gonewiththewind.uk.com) Many thanks.

## 8, For Sale /Wanted section

### **Ultramagic H-42**



Ultramagic H-42 (Year of Manufacture: 1996), 0 hours flown, only 2 or 3 inflations. Possibility for attaching banners to envelope. **Price: € 5.500,- ex VAT.** Contact: Pieter **Kooistra** joure, The Netherlands Phone: +31 - (0) 513 - 417503E-mail: [kooistrapieter@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kooistrapieter@yahoo.co.uk)

Sounds like a bargain to me-Ed!

And Finally.



*They say a picture is worth a thousand words. Here is Colin Wolstenholme "introduced" to Tim Dudman's baby at the prize giving in Priddy. Colin is clearly enjoying the experience of passing on his hopper knowledge to a new generation!-jpeg Allie Dunnington.*

Membership is currently a healthy 425 members and despite a small dip, numbers are generally still rising. All articles for inclusion in future issues will be gratefully received by your editor. Please forward them to [steve.roake@ntlworld.com](mailto: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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