



Cloudbopper News

Issue Number 84

February / March 2016

Greetings and Hello again.

Starting what must be the smallest ever newsletter since I've started this, forgive me if the content doesn't fill you with joy, the reason I've done it is so that the trend of never going more than two months without news doesn't get stopped, but in a nutshell I've had no input of content from anyone so if this remains brief – you now know the reason why.

1, Ed-Speak – The Summer season is upon us

The clocks have sprung forward for spring and so now is the time we all traditionally wake up from our Winter Coma's and start flying again. There are plenty of events planned on both sides of the pond catering for hoppers and with a bit of luck some of you will send me some content. Don't be shy in sending content to your editor. The email address as ever is steve.roake33@gmail.com.

2, Essential Extras- A timely reminder

As we start to think about flying again, now is the time to do that last double check on your kit and see if it is all up and running ready for the new season. One item that shouldn't be overlooked is your Fire Extinguisher. Minimum we should all have is a one kg powder extinguisher, and having just changed mine which was ten years old, the cheapest place I've found to buy them is from Screwfix. So for the sake of £16 make sure yours is up to date because when push comes to shove, you may need it to work, so take a moment and see how "young" yours is. After all, it is an essential extra!

3, The Features Section

Only two items of real interest have happened in the last month so there are reports from the Traditional All Fools Easter Meet at Great Missenden Bucks and a tale about the re-emergence of some stolen property that came via an innocent email to me

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Little and large
Meet spaces
filling up
quickly.



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through the links of the website and hopefully the "owner" will get what they deserve.

The All Fools Easter Meet by Steve Roake.

This long running event dates back well into the 80's and was my introduction to ballooning when I went to the Black Horse Pub in Great Missenden Bucks in 1983. Therefore, I have an attachment to the event with fond memories and whilst in it's current guise of it is a shadow of its former self, traditionally a good splattering of balloon types get together over the Easter weekend and normally fly signalling the start of the ballooning season here in the UK.

In recent years Peter Gray has done the logistics of the event and so a brief phone call prior to the weekend revealed that some 20 envelopes had been entered (of all sizes) and that the first flying slot was scheduled for Good Friday afternoon. With the weather leading up to the event stunningly warm and balloon friendly, the shame of a deteriorating front over the public holiday meant that the Friday pm slot appeared to be the only flyable slot (as it worked out to be).

Having worked excessive hours leading up to the event I had no desire to join the fliers , even declining a chance to P1 a PUT at the event (thanks Tony Attwood for the offer), so I decided that my preferred mode of transport for the afternoon was two wheeled and the BMW K1300GT was rolled out of the garage with a view of mingling with whoever was there and with an alternative need to catch up with Simon Askey from Cameron's (to discuss the stolen goods situation- tying in a serial number on a block).

The forecast was for reasonable weather with 6-7 knots surface winds and up to 20 knots airborne and so I arrived to a very packed venue just in time for the afternoon briefing and approval for all to fly.

In hopper terms the only active participant was Simon Askey who along with wife Hannah and the two kids were supporting the event on a family day off -ballooning! Having hot footed it up from Bristol via the odd Geo cache to keep the younger elements of the family engaged, they flew the company demonstrator G-CIJJ (the lightweight O-31) at the event which had a large public following. The most interesting item of kit on display was a new Cameron Inflation fan which seemed pretty capable. Hopefully I can get you the full



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details for the next newsletter but it was very distinguishable by its unique stand and blade set up.



New Fan in action by Hannah Cameron

A total of 11 balloons flew the afternoon slot after which the weather turned as expected and no further aerial activity was possible.



Another view of the fan.

As you can see, your eagle eyed editor is always on the lookout for things of interest to the group and the fan appeared to inflate easily in conditions that tested some other balloonists.



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Simon later reported that he had a very enjoyable flight that reminded him of his training flight days.



Simon Askey departs the launch field in G-CIJJ

A tale of some Hot Property by Steve Roake

An interesting tale emerged the week leading up to the Easter Holiday break when suddenly out of the blue I received an email via a link from the website. An individual (who for obvious reasons can't be named), got in touch asking me could I help confirm some items that had come up in a "job lot" purchase from a local scrap yard were in fact parts of a hot air balloon? Knowing that in October 2013, Gary Madelin of Farnham had flown G-CDAD his co owned LBL 25A onto a local MOD range at Bramshott Common where someone had the Stolen the Bottom end, from what was being described



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It sounded as though part of the stolen goods were emerging. Trying to remain vague and non committed I asked for more information and if possible some photographs of the goods concerned.



Evidence photograph! note the filed area on the RHS frame where the serial number has been removed, but also the serial clearly evident on the bearing carrier.

These arrived confirming my suspicions and at this stage, I was convinced it was the stolen gear from 2013. The description was clearly of a cloudbopper burner assembly and so I wondered if it might be possible to nail this person as firstly he lived locally to the crime scene and secondly Lindstrand Mark 2 hopper bottom ends in my neck of the woods are rocking horse pooh rare with to my knowledge only three owned locally. I contacted the previous owners and spoke to the police to see if they were interested (they wanted proof). I was also mindful that the person handling these goods could be innocent and so with interest I noted how having now "found me", the level of interest in offloading the goods was now ramping up at an



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increasing rate. I arranged a date when I could go have a look at the items to confirm what they were (with my own agenda of trying to find serial numbers on them), having spoken to co owner Jeff Lawton and got the offending items serial number, and armed with this information I went to the owner's property to look at the things. Having looked at my own kit I knew where the serial numbers should be and was amazed when arriving at the home of the owner, to find, not to my surprise that the main serial numbers had been ground off the frame and block. However, there was a serial number still evident on the triangulated section that secures the bearings that I thought might indicate the build batch and so I took a secret photograph of this area for confirmation of proof. Next having returned home I checked mine on my equipment confirming my suspicions that they were different. I then informed the Police of my findings and spoke to Simon Askey of Cameron Balloons who was appearing that day at the All Fools Meet to confirm my idea that this should be enough to clearly identify the item as that from G-CDAD because the serials should have been logged during the build process and with Cameron Balloons having absorbed the rights to Lindstrand Hot Air Balloons Ltd, they should still have the ability to agree to my findings.

Now as we speak, the affair is in the hands of the police who I have to say, have been very indifferent to the whole affair, due to the passage of time. Let's hope they get a result and at least put off the next person who wants to nick your or my hopper.

Steve Roake

4, Homebuilding – Nothing in this section currently in build in the UK and nothing forwarded to me from abroad. Until some correspondence is received this area remains empty.

5, Interesting Photos.

The only item of note in the last month for this section comes in the form of Lindstrand 31A G-BXUH. The Baby Bell Hopper which resides in Germany came up for sale and details were passed on to me via Andy Austin for distribution via the Facebook page. As a complete kit, this was very desirable, and as we have said on many occasions previously, the market is very active and so proved the case once again. The item was snapped up within a few days with the new owner retaining it in Germany. Reiterating the point, that the right item , priced rightly will always sell quickly!



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Seen Here with a basket bottom end, G-BXUH was sold with a mark one Lindstrand Bottom end.

Another example of how second hand prices remain firm and demand still outstrips supply. It is strongly advised that should you come across second hand kit, you act swiftly to secure the purchase whilst indecision normally results in failure to secure.



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6. Gallery Pages –

Your editor's choice of new and interesting hoppers and duo's active in the world of ballooning.



Rare UK outing for G-BUPH LBL 25A at Oswestry photo by Richard Gahan, seen last weekend at the model balloon weekend in North Wales where it flew alongside G-LORY Airtour 31.



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Enjoying an Inflation after a considerable time in storage, G-BYNW Cameron H-34 is now ready for the flying season- photo by Mark Stelling.



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7, Event News

Little and Large Solo Meet 2016

At time of press there are only nine places left open for this event and to avoid disappointment it is suggested you act swiftly to secure your place in this annual fun event.

And Finally

Facebook membership continues to rise with the current level of 806 increasing by loads in the last month. Let's keep the trend going and aim for the 1000 mark.

Steve Roake

All articles for inclusion in future issues will be gratefully received by your editor. Please forward them to steve.roake33@gmail.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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