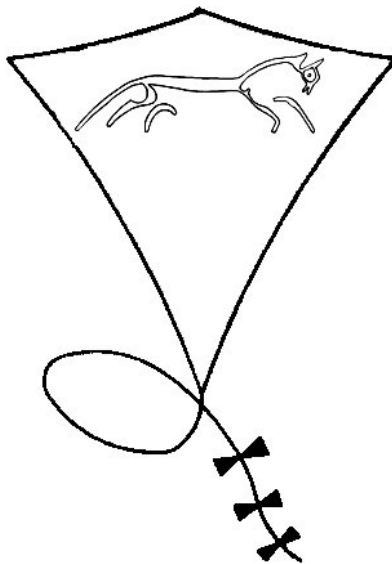


COWPAT HILL

Journal of the White Horse Kite Fliers

Autumn 2015 October-December



It been a very eventful few months for the club, dominated by the passing of our friend Phil. A range of tributes are contained here along with a few photos. There was a fantastic turn out of kiteflyers at his funeral and also at the scattering (exploding/vapourising better describes it) of his ashes over the jolly up field. He was sorely missed at the very pleasant and successful Fun Fly, and when my 5 year old daughter looked around and asked where he was it really brought it home.

See you at the AGM,

Andy

www.whkf.org.uk

info@whkf.org.uk

Diary Dates

October

- 11th Barbury Castle

November

- 8th Barbury Castle
- 22nd WHKF AGM, Holiday Inn Express, Swindon West, SN5 8UD 12.30 start

December

- 13th Barbury Castle
- 27th Barbury Castle Christmas Pudding Fly

Deadline for next issue of Cowpat Hill

31st December 2015

Robinson's Ramble

Well what a sad day it was when Janet and I got to hear about the death of Phil Scarfe, he had fought his illness with such braveness and I thought he was going to pull through it. Phil was a great guy and generous to a fault, in the early days of getting to know him, back in the late 80's early 90's when Janet and I had just got into kiting, he was the guy who would give you any help he could from his massive knowledge of kites; if you needed a pattern he would get it for you or if you had made a kite that would not fly as you thought it would he would look at it and tell you how to put it right, or he would take it home and do some mods on it then bring it back to the next meeting with it flying brilliantly. You have to remember in the late eighties the internet was in its infancy so plans for kites were mainly from books or magazines. Phil had loads and loads of both of these sources of information; he was an avid collector of kite plans. I told him in the early days that I would like a Hagaman Parafoil, he told me that he had been writing to Doug for some time, he had also had some correspondence with Domina Jalbert, who had come up with the plans for the very early Flowforms. He went on to make several large flowforms many for the club, such as the Alien & the Albatross; Phil gave it that name because as he said the making of it felt like an Albatross around his neck.

I know he was extremely proud to be one of the first members of the original BKFA & KSGB; he was also on the Committee of the reformed BKFA
As I said earlier a great Guy who will be sadly missed!

The AGM is not far away, 22nd November at the same venue as last year. With Arthur retiring after 12 years at the helm. This year we have an important vote to make in deciding who is going to lead the Club in the future. Please make sure you are there to help make this decision. I know I always go on about this but please bring a raffle prize and support the raffle, it helps to pay for the room and the buffet. Just to let you all know, **if you intend having breakfast at The Dockle before the AGM, the bridge leading to it will be closed until February, commencing from 9th November, diversion signs will be in place.**

Can it be true, WHKF organize an event and the sun shines all weekend! What a difference a bit of Sunshine makes to any event, the only downside was that with the "quiet" weather there was hardly any wind, it did blow a little more on Sunday. This must have been the best Fun-Fly so far, a great turnout of club members and members from visiting clubs. It was great that Linda Sanders was able to arrive a week before her Banner workshop, however, part of her luggage wasn't so keen to get here; it was still in Adelaide when she arrived at

Heathrow! It was the case with the banner kits, however it did get there by Saturday PM.

I must give special mention to Kevin Griffiths, who did the food all weekend, ably assisted by Dave Thompson. I wasn't there early enough for some of the special breakfasts but needless to say there were some good choices even Bucks Fizz! (No not that rubbish group from the 80's) thanks to everyone for a great Auction we raised some good money that will help to keep the event running in the future. I need to thank Sara & Dave Lyth for staying on until the Monday to wait for the Generator & Toilets to be collected. I received a phone call from Sara at about 11.30 to inform me that neither had been collected. Sara called the toilet company and generator hire company, only to be told by them that they wouldn't be collected until Tuesday, she explained that they had to leave soon and that it would just be left in the field, amazingly they didn't seem to care. I then started making frantic phone calls to them because I was responsible for it and I was 70 miles away, working! Luckily Neil came to the rescue and fetched it on a trailer and took it to his house where the genny company agreed to collect it from and then they still didn't collect it until Wednesday.

David Robinson

Sky Chat

It is with heavy heart I write this at the end of the kiting season, we have lost a long member of our Club and of the Kiting World in Phil "The Flames" Scarfe. Our thoughts go to Libby and his Family at these sad times. But we can look back at all the good things that Phil brought us, He had many strings to his bow and as a kite person we only saw part of him. We will all have memories of him in many different ways, maybe the way he helped with a problem with a particular kite or if you had an idea of making a kite that was different from the normal, he would point out where you might have problems with and possibly suggest an alternative way. He was always open for debate. He could upset some people with his views about the world but he never imposed or hectored you with them. Just good lively conversation.

There will always be something that you remember about Phil that will bring a smile to your face. I have one memory that still makes

me laugh; not smile. It was on a trip to Dieppe, I borrowed a Vauxhall Rascal van to be able to take as many kites we could. I had to pick up two young lads on route for a great adventure for them. Those lads were Andrew & Chris Rummings, a big thrill to be going to Dieppe Kite Festival. All's well except that the van had a cracked windscreen and would not idle, not a problem so off we go from Park Farm with a load of kites and two excited boys to pick up Phil en-route. This we duly did and loaded more kite and with the boys in the back we carried on to Martin's house to spend the night or should I say part of the night as we had to leave very early in the morning for the Newhaven Ferry. It was the night that turned out to be the eye opener for us, as you may know Phil suffered (and Libby from the results of) from Sleep Apnia. This was the first time that I had experienced it and the poor lads had never heard anything like it before and were frightened after the house shaking with the vibrations; then the silence before Phil started again. They came into us worried that Phil was in serious trouble. We calmed them down but I do not think they had very much sleep that night. Early morning we set off in a mini bus for the ferry and a very enjoyable festival and then back again. The journey back to Swindon via Reading in the early hours was achieved with much cursing when the engine in the little van stopped every time you took your foot off the accelerator and put the clutch in. Happy Days we will be thinking of you Phil.

Now back to the present, we have the AGM coming up next month and we would like to see you all there, along with your ideas and someone for Chairman. We all know that Arthur is stepping down this time and our thanks to him for all the hard work he has done for The Club under his stewardship. I personally thank him very much and to Anne for putting up with us all. At the same time my thanks to the rest of the committee for all their efforts this year especially Dave and Janet. See you all at the AGM.

Neil.

Tributes to Phil

On our first trip to England in 1995, we met so many kite people and Phil Scarfe was one of them. It all seems so long ago and yet it could be yesterday. Joining the White Horse Kite Flyers was such a great thing and then the journey began.

We flew over again and someone told me I should wear the Westport Windriders "Superman" shirt and cape. So the next morning I wore it to breakfast thinking that everyone in the B & B were kite flyers.....wrong. Out to the field we went and this man that I had met on our first trip walked up and handed me a kite bag and said, "this is for you". I could not believe that Phil Scarfe handed me a kite. It was a set of legs with my tattoos on them! He had copied them off a picture that someone had taken. With or without this gift we were on a trip to become good friends. Not because of the kite, but because of Phil, oh yes and his family. It wasn't the only kite he made for me, and they are all treasures in my kite bag. My Wallace and Gromit collection began to grow. Yes, and they are all tattooed on me.

The trips to England to be with the club and special times. Arriving in Weymouth and asking where Phil was, "he is in the Black Dog" along with the guys. Watching his amazing kites fly. Learning that he cut them out in Lucy's room on the floor and sewed them sitting on the edge of a bed, leaning over his sewing machine on his mothers small sewing kit stand, the fabric lining the room, along with books and plans.

He traveled with members of the White Horse group to go to festivals and work shops in Washington state, staying in our home and traveling with us.

Introducing him to other kite people, some of whom he knew all about by reading kite articles and books...he knew more about them than I did. He taught me alot about what he had read, seen or made. His sewing skills were amazing.

He called me once and wanted to know if we knew the guy that did pin stripping on cars and if so, could he draw him some flames, because he did not like the ones he had found. Of course we got him the flames and then low and behold "Phil the Flames" appeared. To this day the flame kites are a hot kite to own!

There were times when I would call and have the first few minutes to chat with Libby. Some of our calls were just chatter about what was going on and others were deep about his health issues or what finger I had a new joint put in. Sometimes he was looking for a book he couldn't find and

wanting to know if we could find it for him. Oh yes, could I please bring him some more special glue sticks over. I think the best thing he ever asked us to get for him was the pith helmet like our mail delivery people wore and then there were those great sun glasses that he found at the Washington State International Kite Festival.

He was the invited guest one year and I remember all of the flyers that had one of his kites flew in the main arena. What a tribute to Phil. Of course the pith helmet appeared and I'm sure you have all seen the picture, and yes it will hang in our home forever.

He taught at Fort Worden Kite Makers Conference and for many years he made a kite with the current years log on it. Everyone wanted to win his kite. His skill as a kite maker was a great gift that he shared.

For years we kidded that he was my lover, but as he would laugh and say "it's ok, nobody knows". I think really what we all know is Phil was my great friend and great many of you also have that privilege and what a privilege it is. My mind knows that he is gone, but I can not comprehend it in my heart or any part of my being that he left us too early.

It was a honor that I was able to attend his brilliant memorial service. How fortunate for us all that he was in our lives.

Our love goes out to Libby and Lucy and our Kite Family!
The good thing is Libby and I can have longer chats when I call.

Marla

I must of first met Phil in 1991 or 92, at Barbary Castle near Swindon. I had been inspired by Doug Hagman to make a parafoil so bought Jim Rowlands Soft Kites book, and made a small parafoil that flew like an anvil. In desperation I took it up to Barbary where Phil was quick to offer his help, and concentrated on helping me improve its flight, kindly ignoring the despicable workmanship. From that point on he was my go-to man for plans, ideas and friendly criticism. At that stage Phil was making traditional parafoils as well as flexifoil variants and also had made a 4 line powerkite foil (way before they became popular). In those days before the internet Phil was well plugged into the kiting scene both here in the UK and in the US, by subscribing to a wide range of magazines and obscure newsletters. He acted as a hub spreading these ideas out. After traditional parafoils his designs evolved taking on flowform aspects. Phil had a bit of an instinct for spotting things that would work. Whether this be borrowing profiles from Sputnik power kites for his single line soft kites, or making cheap ultraflex flexi spars

out of fishing rods. Phil's other talent was in graphic design. His well known flames foils and sparred kites were probably the pinnacle of this, but his aliens, stripes and internal coloured profiles all had serious sky impact. And all these excellent kites were made in a small bedroom packed with kite stuff, and marked out on the floor. From the size and his prolificness it was easy to think he had a large workshop.

When I was at university in Reading, Phil and Libby provided many meals and a homely welcome which as a disorganised student I was always very grateful for. These were often on a Sunday in the winter after kiteflying at Barbary, or at Maidensgrove/ Pinkneys Green with the Chiltern Kite Group. I particularly remember cracking roast dinners normally accompanied by a compulsory can of special brew, or two then retiring to the kite room to pore over books, plans or some gadget or material Phil had sourced from the US. I never knew which was the safer route home after, a wobbly cycle ride or a lift from Phil.

I once made a kite buggy and needed some threaded inserts to join the wheels to the frame. Phil was more than happy to supply these, and they were works of art (and a of course a perfect interference fit). He enjoyed doing a "homey" at work when he could. I remember him vividly telling me that he felt his metal working skills were "locked up" each night at the end of work, and he despised this. I think his drive to be creative and so prolific with kites was in part driven by this.

I haven't completed a kite since Phil has died, but have one nearly done. It suddenly occurred to me that for nearly every kite I have made he has given it the once over at Barbary, Weymouth or Bristol, a bit of praise here, a few pointers for next time there. Whilst the club has lots of great people who can do this, it will be very strange to be without Phil's particular seal of approval (or not!) in the future and I will miss him terribly.

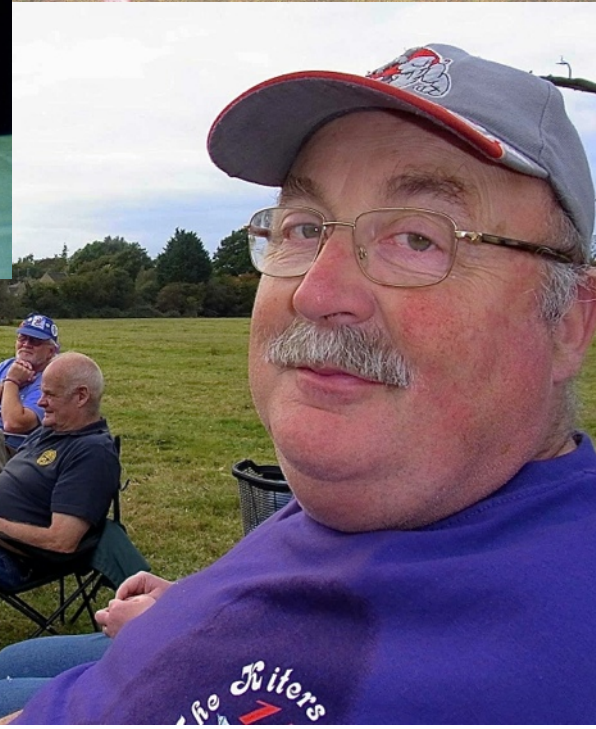
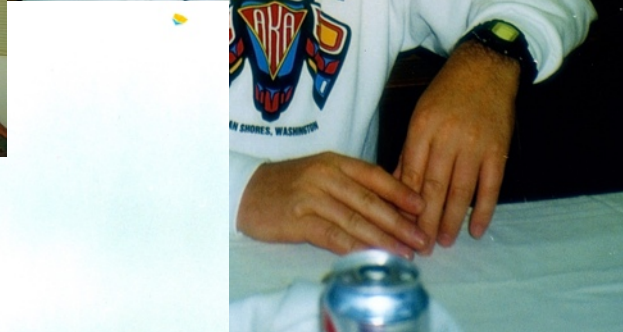
As everyone knew Phil had lots of interests. Cricket, UFOs, Astronomy, Knee surf boards ("you need a "Spoon" Andrew, I have the plans....") Metal working, Hot Rods, Trade unions, America and of course kites. The following Roald Dahl quote that I happened to stumble upon today seemed very apt in how he looked at his interests and conducted his life;

"I began to realize how important it was to be an enthusiast in life. If you are interested in something, no matter what it is, go at it at full speed ahead. Embrace it with both arms, hug it, love it, and above all become passionate about it. Lukewarm is no good. Hot is no good either. White hot and passionate is the only thing to be."

Andy

Our friend Phil





I remember talking to Phil over breakfast in Dieppe in 2012 (the one before the last one) where he offered all and any help with kite building. When I queried him about giving away all his "secrets", he likened it to chefs telling you all their cookery secrets, because it doesn't matter how well you follow the recipe, you'll never make it as well as they could. That wasn't boasting, just a statement of fact, and he was always very generous with his advice.

Keith very kindly used this memory when speaking at Phil's funeral as it does sum Phil up. If you were prepared to listen, Phil was happy to tell you what he knew.

David Johnson

A note on the pictures....

I'd like to thank Doug Ralf and Keith for contributing pictures (along with a couple from me). Rather than being truly representative of Phil's long membership of the club they are what was easily available, however they include most of the classic outfits. One that should be explained is Phil on the toilet. He specifically asked Doug to take this on our trip to America in 1998. Apparently this was Phil's dream toilet, baseball on the TV and beer available. Also from the same trip is Phil in Marla's kitchen in his 3 piece suit. We were off to dinner somewhere with Marla and Ron and according to Phil an Englishman always dresses for dinner. The yellow and pink flame parafoil i believe is the first flame foil he ever made, again from 1998.

All change at Portsmouth and Bristol

This may not be exactly about Phil but he came to Portsmouth and spent the day with us and was expecting to be with us at Bristol but sadly never made it.

When it was announced earlier in the year that the date of Portsmouth Kite Festival was changing there was some consternation amongst kite flyers and some asked if this was the death knell for another festival. KSGB reassured us that this was not the case and although the council still liked the event they can make more money over the bank holiday with a pop concert. Having looked at the weather I think we should be grateful to them.

As far as the field goes I felt that we were much better off as there was no fun-fair or circus so there was all that extra space and the sound stage was well out of the way. On the down side is the fact that there was nothing on the Monday so a shortened event and OH! how I missed the dog with the waggiest tail.

After a very wet Friday journey everyone was delighted with the displays on Saturday but sadly very low winds on Sunday meant there was very little in the air.

A very big plus was the fact that parking was much easier near the hall and there was much more space at breakfast. Although traffic was still heavy it was not as bad as the bank holiday weekend. Perhaps this resulted in fewer spectators than usual but to my inexperienced eye this was not the case.

My feeling is "Stick with it" this was a great weekend.

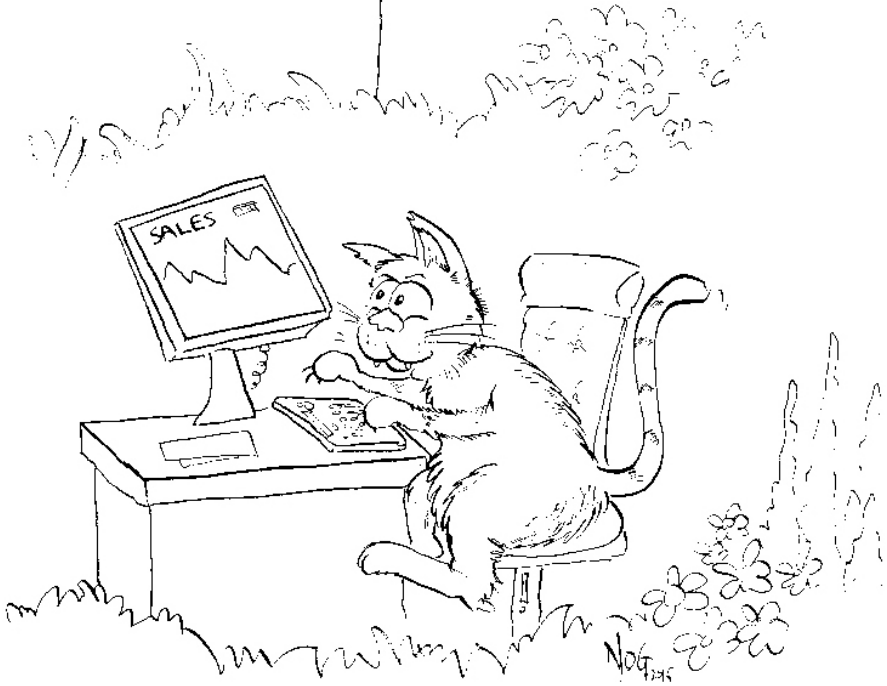
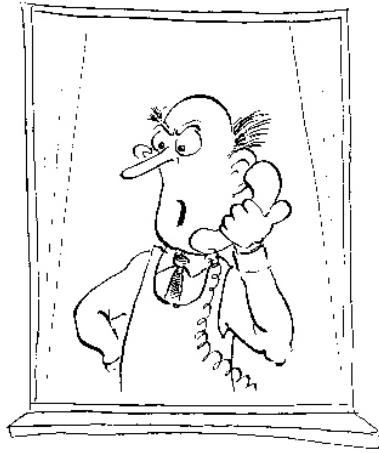
The other major change to a long running event was the location of Bristol Kite Festival moving from Ashton Court to Durnham Down. Once again I think that this was a good move and judging by the number of spectators there on the Saturday a lot of people agreed with the sentiment. It was difficult to get near most of the stalls, of which there was an abundance, and you really needed to be hungry to queue for burgers or ice-cream. I hear that Sunday wasn't as busy due to the weather. I must admit that I looked at the forecast and stayed at home.

With Circular Road shut to traffic and used for flyers parking you didn't have too far to carry your gear and the camp site was again easy access from the road and close to the flying arenas. There seemed to be plenty of space for those who wanted to fly and there is a glorious view across the Avon Gorge from the end of the field. One thing that was noticeably absent was half a mile of pot holed dust bath to test you suspension.

Many thanks to the organisers of both events and we look forward to many more years of the same.

Arthur

Miss Higgins?
Your cat's doing his
business in my
garden again!!



That was a week that was.

It all started on Thursday when I checked the expected time of arrival of Linda's flight. The site I was using said it was going to be 20 minutes early but cross checking with another site they said 50 minutes. So in to the car and dash to Heathrow to find that the first one was correct so had half hour to lose. After about an hour and a half with no sign of her I start to wonder but then the text "Long queues in immigration" followed half hour later by "I'm here but one of my cases is not". Eventually there she is travel worn, one suit case, but still smiling. Back home something to eat, a shower and sleep.

Friday it was to be a walk, found on the web, at Chipping Sodbury, got there, found the Church but where is the lychgate. Check the instructions and find the walk actually starts in Old Sodbury. So it's back in the car and eventually have a very pleasant hour and half walk before returning to Swindon and dropping Linda with Janet, another cup of tea and then Lechlade ready for the Fun-Fly.

What a great weekend that was Great place, good friends and good grub thanks to the hard work by Kevin. Thanks to all those who worked so hard to put on this event. A bit of a break while Linda spends a couple of nights with Di and Don. Not content to take it easy she manages to sing solos in Winchester Cathedral.

Come Tuesday morning it all starts again, this time taking Ann with us we all meet up at a garden centre near J16 of M4 and transfer Linda to our car and following her request "to see some Welsh Castles" we head across Severn bridge to Chepstow Castle, Cardiff Castle, Castle Coch and the Sultan Earth Sculpture before stopping overnight in Caerphilly. For good measure we walked in to town for our evening meal. Wednesday starts with a walk round the outside of Caerphilly Castle, then on to White Castle and Raglan Castle where we have coffee and later a cream tea.

OK so we have seen castles so we head for Warwick taking in the Monnow Bridge on the way staying in a fifteenth century Tudor house. With some doors very low you have to watch out for very low door fittings that can hit you in the eye. Thursday morning includes going in, up, down and round Warwick Castle then the short trip to Stratford to have a quick look at where Shakespeare was born and buried and, back to Swindon.

Friday I was glad of a rest but Linda didn't slow down as she had to meet her cousin "Soos" who had travelled down from Morecombe for the weekend and they go out sightseeing with Janet before sorting out bits for the workshop.

What a great event that was, all the preparation put in to it by Linda meant it ran like clockwork with several people completing fairly complex banners in the time. I got the feeling that one or two wished they had done less complex

ones but we have seen several of these being displayed since. Probably the biggest complaint was the quantity of food with pizzas for lunch on Saturday followed by the traditional Chinese meal in the evening, Sunday Breakfast in the Dockle, jacket potatoes with chilli for lunch followed by a wonderful fruit sponge prepared by our Polish friends. Again many thanks to those involved in the organisation.

Linda's flight home was not until 10PM Monday so just in case she hadn't had her fill of Castles Dave and Janet took her to have a walk round the outside of Windsor Castle and then in to London to visit The Tower which we had only seen from the outside on her last visit. Sadly I understand that the beautiful weather that Linda had sent in advance for the previous week she had sent back home, so it was a soggy farewell at Heathrow.

A trip that those of us involved will not forget for some time. Linda has my admiration for keeping going through it all, happy and smiling with only the odd problem of missing luggage and Skype not working that she took in her stride. Perhaps she slept through all 30+ hours of her travel home. I know I was glad of my couple of days off during the ten days and the crashed out for two afterwards.

Arthur

Re a comment in earlier issue.

Following an article in a previous issue of this magazine the following issue has been raised. It has been our practice at Fun Flies in the past to post a notice at the entrance warning the public that although they are welcome to come in and see the kites, they do so at their own risk. It has been pointed out that this is not worth the paper it is written on and may even be counterproductive as it could be construed as an invitation to come in and we are not as concerned with their safety as we are in reality. Also if they are coming in, what is the point of having insurance? It is for 3rd party liability that covers the fliers against accidents involving the public. OK so it does also cover for other fliers, but they should know better.

It is suggested that a more suitable notice would be along the lines of:-

"This is a private event organised by White Horse Kite Flyers" If you want to find out more about kites or The Club please speak to one of our members or visit our web site at:- www.whkf.org.uk"

I would suggest that this is followed by a warning such as:-

"Please note kites can be very dangerous, some are large and pull very hard whilst others may be very fast moving. Be aware not only of kites in the air but lines across the ground and their associated anchors."

Arthur

Kevin's Fun Fly Café

Hi guys well there we go another Fun Fly done and dusted for another year, great weather and even a bit of wind on Sunday (most unusual) lol, it was great to see so many of you there, This was a sad time for us with the loss of a valued committee member Phil The Flame but I think he'd have been proud of the event and a big thank you to all who had a Phil The Flame Burger. Phil always like good food especially if there was a chance it could be dribbled down himself!

Here's a quick little dish to help us though the cold months ahead

Stuffed Chicken

Open out a chicken breast between 2 sheets of baking paper gently batter it out so it's an even size all over lay 2-3 slices of streaky bacon and place the chicken on to it in the middle place a couple of slices of cheese of your choice add a sun dried tomato and a couple of basil leaves wrap up in the bacon and a piece of baking paper place in an oven at 200 degrees and baked for about 30 mins or until the chicken is cooked, enjoy with some buttered new potatoes and maybe some steamed French beans

For our vegetarian friends add the same filling to a cored out courgette or pepper and bake until tender.

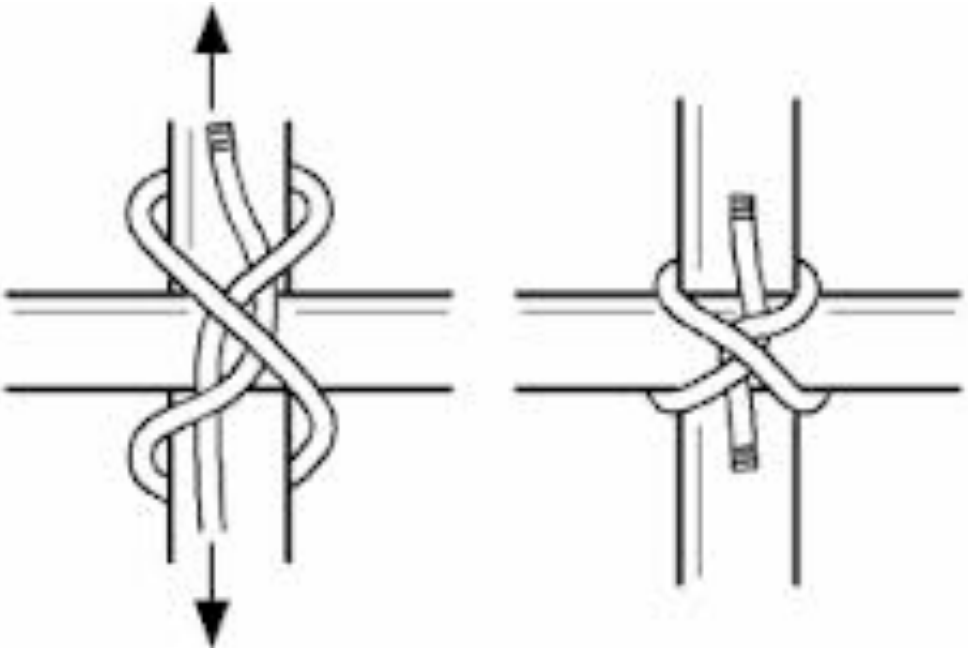
Thanks for the enjoyable weekend and hope to see you all soon.

Kevin

A knot you need to know!

At the fun fly I was struggling with tying my new feather kite together. John Browning looked in and suggested a rather fine knot. This is called the Transom Knot and is rather wonderful. It is designed to join two spars at right angles to each other and is quick and strong. John uses rows of them on the back of his paper and bamboo kites. Neater, faster and using less cord than lashing and frapping. Thanks John!

Andy



WHITE HORSE KITE FLYERS CODE OF PRACTICE

Always fly safely.

Always be considerate to others using the same area be it noise or physical intrusion into their space.

Always fly legally taking in to account all national, local and CAA restrictions and by-laws.

Never fly at a height of more than 60m above ground level, in the UK unless a CAA clearance is in force (as at kite festivals). If you don't know what the clearance is ASK!

Never fly a kite in wet or stormy weather. Always try and keep your line dry.

Never fly a kite near power lines, transmission towers or aerials.

Never fly near Motorways, roads, car parks or railways.

Never fly near airfields.

Never fly a kite with anything metallic in the line.

When tethering a kite ensure that the ground anchor is suitable (see BKFA report 6 June 06).

When flying large kites always use a brake line.

Always wear good quality gloves when flying large powerful kites.

Always give priority to domestic animals particularly if they are showing signs of distress.

Always clear up after yourself, especially lines, tails and bits of plastic that could trap, choke or injure domestic or wild animals. If you see dangerous rubbish left by others clear it up or report it.

Never fly near those kite-eating trees.

NOTE: The use of traction kiting at Barbury Castle is forbidden by law.

Finally remember.....your kites can get really quite lonely up high in the sky; just occasionally, look up and give them a SMILE. It will make you feel better too.

WHITE HORSE KITE FLYERS meet at Barbury Castle Country Park on the second Sunday of each month.

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Subscription AGM to AGM £16 (including 4 issues of Cowpat Hill and kiteflying insurance at club approved events) £5 for each additional family member. Personal Liability Insurance £11 per person.

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