

# COWPAT HILL

Journal of the White Horse Kite Flyers  
Autumn 2024 October - December



# Dates for your diary 2024

## October

- Sunday 13th - Club fly-in at Barbury Castle
- Sunday 27th - Indoor flyin Chichester High School 11am -2pm

## November

- Sunday 10th - Club fly-in at Barbury Castle
- **Sunday 17th - WHKF AGM Basepoint Business Centre, Swindon**

## December

- Sunday 8th - Club fly-in at Barbury Castle

Subscriptions for new members for 12 months from December 1st 2024 £20 (including 4 issues of Cowpat Hill and kite flying insurance at approved events). £7 for each additional family member. Renewals will be reviewed annually. Personal Liability Insurance to be advised.

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## **A bit from the Editor**

Hi Folks,

Many thanks to all the contributors to this issue. It's great to get an event report and a few pictures. The funfly was good and well attended and with reasonable to good weather. I didn't get to St Annes but there really seems to be a buzz about this festival, and once the dates are announced I'll be booking some accommodation. If you are not convinced have a look at some of the videos on line - looks world class.

As always I'm open to any picture and words, for those of us that cant get to many events its always good to see what went on and what people are flying.

See you at the AGM - Sunday 17th November at Basepoint Business Centre, Swindon

Andy

*Our club has had a long association with what we know as the Science Museum site at Wroughton. It's been closed to the public for a long time however, if you are quick enough (and have £27.50) you can go on a guided tour of the new Hawking building and see some of the gems. Here's the latest info....*

## NATIONAL COLLECTIONS CENTRE

The National Collections Centre cares for hundreds of thousands of objects in the Science Museum Group Collection. In 2018, we embarked on an ambitious project to create a new purpose-built facility to transform our care for the collection and enable people to explore much more of it than ever before. Around 300,000 historic objects have now been carefully moved to this sector-leading facility, bringing together these historic objects under one roof for the first time for conservation, study and public access. Regular public tours of this building will begin in late 2024, allowing members of the public to get up close to our world-class collection of objects from science, technology, engineering, medicine, transport and media. For more info go to [www.scienceinnovationpark.org.uk](http://www.scienceinnovationpark.org.uk)

## **From One Extreme To The Other**

During the first half of September I attended two very different kite events. We were contacted earlier in the year by Jess from a community art group in Maidenhead. They have been running a family kite day at Boyn Grove Park in Maidenhead for a number of years and wondered if we would be able to come and fly some larger kites to add to the display. After some email toing and froing, looking at aerial photographs of the site etc, Arthur & I decided it might be possible although the field looked quite small. On the day it was Sunny but with low wind, thunderstorms were also forecast but fortunately didn't materialize. Arthur, Martin Croxton, Mike and Sheila Stevens and I arrived to find a well set up event with music, street food and kids' kite workshop getting underway. We were shown to our field which was much smaller than it looked on the photographs, quite low down and surrounded by trees, one of which had a small, faded kite stuck in it from last year – not a good omen!

The wind continued to be quite light throughout the day, and the event was well attended. On the main hill lots of kids were running around with small kites and everyone seemed to be having a great time. We did manage to fly a few stick kites, but mostly had an enjoyable day sitting chatting in the shade. Unfortunately the wind and site were against us, but we were keen to support anyone organising a kite festival as so many are disappearing these days.

Two weeks later I made the journey north to St. Anne's for my second visit to the kite festival on the beach. No problems with trees there! I went last year but the winds were too low to really do much flying, but I could see how potentially good it could be. The beach is absolutely vast and the organisation and atmosphere second to none. This year about 250 kite flyers were in attendance from across the globe. Once set up on the Friday the kites started to go up. Winds were a little on the light side but not too bad. On Friday evening there is a night fly, the wind forecast was not looking good at 2–3 mph, and around tea time it dropped right away and we thought we were in for a repeat of last year. But as the sun went down it picked up nicely, a nice steady breeze meant a good display of kites. One side of the pier has floodlights to illuminate the kites and the other is for illuminated LED kites. Both sides had fabulous displays and the

A large, colorful kite festival at night. The sky is dark, and the ground is illuminated by bright, low-lying lights. Several large kites are visible, including a yellow bear, a blue shark, a purple shark, a blue fish, and a yellow fish. The kites are suspended by thin lines, and their colors are vibrant against the dark background. The overall scene is festive and celebratory.





## THE JOLLY UP

First held in 2007 it has now got to number 35 with the only breaks being for Covid when even some of those were run on Zoom. This was the inspiration for our own Fun Fly after we lost the last site where we could run a formal kite festival. The format of a totally laid back event with no arenas or schedule of events and the only rule being “enjoy yourself” (Which we do!!!!).

WHKF know how much work is involved in putting on one of these events and are very impressed with Roy and his team for organising two a year especially when you have to store, transport and erect your own marque, tables, chairs etc. We gave up and now hire a marque.

During the life of the Jolly Up there have been a few notable occurrences. JU10 had atrocious weather that managed to provide running water through the marque. JU32 was getting set up when a bad storm hit and destroyed the marque. Much credit to the team that they were able to source another one and get it ready in time.

There have also been a number of memorable events held at the JUs. For example at JU17 Christian and Gayle held their Handfasting ceremony there. Sadly in the same year Phil Scarfe passed away and his ashes were scattered from a kite over the JU field.

Tragically one of the saddest occurrences was this year (2024) at JU35 when Nick James was cycling from his B&B to the event on the Saturday morning and he was involved in an RTA from which he died 2 weeks later.

Food is provided all weekend; pie, peas and mash Friday evening; bacon rolls for breakfast; jacket potatoes for lunch and a good Saturday evening meal. What a tragedy the hog roast became too expensive. As a club we have copied the idea of providing food but we have stopped providing alcoholic drinks as we seem to be a more sobrietyous group and always ended up with a surplus.

Also held on the Jolly Up field are Light Up the Sky supporting Children in Need and weather permitting a Christmas social fly. The latter can end up with vehicles getting stuck on muddy tracks and having to be towed off by Mr. Tugg

Roy usually produces some excellent display pieces; this year three giant magic mushrooms that lit up at night and previously my favourite Big Ben saying something about those inside.

Thanks for a great event and long may it continue.

*Arth&ur*





# **WHKF AGM**

To be held at Basepoint Business Lounge

Swindon SN5 7EX

17<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at 12.00

1). Welcome from the President.

2). Apologies

3). Minutes of last year's meeting

4). Matters Arising

5). Chairman's Address

6). Reports

Hon. Secretary

Hon. Treasurer

Cowpat Editor

7), Election of officers.

8). Close of AGM business by Chairman.

9). Member's forum. (Chance to have your say)

# Funfly 2024

When I turned up on the Friday morning I was greeted by a keen group who were manning the marquee and rapidly erected the cooking gazebo. These were in a completely different spot to normal as a pool where our marquee is normally pitched had formed due the heavy rain in the week, and the massive dead oak which has stood over the camping area for many years lay shattered on the ground. In fact the Mabons had had a lucky escape as they had been under the tree earlier in the morning, came back 20 minutes later and it was down.

Anyway weather on the Saturday was pretty good, with lighter winds in the afternoon and the heigh limit fully used (and perhaps a little more by the Editor....). A number of folk had radio controlled 'kites' which were interesting and I hadn't seen these before. Highlight of the day (and weekend?) was the kite eating tree which ate a rather nice white delta. A long performance ensued with a 12m long pole, pole bracing lines and multiple leaders and ideas of how to free said kite. Keith volunteered his beautifully hand made grappling hook (in stainless steel) and this was added to the long bendy pole but his advice to tie another line to it was not taken up.... The hook caught and the pole split. I wasn't there but on the Sunday an assault with a serious spud gun freed the kite. I believe the auction and food went well and it was a great occasion to catch up.









## Kite store sort out

On Sunday 22nd September we had a committee meeting at Park Farm followed by a sort out of the kite store. The idea was to stock take what we had, check the condition of some of the 'big stuff' and get rid of any rubbish. We had a good turn out of helpers and made really progress. Also in the store were kite collections from a couple of members who have recently passed on, and these were sorted through for the funfly auction and AGM raffle. The plan is to try and fly all the big stuff at Park Farm or Waterhay Farm (where the Editor lives) in the spring, so that we can refresh ourselves on the lines and anchors and take some to St Annes in 2025. Thanks to all who assisted.



# Kite making tips

## 1. Reading non English for dummies

Have you got kite books in languages you don't read? I have dutch, Chinese, german and Italian kite books. I have made kites from some of them, and even spent evenings 20 years ago typing the dutch text into word, then putting that into Babelfish an early online translation programme, which kind of worked.

However smart phones are now complete game changers - using apps such as google lens translate function or apples translate, you can translate and read in real time. I have recently been doing this with a german historic kite book. The app overlays the translation on the photo on the screen in real time, and the translation is really good. Worked on my Chinese kite book as well. Probably easier on a tablet, Give it a go!

## 2. Ditching the scissors

For years I have used dressmaking scissors for cutting ripstop. However for straight lines a super sharp stanley knife, big cutting mat and straight edge is quicker which a nicer cut. However there is a couple of important details. To get your stanley knife really sharp choose a quality blade and then strop them on a leather strop with a polishing compound, you can get them razor sharp. Do this regularly as you use the knife, it will then go through ripstop like butter. Also use a proper straight edge, not a cheap aluminium ruler. Maun make engineering heavy straight edges in a range of sizes. They have a beveled edge and are thick so stay in place and do not blunt or catch the blade. Cut between pencil marks or on top of patterns.



# 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. **Never** fly at a height of more than 60m above ground level, in the UK unless a CAA clearance is in force. (as at festivals) IF YOU DON'T KNOW.....ASK.

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

**Never** fly near power lines, transmission towers or aerials.

**Never** fly near airfields.

**Never** fly a kite with anything metallic in the line.

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

**Always** use a brake line when flying large kites.

**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.

**Never** fly near 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.**

WHKF meet at Barbury Castle country Park on the second Sunday of each month

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