



Bi-monthly Newsletter for Members of the Chiltern Region BBAC



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To get your article in the next issue e-mail Chris Freeman at editor@crbbac.org

COLD WINTER IN FILZMOOS

Chairman's Chatter



Something we all should remember we are involved in a sport which can be dangerous, although accidents are rare they can and do happen. The New Year started with the tragic loss of Lee Pibworth and Allan Burnett near Bristol, our thoughts are with the families.

Then came the news that they had found the America 2 Gas Balloon, that went missing in the 2010 Gordon Bennett Gas Balloon Race off the coast of Italy. It was found complete and confirmed the tragic loss of Richard Abruzzo and Carol Rymer-Davis they were good and brave balloonists, I don't suppose we will ever know exactly what happened.

Then in late January Graham Philpot passed away after a short illness, he will be greatly missed by all who new him at the Black Horse, and our own club. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Sheila and her family in this time of great sadness.

In early February another disaster happened when Bob Bickerdicke, who was flying in the French Alps, was reported to have crashed at 6,000 ft on the side of a mountain, he phoned his ground crew and told them that he was alright, and that he was going to walk to some chalets he had seen 500 ft below and ½ a mile away from him. When it is thought that he slipped on the ice and fell to his death. Again our thoughts go out to his wife Julie and there children.

Once again in January we held a Club Curry Night, which was well attended with some 30 members and partners enjoying a good meal and good company. The Bull Inn once again did us proud with an excellent meal.

Don Cameron came to Februarys Club Night to give us a talk on general ballooning and the Gordon Bennett 2010 balloon race, he then answered questions on all aspects of ballooning. The night was well attended with about forty people coming along; it was good to see some old friends.

Our next club night on March 29th I hope to get Robin Batchelor to come along and tell us about his ballooning adventures over Australia, if I manage to get in touch and confirm the date I will e-mail every one and tell them.

Our next flying weekend will be Maypole on the 20/22nd May at Pidley more details in the next Crownline, if we get some good weather at any weekend in March or April I will arrange a launch field and we can fly out together, it seems a very long time ago since we achieved this.

Soft landings,

Barry.

Flying in Filzmoos

By Neil Ivison

During January the small Austrian town of Filzmoos 50 minutes south of Salzburg, hosts a number of week long balloon meets. From 8th-15th January there was a meet hosted by the Hanneshof hotel with 22 balloons entered from Austria, Netherlands, England, Germany, Slovakia and Russia.

Andy/Jane Austin, Andy Kaye and I teamed up with the Lukas Glaser team to attend the Hanneshof hotel week. We were to fly the Lukas balloon and tether the Action Man balloon at request of the Hanneshof hotel.

Filzmoos is a town which can only be described as being made up of hotels and apartments which serve the half dozen ski runs around the town. After a painless check in and welcome drink we were told the weather looked good for Sunday morning but not great for Monday and Tuesday.



We woke on Sunday morning to bright sunshine and an upper wind which would take the balloons over the Dachstein mountain with a peak of about 9000ft and a large glacial area [I believe Barry has a story about this glacier].

Andy A & I were going to fly in Lukas so the balloon was made ready for flight. For this flight we were looking at 4 tanks + inflation tank to be left behind, then oxygen and a few provisions just in case a forced landing was needed.

The balloon was inflated but once upright almost instantly we experienced a pilot light failure – flight cancelled. We kept Lukas around the launch field for a short while before deflating and Andy K ran some maintenance on the burners. As always it looked like a case of dirty fuel had clogged the internals.



The Hanneshof Hotel has asked us to tether Action Man "somewhere" in Filzmoos on the Sunday afternoon where most people would see it. After a little scouting mission we found a potential spot at the bottom of a ski slope. There was a tree we could use as one tether point & we could get the van in a car park space to use as a second, but what to do about the third point on the ski slope? Andy K went scouting and spotted the perfect vehicle, a Piste Basher, now how do we get hold of one? The manager of the Hanneshof hotel was sent to sort permission to use the ski slope and at the same time enquire about the Piste Basher. He soon returned saying yes to both, the Piste Basher belonged to the town but they were perfectly happy for its use.

At setup time we found a second use for the Piste Basher. We needed to move Actions Man about 20 meters, rather than move it by hand we placed the bag on a plastic sheet, tied it to the Piste Basher and off we went, easy!

We had Action Man tethered for an hour and decided to pack away whilst we still had daylight. It's fair to say that Action Man dwarfed all the buildings in the town and made a huge impact.

Monday was flyable with clear sky and light wind taking us to the North West. Most of the valleys to the North and North West were full of fog but the next valley, Nueburg, was clear allowing for a short flight if anyone wanted to do so. We decided to go for it with Andy A, two of the Lukas crew and myself in the basket. We floated around the launch area for a short while to look at Filzmoos before climbing out of the valley and happily moving in the forecast direction.

Flying in Filzmoos

By Neil Ivison

Upon climbing to just about the top of the valley we were provided with a spectacular view of snow covered mountain tops, and to the north valleys thick in fog as predicted. We flew for about 40 minutes before reaching the next valley, into which the descent needed to be carefully timed. We managed to get into a good area the bottom of the valley and floated around for a short while before landing and walking the balloon near to a road for deflation. Walking the balloon proved fun as the snow was almost knee deep in places.

Despite predictions made on Sunday, Tuesday also proved to be good weather. The wind was taking the balloons pretty much to the North and over a mountain known as the Bischofsmutze [Bishop's Mitre] to the town of Gosau. By some chance this was the only valley around which was free of fog. Andy K and Andy A were in the hot seat for this flight.

As the balloons took off we were surprised by what seemed to be a second wave of balloons turning up. Apparently there was another meet at Gosau which couldn't fly north due to the fog, so they came to Filzmoos to fly back, good news for a clear flight at least. The flight took the balloons up to about 10,000ft and over the mountains with some even more stunning views than the previous flight. As planned the balloons landed at Gosau, with Lukas being landed at the base of a ski slope for easy retrieve. One of the Dutch balloons missed the valley and had to land on top of the next hill requiring a small piste basher for retrieve



On Wednesday morning the hotel had arranged a "kids" day where up to 500 children from local schools were coming to Filzmoos to see the balloons on the launch field. A few balloons put their baskets out for the children to stand in and see the burners, a few others inflated to show off the balloons and we tethered Action Man. During the tether we experienced a few light now showers which produced a few interesting moments. The round balloons deflated but we couldn't until the children had a picture taken. This was quickly arranged and Action Man was deflated before it got too risky. It certainly left a lasting impression on the children, the hotel owner later in the day told us how their daughter had said excitedly that it was bigger than their house!

On Wednesday night the weather turned and we were treated to 24hours of non-stop rain. Thanks to the rain the launch site was unusable so there was to be no further flying for the week.

Although the meet we attended finished on the Saturday, there was a second, independently ran meet in Filzmoos starting on the Sunday. We had been asked to stay for Sunday morning to tether Action Man [yet again] for the press day. Sunday proved to be another magically bright day with no wind, perfect for a big shape. 40 balloons flew that morning making a great spectacle over the mountain landscape. After packing way it was time to say our farewell and head for the airport. And reflect on a fantastic week. To put it into contrast, during the following week a Russian team landed somewhere inaccessible with the nearest vehicle accessible road 12km away. It took them 3 days to retrieve all their kit!

The Long Jump - Winners Story

By Gary Davies

Well here we are again back doing the long jump! After last years cock up with the mileage I sent my GPS to Lindsey Muir for an accurate distance.

So Adrian Waters, Steve Drawbridge and Mark Omega and I set out early to Folly Farm Hungerford in the lovely Cotswold. We had an ordinary journey down with all the useful stops, Adrian's breakfast parlour at the bikers favourite pull in. (Silverstone).

We met Pete Bish at the field to let us in, Adrian bought himself an air band radio not sure what he was going to use it for!

We set up the balloon, Zenith what a work horse she is! she never lets us down. Alan Gray was my passenger for the flight (he's top crew man and chief navigator).

Our takeoff had fantastic conditions, blue sky, good upper wind and good direction.

After 20 minutes we were crossing between Brize Norton and Benson airport squeezing through without them noticing. Time for a coffee and sugar rush, Alan was doing really well on the navigation; we were roughly using 55 litres an hour less as we got lighter. We then travelled to Cranfield where we spoke to a very busy airport that day and were pleased that we called and stayed at 4,500 until we passed.



The fluffy clouds had arrived by this time and were getting a bit menacing with black areas spreading. Alan said "I will keep an eye out for them" I just said "look the other way that way you don't worry!".

So on! Winds and upwards to Bedfordshire, Peterborough then over our patch Wisbech then we tried to get more left to go up Connisgby however the southerly winds didn't kick in as forecast so we decided to take the height with right and went across the east coast so covering Kings Lynn then Sandringham, couldn't see her majesty waving in the grounds. The sea looks awfully close "much!" said Alan "please don't go left when we come down" see pics.

We started our decent over Sedgefield, Norfolk and luckily stayed on track for Brancaster love the candy floss there! We had around 12 to 13 knots landing in a great stubble field along the main road between Docking and Ringsted and couldn't find a landowner for love or money.

Had a brilliant day 5 hours in my lovely balloon with great company, direction and retrieve that I was so pleased I was not involved with! Adrian you can tell that story.

New Years Flying

By Chris Freeman

Having spoken with Gary Davies several times over the Winter break about going over to Peterborough to go ballooning, we finally got some good weather on Monday 3rd January.

Alarm set for 6am to be at Gary's house for 8, didn't know if I was going along for a flight or tagging along on retrieve, didn't really mind either way as I hadn't been out ballooning since November (and that was only a night glow!) and had been in the house for most of the Christmas period so thought I would give my family a break and go out for the day.

I arrived at Gary's and met PUT Steve Drawbridge, shortly after Gary came into the Kitchen and said that his crew had let him down last minute the night before and would I mind driving and he would do an intermediate and either him or Steve would jump out and I would take over for the rest of the flight.

We drove to Gary's launch field in Castor, just to the west of Peterborough (via McDonalds for Breakfast on the way of course!!)

Once on the field, Gary said he was happy to do the retrieve and let Steve do a PUT flight with me as P1, the winds were fairly light on the ground with forecast 10 knots at 2000 feet, enough wind to take us straight over the city.



Steve inflated the balloon and did an excellent take off and climb to level flight at around 2000 feet, I knew from looking at the forecast before I set off that there was more left with height with a lot more right on the ground, it was clear once we took off that the left was there but the speed unfortunately wasn't, I now faced the decision, do we go a bit higher where the winds were 2 or 3 knots faster but there would be more City to cover or stay a bit lower, get the slower speed but cover the narrow part of the City, I chose the second of the two options, knowing that the balloon (G-UZLE) only has about 80 hours and flies as new, with only 2 up in a 77 with 3 full 60 litre tanks, fairly full pressure and more than enough day light, I knew this would be a good option and that we wouldn't run out of gas.

Steve and I covered the City after about 45 minutes, I then radioed down to Gary to let him know we were going to try and find somewhere to come down and do an intermediate so he can jump in. It took about another 25 minutes before I could find somewhere that wasn't crop and next to a road, having come down low and skimmed across several fields I knew the wind on the ground was around 8 knots and having not free flown since September I thought it might be an interesting landing, so grass field picked, Gary stood at the edge I came down low and skimmed across the grass for a while before touching down, once we touched down, due to the dew on the ground and the speed the balloon didn't seem as though it wanted to stop and was getting a bit close for comfort to the road.

New Years Flying

By Chris Freeman



Thankfully the balloon came to a halt before the road, Gary got in and Steve got out and we flew on for another 30 minutes or so, Gary was happy to be flown as a passenger so I carried on as P1, we had flown by this time back to Thorney (the village Gary lives in) and attempted a landing at the golf club as by this time the winds had slowed down to only 2 knots on the ground, unfortunately the golf club wouldn't allow us to land so we had to fly on, if it hadn't been for a set of cables we would have managed to get it on a road between crop fields, we flew over the cables and I landed on a small track between a dike and crop field, perfect! Nice and dry!

We got packed up and headed back to Thorney as there was a surprise in store, Gary had recently acquired a few shapes from the Balloon Museum, so we went back and inflated G-NUTS (Mr Peanut Special Shape) and did some tethering for about 30 minutes.

Once we had finished tethering Mr Peanut, we packed up and headed off to the local Hungry Horse for something to eat and to fill out log books of course :)



For Sale

Aircotec (Alibi 2) Alimeter/Vario

Instrument is in good condition with altimeter/vario indicator ready for Velcro attachment to basket upright.

Price : £60 ono

Kevin Viney 01234 711918

Lindstrand Bottom End for Sale

Martyn Turner is selling his Lindstrand 105 Basket and Double Jet Stream burner.

Price : Contact Martyn

Martyn Turner - whiskeybev@btinternet.com

Want to list an item you have for sale here?
E-mail editor@crbbac.org

Club Events 2011

Date	Event	Location	Details
27 March	Flying afternoon		
29 March	Club evening	The Bull	Speaker: Robin Batchelor
24 April	Flying afternoon		
26 April	Club evening	The Bull	
TBC	Maypole	TBC	
29 May	Flying afternoon		
31 May	Club evening	The Bull	
26 June	Flying afternoon		
28 June	Club evening	The Bull	
24 July	Flying afternoon		
26 July	Club evening	The Bull	
19-21 August	NBF2011	Billing Aquadrome	Northampton Balloon Festival
28 August	Flying afternoon		
30 August	Club evening	The Bull	
9-11 Sept	Grass Roots	Sackville Lodge	Grass Roots Balloon Meet
25 Sept	Flying afternoon		
27 Sept	Club evening	The Bull	
23 Oct	Flying afternoon		
25 Oct	Club evening	The Bull	
27 Nov	Flying afternoon		
29 Nov	AGM	The Bull	CRBBAC AGM
Dec			

Club Notice Board

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