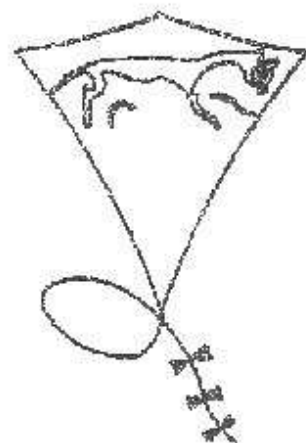


# cowpat hill



WHITE HORSE KITE FLYERS  
SPRING ISSUE 2002  
APRIL - JUNE

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

As some of you receive your mag at Barbury you may notice the absence of 3 members of Whkf. These being Doug Irvine, Pete Dawson & Pete Willis. The 3 as some of you know make up part of the team Matrix Management Doug Manners being the 4<sup>th</sup> member. The 3 of them have been on sunnier shores this week taking part in the World team event in France. Matrix Management have taken part in the winter leagues and were invited to go to France to compete. Unfortunately Doug Manners was unable to go but the other 3 members jumped at the chance to represent the UK and WHKF at this world team event. Congratulations on being invited and I'm sure with me you will all look forward to hearing how they got on in the next issue.

TRACY

## Hold the Front Page

Congratulations to the Matrix Management Boys who at very short notice represented the United Kingdom at the World Championships in France. Without much time to put a complete programme together, especially the precision part. They have come away with a very creditable 10<sup>th</sup> Place.

France took the first three places and U.S.A. the next three places.

Well done, more power to your elbows and this makes up for those miserable wet days of practice during the winter. Neil.

White horse kite flyers  
PO Box 585  
SWINDON  
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## Worth Coming Events

### April

21st - Streatham Common Kite Fest.

21<sup>st</sup> Harrow Kite Fly-in (D)

27/28th - Stowe Gardens Kite Festival, Buckinghamshire.(W,D,T.)

### May

5/6th - Weymouth Kite Festival, Dorset.

11/12th - Suffolk Kite Festival, Rougham Airfield, Bury-St-Edmonds.

11/12th - WHKF Kite Festival at Lydiard Park in Swindon 1 mile from the M4.(W,D,T.)

18/19th - Cleethorpes Kite Festival.(W,D.)

25/26th - Middle Wallop Kite Festival..(W.)

### June

1/2nd - Fylde Kite Festival, Lytham St. Annes, Lancashire.

1-4th - Tewksbury Kite Fun Weekend.

8/9th - Basingstoke Kite Festival, Down Grange Sports Field. (W)

15/16th - Teston Bridge Kite Festival, Maidstone, Kent.

22/23th - Southampton Kite Festival.

29/30th - Shrewsbury Kite Festival.

30th - Rockingham Castle Fly-in.(W,D,T.)

### July

6/7th - Sunderland International Kite Festival, Tyne & Wear

6/7<sup>th</sup> Bedford River Festival ?? (W,D.)

13/14th - Newbury Kite Festival.(W,T.)

13/14th - Fairbourne and Barmouth Kite Festival, Gwynedd, Wales.

14th - Petworth Kite Festival, West Sussex.

20/21st - Brighton Kite Festival, Stanmer Park, Brighton.

**All the bold entries the Club has been asked to do either Workshops, Displays or Teddy Dropping or all three.**

Please check with Dave Robinson or Neil Harvey if more are details required.

# SWINDON KITE FESTIVAL

## 11/12<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2002

### LYDIARD PARK

### SWINDON

When you received your Cowpat extra you may have been surprised to see the above event being announced, after reading about the WHKF joining the Oxford Balloon Fiesta. It's a long story that I hope I explained to you in that publication, So I will not bore you with it here, except to say that it was extremely difficult to deal with council officials who kept changing there mind on what we could and couldn't do at the event. *We had no choice but to pull out!!*

The good news is that we have negotiated with the local council in Swindon, to use Lydiard Park as the venue for our Festival. Some of you may remember that Lydiard is where we held the first Swindon Festival, in 1991. Lydiard is a large park to the west of Swindon, it's about 1 mile from junction 16 of the M4. Camping and caravanning is allowed on site, the fees are: £10 for caravans; £5 large tents; £3 small tents, these fees are for the weekend, (If you can help with the setting up on Friday, Camping will be *free*) access will be available from Friday PM (10/5/02) this will be a **FREE** festival, so you will **not** need a pass. The excellent fish & chip wagon will be there as well as the "Famous" George Pancake wagon. We will also have a licensed bar.

The Saturday evening "social" will include the now famous; raffle, organised by Marla Miller from Tacoma, USA. Those of you who have met Marla will know she is the best "Ticket Chick" in the world; she recently raised, in excess of \$7800 in 3 days from 143 people, at the Fort Worden Kite Makers retreat. *She is serious about raising money!* (If we could raise 10% of this we would be over the moon) The raffle will be vital to the success of the festival. We have to pay a fee for the use of Lydiard, but want to put on a free festival. If you want to help us, please bring a raffle prize and buy lots of tickets over the weekend. Although we have held a kite festival in Swindon since 1991, (With a break last year due to the Foot & Mouth epidemic), moving to a new venue will be like starting all over again. We will need to put on some really good displays to impress the public and the council, so that we can use Lydiard for future festivals. . **So bring lots of kites, to fly, as well!!!!**

If you have any questions my email address is [darjer2@aol.com](mailto:darjer2@aol.com)

Regards

Dave Robinson

## The Swindon Star Experience

No matter where one travels there is always a lesson to be learned

Marla Miller has been extolling the beauty of England's countryside for all the years I have known her. Doug Hagaman always came back from his trips there with a new glow and outlook on life. I know now why. The English countryside is much more than the pictures of quaint little cottages and ducks crossing the road. Meandering hillsides with grazing sheep, one lane little roads, ancient glyphs carved into the hills and little pubs that fit twelve people at the most. Diminutive fireplaces that heat the whole room with flues so small it's a wonder that they can suck any smoke out at all. Thatched roofs with designs indicative of the Thatcher. Comfy stone cottages with smoke billowing from fireplaces lining crooked little roads that send you back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Stone Henge, Avebury with its ancient stone circles, mounds that used to be castles and tiled baths brought in by the Romans. Best of all Crop Circles! I could feel my cheeks get rosy just from the contact high of so much antiquity.

I lived all of this thanks to the efforts of Janet and David Robinson along with The White Horse Kite flyers. I had always heard about this club as far back as Doug Hagaman but I had no clue that the White Horses were actually ancient huge pictures carved into the chalk hills of the region. Dave and Janet have been working diligently for years to bring kite people from the U.S. over to their group. Since coming to The Fort Worden Kite makers Conference, here in the North West, they have been trying to bring the same exchange of Kite Making techniques to their clubs in South West England.

I was fortunate to have Marla make the journey with me. She is becoming so British she uses her eating utensils in the same manner. We stayed with David and Janet simply because it's Marla's second home.

She knows her way around over there better than some of the locals. When we deplaned there was no stop in customs either Marla just went through, I think they knew her. David and Janet met us at Heathrow and immediately started giving me the grand tour.

Going the long way home to Swindon, we stopped near Windsor Castle for lunch. I was stunned by how the Royal surroundings gave me the shivers. The same way I felt when I stepped onto the royal grounds in Mexico and the castles in Germany. It isn't because I feel this royal/peasant difference, it's simply because the ground on which I am standing is so old and hollowed. I could hardly believe I was really here to teach a kite-making class.

After lunching and taking in the sites by Windsor Castle we passed into the rural areas quickly. What scenery! Then right there in the middle of the road was STONEHENGE. I

thought I would find this sacred icon up in the hills with a path leading to it for the wide-eyed inquisitive spiritualists to trek up to. Low and behold it was right there on the side of the road. We couldn't go in because it was closing time. Yes, there is a chain link fence around it and a charge to walk on the sacred grounds. David was able to take a digital picture of me with Stone Henge in the background. Enough to let the folks at home know I had arrived safely and was already enjoying the sites.

We then traveled past Pewsey Vale with its huge White Horse, stopped at Honey Street and the Barge Inn and onto Silbury Hill. We visited another primitive rock site at Avebury. Rocks placed in a circular fashion that I later learned were part of a connective line of sacred sites throughout England. Here at the gift shop, I found that I was smack dab in the middle of Crop Circle country. I don't believe that they are hoaxes at all. No one could really produce works of art of that caliber without someone seeing him or her perform. I highly urge you to see issue #32 of THE CEREOLOGIST. The Journal for Crop Circle Studies. I am in heaven now.

Finally we arrive at David and Janet's house. The invincible Madge is waiting for us at the door. She seems hale and hardy after a bout of pneumonia earlier in the year. Luggage is lugged in and I am shown my nifty loft where I get to make my self at home. Jenny and Balou, the incredible cats, sniff to make sure I am acceptable. Once I pass the cat exam, I am in for the next ten days. Dave and Janet treat me just like I am Marla. Well I didn't get a house key. But then Marla made dinner, which she called "Indian Takeaway."

Sunday was kite-flying day out at Barbury Castle. The names sound like they are straight out of The Lord Of the Rings. Janet drives up the hill in her new Cherry Red Chrysler PT Cruiser. No one knows who we are. The day was a bit blustery and kites are flying over the farmlands below. I launch a brand new "Starflake," walk over to David, hand it to him and say "Happy Birthday and thanks for making my trip here possible."

Just as I hand it to him, the wind from hell comes up, David not knowing what I was doing, took over the kite with a bit of astonishment. The kite has a mind of its own and wants to take off with the "100 MPH"

Gust, I keep yelling at David to "let line out!" Little did I know David was letting line out but holding the halo reel against his coat to keep from burning his hands on the line. The kite finally bales out, slams to the ground and David turns around with such a look on his face. As he walks back to the group, I realize I should not have surprised him in that manner. The closer David comes; I notice that he has huge burns on the front of his new jacket. Bad burns! He says, "I thought I smelled something burning, better the jacket than my hands."

The Whitehorse Kite flyers have come back to their regular flying site after the foot & mouth disease. No cows in the field below, but the view is absolutely incredible. Next to the flying area is the Barbury Castle mound. Phil Scarfe walks over to the mound with me and tells me about the line of castles that used to be on the line of hills surrounding the area. On the far hill is where King Arthur's Castle was. I almost fell to my knees. I loved "Camelot." Can you imagine flying kites in these ancient hills? That evening we had dinner at the Three Crowns Pub. Here I was given a test on how I would pronounce many English words. Of course I did not pass the test. How do you really say Marlborough? It is Marbro. It was a delicious end to an extraordinary Sunday.

Monday bright and early, Neil Harvey was at the door waiting to take Marla and me to his house in Bibury. The ride through the rolling hills and vales quickly puts me to sleep. We hit "Marbro" and Kathy hits the shops. I think the Visa card company thought I had gone mad. Then we are off to Cirencester, where the Romans left their mark with tile mosaics and other ancient artifacts. We also visited the church where Neil and Sue were married. Enscenced in the wall is a chalice donated to the church by Anne Bolyn.

After completing world wind shopping sprees we finally crash into Neal and Sue's house. The road to it is very narrow, yet considered a two-lane road. After dinner we go down to the Red Lion Pub. Just big enough to hold 8 people comfortably and 12 people cozily. Here the fireplace is so unbelievably tiny, it is hard to believe it can warm the space but it does so with a warm glow.

Tuesday we are off to see more of the Cotswold's. That is the name of the area we are traveling through and where Cirencester is located. Can you say "Sirencester?" That was the only way I could remember to pronounce it. We pass through Bibury Court, a 16<sup>th</sup> century village and are effortlessly thrown back in time. It isn't too hard to think of oneself riding a horse cart through the narrow winding streets of this quaint village.

Bibury was once a famous horseracing centre and home of England's oldest racing club. The most beautiful village I have ever seen or could have imagined. We idled our way through an area called Sherbourne with old espaliered trees. More cottages, and thatched roofs, on our way to Bourton On the Water. A great lunch and more shopping! Poor Neal's "pins" had to be aching. Then just as we were heading back to the car, I spied a miniature shop. Crikey! What a place to get lost in. There we found even more kite collectibles. Both Marla and myself stocked up on "Katies Kite" for the Fort Worden Auction.

As the day came to an end we returned to Swindon and a great homemade dinner waiting for us at Janet and David's house. M-mmm that English sausage is great! Went to bed early that night I did. I thought the jet lag had finally hit. Little did I realize it was a false alarm. I would hear from old Father Time a little later.

Wednesday we took the train to London to meet Doug Jones and Martin Croxton. The train ride was efficient and quite pleasant except they lost our seats. No problem, we got upgraded. How much better could it get

Doug met us at the station with bus passes in hand as well as tickets for "The Eye." We got off the tube and walked briskly to Buckingham Palace. I have to admit, I was the one who wanted to take in all the

Royal sites I had seen in People Magazine. I had no concept of just how much land belonged to the "Royals," I was rather shocked to say the least. The splendor is real but somehow unreal. Palace guards were in their winter wear. Not too much color but they are cute even with those huge furry hats. We did get to see the changing of the Horse Guard. Holy Cow those guys carry a lot of fabric in those capes!"

3.

Took a picture of Big Ben as we breezed by. Our appointment with "The Eye" was at noon so we had to get there in order to get a spot. That is some kind of big structure. Moving on so many people as so many moved off without stopping was pretty mystifying. I have to say, "Good Job" to Tony on that investment. It definitely is a grown up's Ferris Wheel.

We had lunch and hopped a bus to go see Andy King at the Kite Shop up on Neal Street. Had a photo taken with several of the great Mime Artist's that flourish in the streets. Those guys and gals are remarkable!

Not too much shopping done here. Did find a Kalakala ferryboat replica at Andy's shop though. It was a famous Art Deco era ferryboat that glided across the waters of Puget Sound in Washington State. I thought it inconceivable to find this little tin toy in England since the original boat is docked only a short distance from my kite shop.

Doug took us on another bus to take in the British Museum of Art so that we could see the kite exhibition from Japan. There were only a few kites of any note but there was a spectacular replica of one of the man drawn floats that are pulled through the streets of Aomori prefecture in Japan. I had the opportunity of visiting the sight where these incredible bamboo and paper floats are stored in the mountainsides in Northern Japan.

Doug had wanted to take us by Harrods but since I had earlier requested to see Kensington Palace, we hopped onto another bus to get there. He was a bit concerned that we weren't getting the most out of our bus passes but I felt we really had gotten much more than our money's worth.

Kensington Palace was a very haunting place since Princess Margaret had just passed away. According to all my reading, she had occupied this palace as well as had Princess Diana. Again I was quite taken by how ornate the palace was. It seemed quite deserted with one little bird singing in the tree. I felt really sad as we walked by. I can't believe I was so fascinated and drawn to the scene of such wealth and turmoil. I hope it's just human nature and nothing more. Doug then dropped us off at the "tube" and off we went back to Swindon.

Thursday was spent in Swindon. It was Valentine's Day. Both Janet and Marla received bouquets of roses. I was too dazed and confused to feel left out. We met Janet for lunch along with Jackie, Janet and Jessica the girls she works with. What a hoot! Afterwards we went to the mall, to shop and home to fish and chips.

Now Friday was a day. The rail system in England is just fantastic. For a few bucks you hop on a clean and tidy train and off to Bath you can go. I was not prepared for Bath. It was so beautiful I could never have imagined seeing such a well thought out town that dates back to the Romans. It is the center of the Roman Baths where it comes by its name. Site of a hot springs, the Romans built a system of bathing tubs here. The actual baths were 18' below the location of the current city. I have another one of those scintillating moments.

First we took a tour of the city on one of the open-air buses. Cold it was, but the sky was clear with the Sun out to warm us up. We got such a tour of a city whose multi faceted architecture was the result of The Romans, Saxons, Vikings, Normans, Tudors, Stuarts, and Georgians. As we climb the hills, the vast array of all the different influences soon became apparent. Truly magnificent! After a visit to the Baths and lunch, we had a little time for shopping. Then back home on the train. I cannot believe how handy and clean the mass transit system in England is. Seattle is in dire need of a similar system.

Saturday arrives and it is time for me to get down to the purpose of my visit to England-to teach a class, for The White Horse Kite flyers. I had prepared for this event for the past two months and now I was here to impart my knowledge. All the classes I have teach are prepared with a certain lesson that I want to share with others. Since the majority of this class was made up of intermediate to experienced kite makers, I had to think of something that would challenge but not overwhelm the level of mastery of the students. I chose to provide information about the methods manufacturers use to produce the carbon copies of kites with the same quality time after time. To achieve this goal I chose a dimensional single line kite -a take-off of Goodwind's Asteroid that I have been making for years. This is a six-celled star kite that can tumble when flown as a fighter kite.

I provided the kite kits with pattern pieces pre-cut. This class was going to take long enough without making the students cut their own fabric. The object of the class was to use the marks on the fabric pieces to guide the students through the course with. A back up 6-page instruction sheet with photographs was also provided. I was trying to cover all the angles



Now I really wasn't trying to make the kite for the students but in my mind, sharing techniques is a huge part of teaching. Techniques included: Notches that allow the kite maker to have consistent seam widths and for pattern pieces to meet accurately. Creasing fabric pieces for the same purpose. Hot tacking to secure pieces, using weights to hold pieces in place while hot tacking, sewing channels to secure spars and using insignia tape for reinforcements and predetermined seam allowances. Overall the kite I chose to teach gave students the opportunity to get the feel of making dimensional kites. By following the trail I provided with precut, notched fabric pieces, the student should be able to make a kite skin that would fit the precut spars provided in the kit. Anyway that was the goal I had in mind.

The class started out according to the schedule I had provided ahead of time. There were the prerequisite sewing machine problems, three machines blew up and two just had minor problems. I think there should be a contest for the best machine problem and the simple fix. I have to say the best one I have ever seen was right here in Swindon. Phillipa Todd's machine had a platen that just did not want to set evenly on her machine. She told me she just had the machine looked at and the mechanic told her it would take \$114.00 to fix. She said she had just learned how to overcome the problem and was happy enough to sew with it the way it was. Well that did not satisfy me. With the help of Helen Howes of Raindrop Kites, we proceeded to take apart the bobbin area apart to track down the cause. I felt Phillipa was not going to get the results she wanted if she had to sew with this wobbly plate. Later on she told us that the machine had never sewn as well.

Dave Robinson had told me ahead of time that Phillipa always had to have her kite project completed the first day because she could not make it back for the next day. So we really were fighting the clock on this one. As Helen and I dug around in the guts of the machine, we discovered a huge clot of built up fuzz. This buildup of fuzz was like a hard ball congealed together with oil. As the fuzz built up, it caused the platen to rise above the sewing bed. Removal of the ball allowed the platen to fall back into place and the Phillipa was off sewing like she had never sewn before. Simply removing lint from ones machine occasionally will keep this problem from happening. The rest of the day went smoothly and the project was right on schedule.

Later that evening we had wonderful banquet at The Blunsdon House Hotel. It was called a "Carvery" what we call a buffet in the U.S. An extraordinary feast! I felt highly honored in the company of all these people. Later that evening over a few whiskeys, David, Janet and I reminisced about Doug Hagaman. It was after this conversation, that I realized that the Big Parafoil with a string of Koi needed to be here with the White Horse Kite flyers. For years this Parafoil has been sitting in my closet along with the fish. I was waiting for the right place to leave it. Just before Doug passed away he took this kite and readjusted all the bridles. It had only been flown once after that. I knew that I would never fly it since it was

just too big for me. After meeting all these folks who loved Doug so much, I knew that this is where the kite should be. A place where it could be free to fly and not caged in my little closet.

Sunday the second day of the class started out fine. I was ready to meet the class and continue the schedule we had left off with the day before. All was going just fine until I felt my knees start to shake and sweat started pouring off of me. The class was merrily sewing on their way while I was having hot flashes, dizzy spells and all out nauseous ness. After someone mentioned I looked quite pale, I realized that I was entering that dark place called Jet Lag. Too much of everything and too little sleep turns Kathy into a wobbly bowl of Jell-O. Believe me I hate admitting just how much of a lightweight I am, but here I was loosing it in front of a whole class. Fortunately, everyone understood and Janet took me to her place where I took a 2-hour nap. Was I embarrassed or what!

When I returned to the class, several people had already completed their kites and had flown them. I had 9 Asteroid pins to give all those folks who had completed their kites first. All 9 were given out.

Even though I keeled over during the class, everyone was able to carry on without me. It was either a well-prepared class or a batch of students who knew what they were doing. Most likely a combination of both, and as well as a marvelous complement.

Another feature of this weekend was the raffle put on by the raffle Queen herself, Marla. She has taken her raffle skills and spread them all over. She even was selling Fort Worden raffle tickets. You never can buy just one from Marla. Personally, I feel the more we trade information, whether it is taking kite classes or raising money to bring more of us together, we are all working to further kiting throughout the world. Opening our doors to one another creates a bond that extends around the world. Learning from one another is the key that opens that door.

When I see what The Fort Worden Kite maker's Conference has inspired, I realize that Doug Hagaman's and Jack Van Gilder's dream of exchanging kite-making techniques has been realized. Far beyond their visions, to say the least. I don't think they even realized that one day we would be exchanging kite-making techniques across oceans.

I want to thank everyone who had the faith and patience to take this class. It was a difficult kite to make but you all trudged on with the vision of having a Swindon Star in your hands. You were all great students and I just had a ball working with you. I especially want to thank the Kite Clubs who brought me to England so I could be overwhelmed with awe not at the Royal lands but the ancient lands. And I want to thank David and Janet Robinson for never forgetting me. Thank you Doug Jones for racing me through London in one day. The best

experience of all is having folks share their houses with me and letting me see first hand just how the Brits live. Thank you Neil and Sue Harvey and David and Janet Robinson.

My wonderful students were:

Peter Dawson with daughter Jenny

Don Baggett

Karl Longbottom

Arthur Dibble

Helen Howe from Raindrop Kites

Jean Jean "the Raffle Queen" Turner

Phil Scarfe

Doug Jones

Neil Harvey

Franchesca and Jon Caton

Paul Chapman

Steven Neal

Doug Manners

Simon Hennessey

Alan Outram

Jonathan Doney

The lesson learned: There is a whole bunch of outstanding folks in England who love kites.

**Kathy.**

## The Swindon Mini Trouble Star

When my dad approached me back in November and said "would you like to join me on a kiting weekend" I thought oh dear another weekend spent in the driving rain and wind in the middle of goodness knows where, praying someone I know would turn up or he would find my Nasa wing four liner and I could have a play. So I agreed and to all intense and purposes I forgot about it. In the coming months he started to give me a few subtle gestures and I thought ARGH what have I forgotten now!!! So I asked him in February what this was all for and he told me I was going to make a Swindon Mini Star Kite. This whole idea sounded absolutely crazy!!! I have no idea how to make a kite, never mind the infamous bridling... So the next day we packed the car and we were off. I was greeted at the door by the warm face of Dave and Neil. So I went inside and drew up a seat and we began, with only 5 of the 30 or so people there known faces I was a bit daunted, but after the briefing I soon realised that the kind lady running the workshop (Kathy Goodwind) was a great help!

We got handed a nice pretty pack of goodies and an information sheet and soon we were sewing... The information sheet was of little use to most of us, as it seemed to be written in double Dutch!!! Plus with the added bonus of my dad breaking my sewing machine I was soon behind! Luckily Dave stepped in with his big fancy sewing machine with 101 stitch patterns!!! (I could get used to that!) With side 1 sewn to side 5 I struggled on but thanks to the dreaded wing tips I was soon lagging behind... But with a bit of help from some willing

slaves by the second day I was on top again and was in the running for the fabulous star prize of a pin in the shape of the kite we were making by finishing in the top 5!!!

So lunch came and just like yesterday there was a lovely buffet lunch with Shepherds Pie and Pizza and all sorts galore. With all that inside me, suddenly (after hours of ticket sales) Marla shouted Raffle time!!! Everyone did well with me coming out with a shower radio and soaps (Dad even got a couple of things too)!!! After lunch it all became clear that I was building a nova/facet kite with 6 cells or so that's what they said... to me it was a huge success that was eventually build by me and only me... I built it within the first 5 and received my pin!!! So I packed everything away to go home, I was to scared to fold away the kite so it went home intact to show my mum! I got home and left the kite on the desk for about a week just to keep looking at it in amazement!! I still don't believe it. I was the non-kitey type, but I'm now hooked!!! MEGA thanks to Dave Robinson for organising it all, Kathy Goodwind for her precious time and to Marla for the Raffle and of course all those other people that helped, because there were a few, I just haven't got round to meeting you all!!! Thank you!

Jenny Dawson

## Some sad news

Just a little snippet of sad news. We've just heard that Neville Wing (Tewksbury) has passed away, after along battle with cancer. Bye now, Brendal x

Thank you for letting us know, he will be sadly missed another great loss to the kitting fraternity Tracy.

## Welcome to the Brighton Kite Festival

How unfortunate that there were two attacks on poor old Arthur in the last edition of Cowpat; the tongue-in-cheek and well-meant letter from Ms. O'Fend and the rather less friendly one from Brighton.

How many of our members will have read of Arthur's experience at Brighton last year and will, as a result (and as forecast by Ray Oakhill in his letter to Cowpat), not go there this year?

How many members will take Arthur's comments seriously enough to avoid what is one of the very best festivals of the kiting year?

How many members consider that the fun of kiting should transcend all else?

How many WHKF members will be going Brighton this year? One for sure.... Me.

B. Friends



## Fort Warden Kite makers Conference – Or how a wish came true!

It's all Marla's fault! Well, we all know what she's like – the Ticket Chick, she'll get the last buck out of you no matter.....

There was I, coming on a year ago, going through the raffle at Basingstoke Festival and thinking what were the chances of winning anything – ever! So I dropped my last tickets in for the Fort Warden Prize.

Five hours later I hear I've won something, and there's Marla urging me to go get it, and lo and behold, I've won a ticket for Fort Warden -- well, sort of... I'd won a raffle to enter a raffle?

You see it's like this, the Fort Warden Conference is a yearlong money making event! There's a raffle (you guessed it, run by Marla) that offers you a chance to attend the actual Conference being run in March. And what I'd entered at Basingstoke was a chance to get some of these tickets. It's as clear as mud I'm sure.

Marla had offered these conference tickets to the Basingstoke raffle, no no no, too confusing, forget it! I did. That is until November when I was sorting out my kite box and found the ticket stubs – “oh look, it's to be drawn in a weeks time, no chance there then!” and nearly thrown them out there and then.

You guessed it – a week later I was woken at 6a.m. by Marla's sweet voice “hey Peter, remember what you did six months ago?” I just burst out laughing! I'd heard she'd done this to a previous winner the year before! I just couldn't believe it, I'd won a place, no, I'd won two places – worth goodness knows what – Yet Marla couldn't understand my humour, why the laughing, just a week before nearly disposed of the evidence! I'd won though two raffles to go.

Panic – all I had to do was get there! How much? Bound upstairs and hammer the computer to life, CLEAR THE LINES.... Onto the infamous World Wide Web and see what the airlines charge - £350 to £400, but I knew this was just a guide, it can be cheaper. I'll chat to the travel agents that did us proud on our once-in-a-lifetime adventure holiday to the States earlier this year. Now we're going back within a year!

The real problems come when Cari and I realised we couldn't just “up sticks” and the two of us go. Kids, dogs, horses, family commitments meant that it was not to be. We could not organise the event for the two of us, so Cari (I do love her) so kindly said I must go, and she'd stay to maintain things here. So with promises of lots of presents I adjusted the arrangements to just me.

And what of the second place you may ask? Well, I obviously needed a companion that would keep this wild nutter in his place, one who knew the ropes, a good friend, and someone I knew would appreciate the opportunity (who am I kidding!). So just to confuse his life a little more, I invited our beloved leader Neil Harvey to take the ticket, now the cast was set.

The Cast was actually quite a number. Dave and Janet of course were going, along with Don Baggett, Neil and Myself, Phil Scarfe, and Jean Turner. All collected at Heathrow Airport in February for the BA direct flight to Seattle. So we all bundle onto the plane (Dave, is it a Comet?) and we're off on a 9 hour flight.

Due to us all sorting out our flights at different times we were spread about the aircraft, but what's this, a ruckus in the ranks! Dave, Janet and Don get pulled up front, are they in trouble? No – they've been upgraded! “Luck of the computer” Dave says, lounging out on his executive chair “I did try to get you all moved up” he uttered over his glass of wine. The rest of us suffered the best we could, trying to survive the situation by moving about the aircraft – seeing if we could slip into Dave or Don's chairs when they weren't looking. But Dave kept tossing and turning – his guilty conscience was working on him and he couldn't sleep!

Soon enough we were landing and off through customs and away – Hang on, there's a nice little hound wagging its tail at Neil. “Excuse me sir,” said the uniformed Officers, guns on their hips “but do you have any illegal substances in your bag?” Neil, Drugs? Cant be, must be a mistake! “Are you carrying any fruit, sir”? America has some strange rules, one of them is that they do not allow any fruit or vegetables into the country at all, and the dog was specially trained to smell out anything of this. What had happened was

that Neil had brought some apple and bananas for eating on the flight, and he'd carried them in his hand luggage, but the scent was still there. Luckily they accepted his excuses and we moved on out to be met by Ron and Marla.

It took three vehicles to get us sorted and off to the Millar residence, and then we were separated in that Neil, Don, Jean and I went off to the "little house in the woods" to stay with the Skeer family, Guy, Pat, and their daughter Crystal. This turned out to be a splendid property on the side of a hill, facing East, with views of the mountains beyond, and a wood up and over the crest. Magnificent. We were made most welcome, accommodating our every wish. And what's more it was Guy's birthday! We were off to his party that very evening to be held at a local favoured restaurant. We met a number of familiar faces there – Don Mock, Bazzar and his new wife, Marla's daughter Kim, and more. A splendid meal topped off with a Birthday Cake that ignited the jumper that Guy was wearing! Just a vapour of flame shot up the jumper and over his shoulder and was gone – spooky.

Next day we went shopping, news was out of a sale in one of the department stores so off we went into a Shopping Mall that must have taken up the equivalent of 12 football pitches! It was huge! So it was new jeans for all the family, spotted some shoes! Beanie bears for Jenny, and then the sports hall to fit out Matthew with a baseball kit. That and four kilo of jellybeans (Hide them from Dave!) and most of my promises were done.

Thursday, and time to travel on to Fort Warden, a four hour drive that was eased by having fun with the C.B. radio's between the cars. The site turned out to be next the Puget Sound, the main waterway out of Seattle to the Pacific Ocean. And on the opposite side are some wonderful views of Mount Olympus and its range. The buildings are well preserved from its days as a Naval Training Centre from the century before; in fact it was the centennial of the site this year. Our accommodation was the original dormitories. After registration there was plenty of time to get our bearings, Chip in and get Kathy Goodwind sorted so she can run a shop through the weekend, check out the raffle (yep! There's one just for the weekend, and guess what? It's Marla!) and find the buildings where the classes will be held tomorrow.

No restaurant this evening, so a superb buffet had been organised by Sam and Ann Houston at the house they were using so everyone could meet and chat, a simple competition crossword was underway, with ripstop "feathers" for prizes. Come 10 p.m. and we're ready for bed, the excitement was building up to a full weekend.

Timing was fairly critical for this sort of event, some 31 different classes, running different lengths, over the coming days, Four hours per session. This means it's an early morning and ready for breakfast by 7a.m. Meet up with the gang, compare notes on who's doing what – something that has to be decided prior to coming! A good breakfast is served, there's Marla with the first attempt to remove some raffle prizes off her hands ("Are you ready to raffle?") and it's off to our first class.

My First choice (as was Guy's) was Silk Painting with Diane Butler. There she explained the technique of lines of resist, then filling in the areas with the colours, blending the mixtures where required. Now we each chose a pattern we wished to try, I chose the tiger image. Soon we're running lines freehand over the silk, trying to ensure there's no break in the lines where colours seep through. Then it's the paint, mixing the colour you require, blending on the material to fade the colours into each other. Someone next to me spills a pot of paint on the silk, and it's seeped across the lines like a wave crashing over the barriers – disaster! He restarts. Now the process gets fancy with the use of rock salt to create effects. Have I missed any areas? Now the paint must be left to dry, to go to proofing, before it gets back to us on Sunday.

Lunchtime already! And Marla starts the second of six attempts to reduce the raffle that has some 500 prizes in it! Everyone that has come to this event has brought something to the raffle, so it's huge!!! From simple trinkets to large flowforms, all kite related in some way. I've already spent some \$20 on tickets. There are people buying them by the 100's. Lucks in, I win a couple of things, an AKA patch and some kite plans.

The afternoon session is to be with Karen Gustavson and a Japanese Baka fighting kite, made of modern materials. At this I was joined by Don Mock, proving even the old hands enjoy the variations of

knowledge and techniques that are available here at this sort of event. With a drop of water on a glass sheet we held the Mylar sheets down, cut and stuck the different pieces together, spliced the unit together, and voila, the kite was ready. Just time to go outside and fly them if you wish, but I dove off to look in one of the other classes that I had to miss, Kathy Horn and the making of a pendant that has a miniature kite within. Don was in this class, so I got to see the principles of what this was about. That was one of the nice things about this retreat, you could wonder about and look in to see what others were doing. It was a relaxed meeting of like-minded folks enjoying themselves, the lecturers themselves were found doing other classes when they weren't working. Everyone chatted with each other, swapping ideas and experiences, enjoying the stories, all learning from each other.

Evening meal in the Dining room was very good, they certainly gave some thought to the menu, and all were supplied hot and ready. While not haute cuisine, it was excellent when you think there's some 160 plus people to feed. When another round of the raffle, another 100 prizes to go – it seemed endless, but nothing for me this time. The evening was spent chatting with others, looking around the rooms where the more difficult projects were running, people just worked on into the night to learn and complete the projects. Then it was round to the raffle to check out what's new from the day.

Then I saw it! A 2 metre Rokkaku beautifully appliquéd with two fish, all done in an Aztec style. Wondrous, I just fell in love with it – Marla saw the glint in my eye and went to work! So went another 10 bucks – and only in to that prize. But what a kite, I'd never seen such a nice kite, just wanted to see what the light behind it would do. I just wanted it. I just wished to win it. I was hooked.

The dormitories there were much like military camps generally, I'd seen a couple in my time, you have a basic room with bed, desk, and cupboards. The essentials. And the toilets down the hall included showers, so we were well provided for. Upstairs was a common area with seating where some of the people met and chatted into the night. But come 11 p.m. I was tired.

Next morning I was up, showered and out for 6:30, round the corner of the building and down the rivers edge for some wonderful views of the sun rising over Mount Olympus, happy snap time, along with half a dozen others needless to say! Even Neil was there enjoying the moment. But tempus fugit! Time for breakfast and the new challenge.

The meal soon disappeared, another round of the raffle! Won a few trinkets, a kite hat, some pins, notepad and envelopes. Just enough time to check over the raffle room to look at the Rok again, think I'm not the only one eyeing this up – another 5 dollars slip into Marla's till. How could I resist, it was love and I was by now feeling a little home shy. How I wish Cari could have come and enjoyed the fun and hospitality we received from all we met. There wasn't a cross word to be heard.

Saturday's challenge was to be an all day affair, Appliqué techniques with Scott Hampton to make a 20"x 20" kite. So we sat down to this class with Jean in the front row and Kim next to me. So we looked at the work, choose the design we fancied, checked out the sewing machine I'd managed to borrow from one of Marla's friends, and set to. It turned out an easier project than I expected, in that come lunchtime the kite itself was made, leaving me just the bridling to do in the afternoon.

Before that came Lunch, another fine meal, and the latest round of the raffle. This time my heart sunk, it was there, my Rokkaku, I was all a quiver, you have a chance to put more tickets in while the meal is being run, so it was up to Marla and pawn my ticket home, well not quite! It was to be drawn near the end of the list – I won something I'd forgotten I'd ticketed – but then it came up "and the winner is..." the moment had come, but it wasn't me. Forlorn I left the hall, no other prizes to interest me. But someone was watching me. A cunning plan was being conceived.

Outside the sun was shining, as it had been since the day we landed, and the lawn between the buildings was large enough to fly six or so kites with ease. So while waiting for the classes to reform I had the opportunity to see what the local sport kites were like, chatted to the pilot of one and promptly got handed the kite to fly, wonderful therapy!

Back to class. The bridling was simple enough to do, so out and a quick fly to check it over, and I've three hours to fill. I wandered around, looking in on other classes, Neil was having fun with a six-legged star

as his turned out to have twelve! What was that he'd been drinking last night – as no alcohol is allowed on the site! Just check out the club's web site and you'll see! Don was working well with Bazzar's class – seemed a long way to come for this class, but he'd managed to miss the one's we'd run back home.

Another nicety that some of the teachers do is to offer you the details and kit of parts so you can just collect this and build in your leisure another time, so it was with Dave Christenson and the Catherine's Wheel. I bought the kit, and one for Don, and then sat in for an hour to get a chance of seeing the techniques used in the bridling of this. Interesting idea of just a zigzag stitch over the bridle string, a knot to the end of the line, slide the line down to the stitch, and the knot comes against the stitch to stop. Adjusting the line length is then a simple adjustment to where the knot is. Clever! OK for smallish kites, not big ones, sorry Dave.

Evening meal and the final raffle! This is the big one, the best kites were now to be drawn, and needless to say it was the flowform of Phil Scarf that had taken most interest. He had produced a wonderful design mimicking the logo of this years conference, something he was getting very well known for. There were hundreds of tickets in for this one, serious money was changing hands, Marla and the crew were working flat-out! "Are you ready to raffle?" came the cry, and so the last prizes found themselves moving home, "The Skeers", "Jean, Jean the raffle queen", our table was doing well, people were moving tables to get closer, hoping something would run their way. Many fantastic prizes were disappearing, I won a nice set of towels with kite logo's on, a video and book, more bits! Good job I'd bought that extra bag! Finally a wonderful banner and the two fine kites came and went!

It was over, Marla actively beamed, the chore was complete. It had been three days of hard work for her, husband Ron, Dave and Janet, and others to see this raffle through. From this raffle came the funds to run next years conference, along with the yearlong raffle for the tickets to be there that I'd won I was just one of three who achieved this. And she'd managed to reach the just over the amount as she'd got last year, so considering the event was down on numbers, a success!

Now to work! Neil was struggling with his star so returned to his class, Don was just finishing off his project. I gave a hand to clear up the raffle room, then joined Guy, Bazzar and others in the house they were renting for a relaxing drink (don't tell the wardens, but we'd smuggled a box or two in!). A few hours to relax, then a stroll on the moonlight over to the dorms. What could be better! Pondered if I should Phone the Wife – 11p.m. here, so it would be 7 a.m. at home Sunday morning, but I thought she'd appreciate the lie-in.

Sunday came soon enough, we leave today so it's clear the rooms this morning, Breakfast and off for our final classes. George Peters (no, the other one, he's not from Grenada!) and Kite Puppets. I'd seen his wonderful creations at Dieppe, and the one's MKF flew, so was expecting some hard work. So it was, but not as you know it, Neil and I found ourselves painting Japanese style characters to help relax and clear our minds. Then it was a game of "Potato Men" on paper within the groups we were in, to form some impressions of the project he had in mind, something he'd just thought up that morning!

And so it was that we found ourselves making a kite puppet 35-foot long made of paper and plastic. The class was spilt into three groups, one to make the head, mine to make the upper torso and arms, Neil and the rest on the lower section. Each group to make it in whatever fashion they wanted. We opted to make a "Superman" style body with a big "FW" logo. Loads of bamboo to make up the head and body sections, the legs to be left drogue style. So the design, when flown a couple of hours later, turned out to be a female with long flowing curls, a Superman chest, in a pair of trainer bottoms with the biggest zip-fly known! But it flew, well OK, just for five minutes, before the trousers descended separately to the ground to roars of laughter.

The final meal, various speeches, a mention of September's events and Neil's flight was commented on, getting Neil teary. Without warning the plot hatched and I'm set up! A stranger strolls up, "I understand you took a liking to my kite, here you are, it's yours!" What's this he thrusts in to my hands but the Aztec Fish Rokkaku. I'm totally taken aback, speechless I look at him. "It's very rare I carry two of any kite, but it must be an omen that this was meant for you to have come with me. You have some special friends here" and he was gone. What could I say, I looked around, but couldn't see as the emotion of the moment took over, but noticed Ron looking and smiling, the sneaky old devil realised I'd fallen for the kite so went and



organised this one for me. I was totally gob smacked. I don't want to think what he'd done to arrange this but I owed Marla and him plenty as it was for their support in helping organise this trip. Luckily there was an Ace I could play, but that would have to be later.

Don was curious as I was to see this fly, so while the rest went into conference to see about next year's event, I slipped out to fly this wondrous new present. As I walk through the car park to the lawn, here was this mysterious man again, he was just packing up to leave. Apparently he's a good friend of Ron and Marla, sharing a common humour and good old Wallace and Gromit. We talk about this and my involvement with them, and I mention about my Ace, so with a promise of e-mailing him sometime we part to let him get off as he's a long drive home. I'm off onto the grass now, and with Don's help, the kite rises easily in the light winds and looks quite spectacular. Pleased as punch, I'm a dog with two tails.

Looking about to see who to show off to I spy a family, kids wishing they had their own kites to fly, not really looking at any kite particularly so I stroll over and pull the old Don Mock trick "here, hold this please while I tie my laces". Works every time, the 8 year olds eyes spring wide open, she's holding a kite, a pretty kite, one that high up and going higher. I drift off and chat to her parents. We chat for an hour, the kite gets passed around, the kids want their own kites, where do you get them? I give what advise I can, luckily knowing Cathy Goodwind's shop in Seattle, they know the location. Two more into the spider's web we call kiting.

Time to press on, put the kite away, we set to and fill cars with all the paraphernalia we came with, and I return "home" with Don Mock. I learn about a side group that forms after the event, to help unwind the weekend stresses, it's called the "Kite and Gun Club", just the sort of thing BoF would enjoy I thought. But that was for tomorrow, something to see about, this day had a trick or two yet.

Eventually we return to the "shack". We were first back, and I'm in one of those playful moods (the sort that usually get me into trouble!). Spying a couple of water pistol "supersoakers" I load them up for an outside tap and await the others, it wasn't long before the victims arrive, Guy gets his car washed, promptly followed by Pat, only she's got her window open! Opps! But the girls on board get me back with some bottled water a moment later! Serves me right.

The evening is another meal out, a group meeting with one and all at a Chinese restaurant and the Ace gets played! During the meal I call Ron and get everyone's attention, I retell how someone's got me sussed, of the kite, and how much I owe them for their friendship. Then tease Ron about Marla's passion for Wallace and Gromit! So doing I drop him a kite, a two metre Rokkaku. This time it's one I made, legitimately, that has W&G on it. One that Marla has bankered after ever since I'd built it three years ago. I'd brought it to say thank you to them anyway, but now it seemed even more so to pass it on. It was an exchange, cementing our friendship I feel.

So, how do you unwind from such a weekend? More kites of course! Options for the Monday included an opportunity to go into Seattle, look at the Space Needle there, go visit the Drachen Foundation (very interesting, worth a visit too understand their philosophy, the collection they hold, the tee-shirt!), and drop in on Cathy Goodwind in her shop. Some retail therapy in a tee shirt shop on the way back, just to see you through!

My final evening is spent at Ron and Marla's, yet another gathering of all, and a barbecue! Honest this is only March, the weather's been wonderful the whole time, but there's the threat of snow in the next couple of days but so what, that's later. Steaks all round, nice beer, a chance to swap stories of the weekend, and plan the next day. Seems we're off to Boeing! There's a surplus shop to see! And wasn't it something else, a hanger to hold 3 jumbo's all set out with everything imaginable! From sheet metal to computers! And cheap too.

So my trip ends, I'm returned to the airport, the flight home and return to my family. It's been a wonderful week over there, and I've learnt a lot, made many new friends, and readjusted my perceptions of America. If you have the opportunity to go and "do" this conference I would unreservedly recommend it. And the next time you wonder what are the odds of winning a raffle to enter and win another raffle, well now you know it can be done! Don't miss that opportunity, I've my raffle tickets for next year already!

See you on a field somewhere, just look for the Rokkaku with two fishes, and the owner with the broadest of smiles!

Peter Dawson.

## Apologies

1)

Dear Denise,

Please accept my most profound and abject apologies for having upset your delicate sensitivities. Firstly please let me stress that the name you are using came not from me, but another of your friends. However you will always be remembered in my affections as Kay Bee.

As far as considering the feelings of others I do. That is why I keep my hinges covered. Concerning the head scarf, my knowledge of female attire is evidently not as extensive or accurate as yours and to make up for my slanderous remarks the next time I am in the part of the world where they make these light weight accoutrements I will purchase one for you as a gift and then you can impress us all with your constructional and flying abilities by producing another masterpiece with enormously long name which I won't be able to remember.

On the subject of Petworth I had been given the information and was passing it on to you in good faith. I promise I shall not try to assist you in future.

There, I hope that was good enough

Author.

2) Brighton

I'm sorry I seem to have upset Ray. I did not mean to say there was anything wrong with the Brighton festival it's a good one, only that I had a run of problems. In fact it is nice to know that we are not the only ones let down by others. I even said it was a good bar-b-q. I wish I had had a chance at some of that cider but it didn't get any where near me. I also only blamed myself for the tent letting in water and the traffic noise only disturbs me because where I live is relatively quiet and I am not used to it. I get the same problem when staying in hotels near main roads (perhaps it's my age).

As to flying in a bucket, if I come to Brighton again I will no what to expect and come prepared as I hope will others and in future I will know where to fly as I pointed out there was a great display by others who knew and went up the top.

Of coarse WHKF have never had any adverse comments about their festival, not even 6ft grass on flying and camping sites, "fertiliser" on the field, blizzards to mention a few

Arthur

## THE BRITISH HAVE LEFT, THE BRITISH HAVE LEFT.

Have you ever gone into your home and been out numbered by foreigners? Will we have been inundated with the British since the 26<sup>th</sup> of February? First we had the Robinson's, Peter Dawson (the winner), Don Baggett, Phil Scarfe, Jean the raffle queen Turner and The Chairman, Mr. Harvey. There were some other guests, Rolf and Claudia Zimmerman from Germany and Kathy and Karl Horn from Illinois USA.

We all went to that wonderful Fort Worden Kitemakers Conference. I think we all had a heck of a good time. The raffle raised \$7,775.25; we processed 522 raffle items and won a few too. This all happens in a mad 2 day time period. We sell tickets all day and raffle at them 6 meals and then it is all over. I am not sure what we did after that. You might want to question some of our guest to see if they had a good time?

The first group returned home and the Chairman stayed on. Sue, Amie and Karl finally made it here on the 18<sup>th</sup> of March (this was their second attempt, they tried to come here on 9-11). We went here and there and everywhere, the Pacific Ocean, Mount Saint Helens, Seattle and the Space Needle and the Experience Music Project, and of course shopping, shopping and then some shopping. They left on the 4<sup>th</sup> of April. And we are here to tell all of you our house is mighty empty.

So what does one do after that, they get out the new raffle tickets for Fort Worden 2003, pack their suitcase and come home to England to be with our family that left us. Ron wants to know if I am British? Maybe you can help him with this question at Weymouth, as he will be flying in for one of his weekend visit. Our son Chad is also will be there.

I would like you to meet some of our dear famous kite friends who will be at Weymouth this year. Some of the British guest stayed at their little shack in the woods. They are Guy and Pat Skeer and their daughter Crystal. If you miss them, you just were not looking and you will have missed some great people.

See you in ENGLAND!!!!

Ron and Marla Miller

### SKY CHAT

As there is so much in this edition of "Cowpat" I am only going to thank the contributors for their efforts and add my usual appeal for help during this coming season at events, especially at OUR festival at Lydiard Park.

Neil.

# Last but not least.

The sun is out and the winds are good it must signal the start of the new kite season. It will be good to catch up with you all after the long winter months. Our festival will soon be here we all know how time flies. So lets hope this year is good to the club and to the members wherever they may be representing kitting looking forward to seeing you all soon may the winds be good and the weather fair.

TRACY

## Kite Flying Safety Tips

### The NEVERS of Kite Flying

- Fly a kite in wet or stormy weather, try to keep your kite line dry.
  - Fly a kite near power lines, transmission towers or aerodromes.
  - Fly a kite with wire or anything metallic in the line.
  - Fly a strong pulling kite without wearing GLOVES.
  - Leave odd bits of flying line etc on the flying site.
  - Fly a kite at over 200 feet\*.
- \*Kite festivals may have C.A.A. clearance to fly higher..... ASK!

### The Things to AVOID

- Motorways, roads, car parks railway lines or buildings
- Airfields and low flying air traffic patterns
- Members of the public... stunt flyers please take care!
- Those kite eating trees.
- Animals, they can be frightened by kites.

*Remember... your kites can get really quite lonely up high in the sky, just occasionally, look up and give them a little SMILE.*

... AND PLEASE, MIND THOSE POWER LINES!

## Where the WHKF go to fly their kites

WHITE HORSE KITE FLYERS fly at Barbury Castle Country Park, Wroughton, Swindon, Wilts on the SECOND Sunday of each month  
Will YOU be there?

Local WHKF contacts are:

Neil Harvey on: (01285) 740295

Arthur Dibbie on: (01635) 865976

Dave Robinson on: (01793) 824208

and

Lynn & Brian Simpson on: (01793) 845346

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