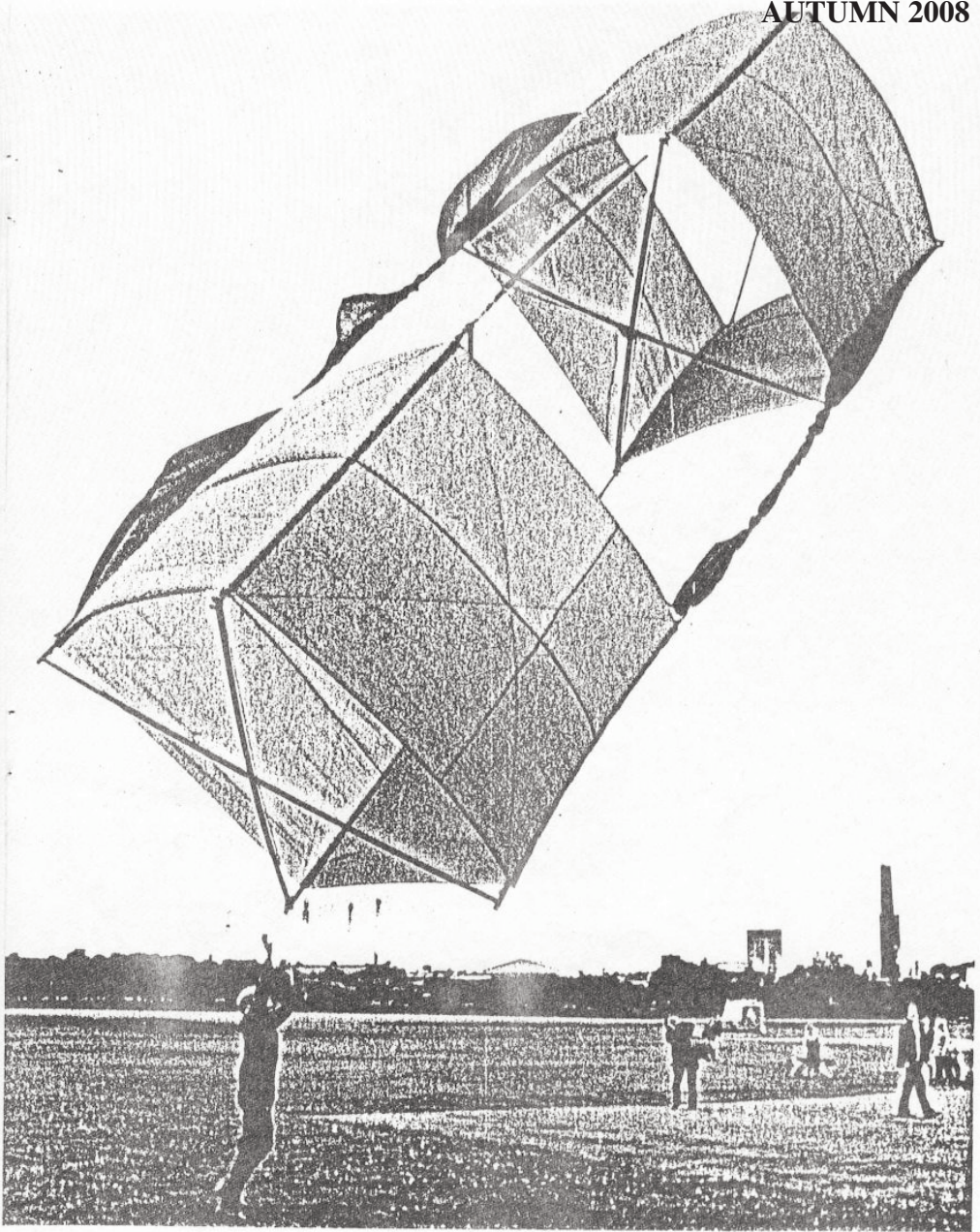


THE KITE

NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2008





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DAKINE

A Note from your Chairman

Hi All, we have something to celebrate, the 30th birthday of the Northern Kite Group, The NKG was formed in November 1978, and thanks to all our member we are still going strong, and enjoying flying kites.

As we all know its been a damp flying season, with events cancelled all over the place, so we made sure we enjoyed the ones that survived. The 2 day Beacon festival in June was brilliant, the local scouts brought us a marquee and some of the NKG members helped to erect it. The PA system this year was operated by volunteer NKG members who did a grand job of working to a rota. The auction held on Saturday evening with Neil Edwards and Phil Ashton in charge (They made a very entertaining double act) raised the magnificent amount of £673.00 half of which will be going to the groups only charity event LUTS (Light Up The Sky) for Children In Need.



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Our Fleetwood fly-in was a good day out at the beach, theres a large free car park, a Kite Shop and a cafe with food & drink at reasonable prices and a Loo, all at the edge of a wonderful flying site.

The Morecambe fly-in which is held on the beach at the side of the newly refurbished Midland Hotel is always a good venue with lots of holiday town atmosphere. Dave Holt organises the kite flying part of the event and gives the group a donation if enough members turn up to fly. Tony & Marie from Go Kites certainly seemed to be busy trading all day.

The Bolton-Le-Sands 2 day fly-in was WET and BLEW A GALE, and apart from having a good natter is best forgotten about. Next year will be better.

Now for Chester, the 2 day gathering we all look forward to, held in the middle of the Roodee Racecourse, its like a big family outing, this year we had 2 glorious days but NO WIND!!! We did manage to hold the altitude sprint and put some kites in the sky, but it would have been nice to have the Chester sky full of kites.

Now will someone bring me my soapbox out please, Yes here I go again, SAFETY, it has to be mentioned, because it is so important. So for our new members and for those who would like to be reminded, Dazzz will be including a kite safety rules list in this magazine, please read it.

Your own little Rocker
Enid

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Your own little Rocker
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Annual General Meeting to be held 18th January 2009

12noon till approximately 4pm

PLEASE NOTE The Church Hall at Newton Heath is not available for the AGM meeting

The NEW VENUE for the meeting will be notified to members nearer the date of the meeting and as soon as we have finalised the details.

There will be a free meal provided.

The usual activities will include

Best Kite Competition 2 classes large and small

A Straightforward competition. The kite is to be made by the entrant and the one voted best by the members present is the winner.

If you want this competition to continue more entries are needed than last year. All the cup winners in this annual competition since its inception have been exceptional in the design of the kite and /or its decorative applique work . (note a small kite will be one whose width plus spine length is not more than two metres)

Displays of Photographs, Kites, videos etc.

Private sales of kites and associated bits and pieces.

Please note there will not be a raffle or auction this time

Presentation of Cups

AGM Agenda

- 1 Report by the committee .
2. Receive and adopt the annual statement of accounts.
3. Any other business (see below)
4. Election of officers Editor, Treasurer, Secretary & Chairman
Appointment of one member to act as auditor

AOB

Future Direction of the Club Festivals etc

Flying sites for Fly ins, review . Monthly programme of events/ fly ins, including OSOW and Light Up the Sky

Safeguarding Children update on the New Act and its implications for all Club members.

Please note Although any other business can be raised at the meeting it would be preferred if items could be notified to the Secretary beforehand.

PROPOSED NKG FLY-IN LIST 2009/2010

18	January	AGM	Central
15	February	New Brighton	West
22	March	Roundhay Park	East
19	April	Crosby	West
17	May	Pontefract	East
21	June	Fleetwood	West
18&19	July	Bolton-Le-Sands	West
16	August	Pontefract	East
19&20?	September	Chester	West
???	October	OSOW & LUTS	East & West
15	November	New Brighton	West
13	December	Otterspool & Stainland	East & West
17	January	AGM	Central
21	February	New Brighton	West
21	March	Roundhay Park	West

After posting the list to the NKG forum and asking for feedback I got a few suggestions back regarding the Fly-ins. One suggestion was to separate the three fly-ins in the east at the start of the year which I have done in the list above.

Another suggestion was to have dual fly-in locations in case people didn't want to travel across country for a fly-in or if the weather was looking dodgy in one particular area, and also the current economic climate and fuel costs, whilst there are several good reasons why it would be a good idea I feel it might fragment the whole purpose of the fly-ins which is for members of the group to get together to fly kites, therefore I would suggest we offer several more dual location fly-ins over the winter months when weather is more likely to be an issue, I will add this as a proposal to the AGM then the members can vote on whether they want to follow this route, adding the extra locations afterwards would be a relatively simple task.

Another suggestion was made to do away with fly-ins during the spring/summer months May to September due to the number of other Festivals and events taking place. This has been considered in the past and we do deviate from the third Sunday of the month rule sometimes to qualify an event as an NKG fly-in. However I do think that more choice is good and I do try to suggest a Fly-in location well away from any other events where possible so that people who wouldn't necessarily travel a long distance to an event that may occur on a certain date have a fly-in nearer to them. However I will ask for the I will add this as a proposal to the AGM so the members can vote on the idea.

If you do have any ideas or proposals on the subject please feel free to post them on the NKG forums or by contacting a member of the committee.

Please note this is only a proposed list, it may change several times before the AGM as other events are announced or get changed as a result of votes at the AGM itself. And we are also on the lookout for any decent Central or Eastern fly-in sites that may be of use as well, preferably with toilet facilities.

Dazzz

AT WHAT AGE DID YOU FEEL MATURE ENOUGH TO FLY A KITE?

As a nation Where the hell are we going?

I read in the last magazine that whilst flying with the NKG, a CHILD? of seventeen years and eleven months must be accompanied by an parent or legal guardian (one who IS a full member) at Club events. Please note, we are not a club, we are a Group.

At the age of eighteen years and one day, he/she can become a FULL member and so take responsibility for any number of joint members of any age,(providing that they are each from 'Close' family of the eighteen year old). What miraculously happens on an eighteenth birthday?

It would appear that the longer we encourage our offspring to attend formal education, the less we trust their competence to face the 'perils' of adult life. I, along with most of my age group, left full time education at the age of 13 years and 362 days (say 14), still wearing short pants. I started full time working a forty four hour week, in a factory, full of DANGEROUS machinery, 10 days later Miraculously, I survived, unscathed.

At the tender age of eighteen and two weeks I was conscripted into the army where I was sent to Northern Ireland to complete six weeks preliminary training. No close family relations were allowed to come along to comfort or guide me.

I was given a rifle and taught how to aim and fire it (very dangerous). I was shown, with the help of a bag filled with straw, how to stick a bayonet into someone's belly. When I could do that with some degree of success, I was given a Bren gun to fire (500 rounds per minute). Even more dangerous. Likewise a Sten gun and then a 0.38 revolver.

At the end of this highly dangerous preliminary training they gave me a 34 ton tank, capable of travelling at 32 M.P.H, propelled by a 600 Horse Power Rolls Royce Meteor engine, It was fitted with a 77mm cannon to discharge high explosive shells. It was also fitted with TWO machine guns but had no brakes to slow it down or stop it. And, I was still barely out of my childhood. Nevertheless, I was soon put on a ship, along with many other 'minors' and sent off to Italy and encouraged to kill as many as I could, before they killed me!

NOW, at the age of 17 years and 364 days, you can't fly a kite with the NKG ... unless Mummy or Daddy (or some other 'CLOSE relative) is there to hold your hand. (See Rule 10.1 or something or other) What, in heavens name, are we coming to?.

How close does a 'close relative' have to be in order to meet this criteria? We have a great grandson who lives in Doncaster He is seventeen years of age and has a couple of ASBO's to his name. He has also spent some time in front of the beak, due to his being drunk and disorderly and for persistently riding his motor bike too fast. (Yes, at seventeen, he can ride a motorbike, on his own, but he can't fly a kite with the N.K.G.!

We have very good neighbours, who have a son of 10 or eleven years. A nice lad and we have a conversation over the garden fence on most days. He goes shopping for us and we are able to trust him with a ten pound note to pay for our purchases. Always, we get the correct change, whereas I wouldn't trust my great grandson with a ten pence piece. Remember, he is not a close relative. Which of these two could I bring flying with me?

Another point which I find perplexing is that these rules and regulations have now been passed on to the present members, via the magazine. New members joining from here on, will need to be made aware of these restrictions. Will they be passed forward to the prospective members on a revised Application for Membership Form or will they only be informed of the current rules and regulations, after they have been enrolled?

I fear that if it is to be done before enrolment, this could significantly reduce the number of applications being made.

Jackcee.

NKG FLY-IN FLEETWOOD JUNE 2008

Fleetwood is a relatively new venue as a fly-in site for the NKG so for those of you who haven't made the trip to this site before I suggest you make a note in your diary next time around as it really is a superb spot.

The site has its own kite shop which is very member friendly; there is a cafe and toilets within 10 yards of the beach and the views across the bay toward Cumbria are spectacular. It's a great spot to watch the Kite-surfers here as well, though on this occasion a competition further up the road robbed us of the pleasure as they all headed off toward Barrow.

On the day in question a challenging wind was blowing more than enough for everyone - 'The Revelations' quad-line display team were flying their vented kites pretty much all day long. The Lightfoots had made the trip over from Redcar with Peter flying various kites, of which, his smallest 'flowform' was ideally suited to the 20mph+ winds.

Another valiant supporter of the club, Dennis Chappell made the journey over and it's always good to see him. Both Dennis and John Braidwood know the area very well and gave us good tips about when the winds would start to ease and sure enough at about 3pm the winds became much more manageable.

Ian, Julie and young Adam Parkes popped over for a fly, though it wasn't easy recognising Adam as he's grown about a foot in the last few months. Your committee was represented by both Mary and Enid, with Roger looking as though he was thoroughly enjoying getting the cobwebs blown off him. Steve & Lynn from the Blackpool area came along and amazed the locals with some superb ground displays.

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A late arrival on the day was Bernard Crick with a 'hot' delivery of freshly made ground stakes (thanks pal) and his new 40ft spinnaker which astounded one little lad so much he ran home to get his mum to come back and look at it! Bernard then produced his latest Robert Van Weers angel fish and set up such a spectacle that my better half (Lindsey) declared him the winner of 'best in show'.

I remember when I first saw an amazing kite display and the effect it had on me – the more kites in the air, the more spectacular it is – which is why it's so important to support your club event if you possibly can. There are many of us who fly at local venues pretty much every week – sometimes even twice a week – but on the day of the NKG's actual fly-in, why not come along and support that instead, you would really help promote the club that has helped so many of you - go back to your local event for the next 3 weeks of any month but on the date we set aside for the clubs monthly fly-in, try and come along and help give something back if you can.

For me, the day was a chance to fly my latest building project. This was a conyne delta built using a rather interesting technique of heat sealing all seams together before sewing. It was a project I found on an internet forum which specifically helps and advises on kite building – it is rather cunningly called 'kitebuiler.com' and if you have any interest in wanting to start building your own kites, I strongly recommend you visit the site. The kite flew wonderfully and the kind of grin that only appears on your face when you've built the kite yourself stayed with me for the rest of the day.

As the day was coming to an end, the conditions were near perfect. I'm not sure the group has a flying site with such a wonderful backdrop and there was just enough time for a bit of trick flying before heading off back home. It was one of those perfect moments where kite, man, and nature all joined together as one to give us one of those never to forget moments. A great day, and well worth another visit.

Neil Edwards

NKG BEACON KITE FESTIVAL 2008

This years festival at the Beacon Country Park was another fantastic occasion. There were just as many attendees and campers from around the country again, despite the clash with the event at New Brighton.

Unless the winds are from the South, its always a challenging fly here - but the camaraderie and bonhomie that blows along this meeting, more than make up for it! The rangers had done their usual 1st rate job at making sure everything was in place.

Go Kites were once again supporting the event – if you’ve not met them yet, they’re our favourite kite traders in the world and look after the NKG like no-one else can in selling great kites.

Some great displays from all the fliers kept the public happy – and once again the public turned up in great numbers.

If you missed this years show, you missed some new commentators taking to the microphone that would have Murray Walker looking over his shoulder if he was still in the game. If your event is lacking some good old fashioned ‘strict discipline’ then there’s a new girl who’s taken to the ‘mike’ who will knock things into shape pretty damn quick I can tell you! (Get in touch for details) – But seriously, the usual lack of volunteers to help with commentary was turned on its head this year, and a great job everyone did. Thanks to all.



Photo courtesy of Mary Jones

‘Sky Artists’ provided most of the ‘inflatable show kite displays’ and Jim’s leadership skills meant there was barely any room for slacking or for a much deserved drink or two in the hot conditions. ‘Jims got crabs!’ was the alarming call from the commentary booth, causing the ladies who had agreed to look after Jim (in Vanessa’s absence) to break into a sweat – but calm was soon restored when the man himself lofted his new Peter Lynn mid-size crab into the heavens to compliment the rest of the teams display.

NKG BEACON KITE FESTIVAL 2008

'The Revelations' 4-line display team kept flying all day as per usual.

The call to arms for box kites / bird kite displays etc etc from the whole group was met with an unusual surprising vigour – and the whole thing just kept rolling along nicely.

Some members had travelled further than others this year, and Jock & Peter from the North East blessed us with some of their unique displays which showed of their talents as some of the countries best kite builders.

The Saturday evenings traditional auction had a bit more spice this year with your Committee (God bless them all) deciding to split the money raised between the club and our favourite charity, 'Children in Need'

With a new auctioneer's team of Phil Ashton and my good self, the Group broke all previous auction records by a country mile – and huge thanks go to those who donated and purchased what will surely prove to be, in future years, some highly valuable investments.

Sunday dawned with yet more sunshine and lovely breezes with another sky full of kites. The traditional NKG sprint cup is held annually on this day and this years winner was deserving of the title more so than I think words can express, having been done out of the title for what seems like an eternity, a rather handsome chap with looks similar to my own, finally took the trophy home. Phew.



Photo courtesy of Mary Jones

Another great moment on the Sunday came from Stuart Baldwin. When the trick-kite fly started to dissolve with injuries and lack of participants, Stuart took to the centre of the arena and put on an impromptu show which really excelled beyond what we all were hoping for.

All of this and a lot more besides made for a great weekend, but the moment which made each and everyone of us smile, was when our very own little 'rocker' Enid Knowles showed up after being 'under the weather' for a while. It's strange the effect that such a little person can have – though I'm glad it happens, and when it does the breeze is sweeter and the kites fly better. You are loved by pretty much each and every one of us Enid, and we hope a full recovery is just round the corner.

Neil Edwards

30 YEARS OF THE NKG

The Manchester Kite Festival
Heaton Park - North Manchester.
23 & 24th June 1990

When this event was first discussed last year, little did we realise that it would turn out to be such an International Festival, with so many foreign kite flyers involved. After many meetings with the Manchester Olympic Festival and our own members, Ruth Floate and Andy King, arranged and booked the guest flyers and during the last few days allowed for organising, we were offered the six Malaysian kite flyers, courtesy of Malaysian Airways.

In the weeks leading up to the event we had many enquiries from British kite flyers, all eager to attend. The first real signs that things were beginning to happen was when I went to Manchester Airport early on Friday morning and met Fran and Mary Gramkowski from America and took them to their hotel in Prestwich. Later in the day, visiting Heaton Park and meeting other NKG members, seeing the marquee arriving and being erected and meeting Peter Reiliet and Rolf Sturm from Germany who had taken the opportunity to come and familiarise themselves with the proposed flying site. Both were pleased with the chosen site. Later in that same day, tents and caravans appeared and I realised that after all that planning, it was going to happen.

Saturday morning started very wet with rain falling from early morning. At the starting time shown on the programme, the rain was still falling. Some kites were flying but the general feeling was that we were in for a very wet day. The visiting public were very scarce and making good use of the under-cover events, particularly the Kite Workshop, being run by Martin Laurence and David Ives.

Fortunately, after lunch the sun came out, the sky turned blue, the wind was quite strong and the kites appeared, so did the public, who were treated to an afternoon of interesting and spectacular kite displays. The display included a Rokaku Challenge and a display of kites being flown by the visiting overseas flyers. This included the giant soft kite in the form of a Dragon Fly belonging to Peter Reiliet, Snoopy's air-plane, complete with parachuting lollipops, flow by Rolf Sturm. Many other kites were flown, all accompanied by an interesting and informative commentary delivered on the P. A. system by Andy King.



30 YEARS OF THE NKG

On Saturday evening 113 kite flyers enjoyed a hearty meal in the on site marquee, fitted with a Chandelier and wall lights. This was a very friendly affair with a great mix of people, plenty of interesting talk and good food, all accompanied by a group of talented musicians and singers. A raffle was organised with the prizes being donated by the visiting stall holders. Many thanks to those who donated and a useful sum of £47-00 was raised for the NKG funds.

Kite flying continued throughout the evening and when darkness fell, out came the kites with lights on and a spot light to illuminate the kites not fitted with lights. Martin Laurence attached fireworks to one of his kites for a fine display of aerial fireworks. I saw what I think was the last kite down at 11-50PM, so ending an excellent day of friendship and kite flying.

Sunday morning started with brilliant sunshine, with kites flying from before 7-00 AM and with a good day in prospect ... but by 11-00 AM, the time for our official start, the rain had returned and continued throughout the day. An announcement was made that the festival was to close but by 3-00 PM the rain had stopped, the sun shone and everybody was wanting to fly again. A Rokaku Challenge was quickly arranged and we still had a good number of spectators and with all of the flyers taking part, this was the final of a kite festival to be remembered.



This was the first large festival that the NKG have organised. Not everything went according to plan but on the whole, judging from comments made, all were complimentary and said how much they had enjoyed the festival and hoped that there would be a second Manchester Festival in 1991. This event could not have taken place without the help of the Manchester Olympic Festival Committee and a very big thanks must go to them for their help with sponsorship, organising ability etc. A special thanks to Ruth Floate for her untiring help.

Many thanks also to the member of the NKG who attended meetings to organise this event and, of course, those who helped over the weekend. A lot of hard work was put in, but it appears to have been enjoyed.

This was our FIRST and we learned a lot. It may come easier the second time around.

Ron

From Kite Magazine No.2

how viable are we? I've had a number of requests for a list of members, and here it is. I know that some people are wery about having their address published, so I'll just give name and town, in the order in which you joined.

1. Les Navier, Hull
2. Martin Powell, Rochdale.
3. Sarah and Dave Green, Greens of Burnley to you.
4. Ian and Krystyna Walton, Rochdale.
5. John Spendlove, Preston.
6. Chris Williamson, York
7. Derek Wadeson, Sale.
8. John Gregory, Bradford.
9. Richard Hewitt, Frodsham.
10. Mike Ware, Manchester.
11. Alan Rigby, St. Helens.
12. Bob Ayton, Liverpool.
13. David Holmes, Keighley.
14. Anne Evans, Hale.
15. Frank and Mark Holterman, Hale.
16. K. Boddy, Hull
17. NLL, Lee, Liverpool.
18. Frank Jevons, Barnsley.
19. R.J. Gampbell, Northallerton.
20. Mark Anderson, Ilkley.
21. Eddie Bentley, Hull.
22. Stan Frost, Bolton (let's have your new address Stan!)
24. B.W. Marshall, Morecambe.
25. Bill Chasband, Stockport.

So you can see we are a well scattered group. Hull to Liverpool. Which naturally creates problems for those wanting to attend rallies that could be 100 miles away. The Sheiks have rather put the mockers on it. The other thing of course is that although the list stops at 25, it doesn't reflect the true membership, since there are many children and wives who enliven proceedings with their presence. I'm thinking particularly of Kate and Robert Green (you'd be surprised how many of you feature in their diaries!) and Russell and Nicholas Ware. So if we were all to gather in a field somewhere, we could certainly be looking at forty people, and if they all flew every kite they owned at once.....

1998 - 20 Years of the Northern Kite Group

In the November of 1978, an announcement was made in the Manchester Evening News, saying that on the following Sunday, a kite day would be taking place on Firgrove playing field, Rochdale. I told Norman Booth about this and we both decided to go. People were asked to bring kites. I had made an 24ins plastic sled kite without any vents in it. When we arrived there were quite a few kites flying. We attached a line and launched our kite. And it flew perfectly. Whilst it was flying, a "professional" kiteflyer came along and said something along the lines of "that should not fly without vents in it". When we came home, Norman and myself measured the line and found that we had, had 600 feet of line out on that kite that should not have flown. Later on that day, Dave and Sarah Green (Greens Kites) took a few names and along with the organiser, started what was to become the Northern Kite Group. A short time later, at a kite exhibition in Manchester, I put my name down a list, was contacted and joined the NKG.

Like many small groups, it has had its ups and downs but has survived for the past 20 years. I could not say why. Maybe some of our members would like to say why, and how can we continue for another twenty.

Ron

30 YEARS OF THE NKG

Eventually I walked back (not too far fortunately) – but by then it was raining and I slowly discovered one of the snags of decorating kites with powder paints.

To quote Martin, “I took a list of names, but I’m no Clive Rawlinson, and couldn’t bring myself to say, ‘Here’s a kite group, fly me!’ Maybe the pressure of a brand-new 7lb screaming bundle of fun was too inhibiting for him! Anyway, at the autumn meeting at Old Warden, Sarah Green swung into full inveigle. She collared John Athorn, and I, and nagged us all afternoon The result was a circular, announcing a Sunday meeting at the Greens, with flying afterwards. The 5th November 1978 was the inaugural meeting of the N.K.G.

Thirty people were present of whom Martin was lumbered with the job of Secretary, and Mike Ware was rail-roaded into the role of Chairman. Later, John Spendlove became the International Secretary and Richard Hewitt the Treasurer.

During the first year there were no less than seventeen N.K.G. organised events, including the first “make a sled with the kiddies” session – you need to be fit to do one of those!

Martin produced the first couple of newsletters, but was finding the job a bit too much on top of his other commitments. So, in November, I took over as Secretary and David Holmes started to edit the newsletter. In May 1980, it acquired the name “KITE”, and I think you all know the rest!

Ian Walton.

Below is a reproduction of the article from Mr Manchester's Diary, dated Tuesday, August 29th 1978

When they fly kites these days, they fly them high. Hence a request to the Civil Aviation Authority for clearance to hold the Great Northern Kite Rally at Rochdale on September 9th.

“We hope it will be the biggest thing ever held in the North” says one of the organisers, 39 year old chemistry lecturer Dr Mike Ware.

The special clearance he and his friend Martin Powell of Manchester Rd, Rochdale have asked for is to allow flights higher than the official 200ft limit.

“These days, even average kites can be flown up to 1,00 ft” says Mike. I’ve seen them go up to a mile”

Among the contraptions expected to be shown at the rally is a ‘train’ of war kites from a Burnley supplier. They are of a type dating back to the 19th century which have been used by military observers of several nations in wartime. One was demonstrated by Bristol enthusiast David Turner, who was lifted to a height of several hundred feet.

But the train (group) to be shown at Rochdale will be a scaled down version. “The 20ft span man-carrying kite we are having made will not be ready in time for the rally,” Says Greens of Burnley. There will be no entry fees for the rally at Firgrove Playing Fields and it is open to all enthusiasts. So far there is no kite club in the north Says Mike: “We hope to get one off the ground” Ho, ho, .

30 YEARS OF THE NKG

THE NORTHERN KITE GROUP

How did it all start?

Well it would appear that a group of people in the Manchester area, each of whom were mildly interested in kite flying, and headed by Doctor Mike Ware of Manchester University, wondered how many other people in the area, if any, were also attracted to the interest of flying kites.

They decided to test the water by putting a letter in the pages of the Local news paper (The Manchester Evening News), inviting like minded people to join them in a Sunday afternoon 'fly-in' at a flying site situated in Rochdale. The response to this would give them some idea of the need for an organised group.

The outcome of this announcement is to be seen in the article headed GENESIS OF THE NKG, by Mr Ian Walton, a past member of the Group. The Article was first published in our magazine at the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the forming of the NKG. Nevertheless, it still makes interesting reading and not many of our present day readers will have read it when it was first published.

GENESIS OF THE NKG

In the 10th Anniversary Issue of the KITE Newsletter in August 1988 one of the early members of N.K.G. Mr Ian Walton, wrote for the record, what he recalled of the starting point for the Group.

EARLY DAYS

I can still remember the day I really got hooked on kite flying - I had read Tal Streeter's book, and saw the photograph of brightly coloured Rokkaku's in the blue Japanese sky. That was in Summer 1978 and like everyone else who was mildly interested in kite flying, I had a Peter Powell stunter, and a copy of the book "Kites" by David Pelham. There were not many clubs or kite shops around then, and I didn't know where one could buy surplus exotic materials like rip stop! However, I soon built some traditional bamboo and paper designs, and spent many happy hours flying in a field near our flat, watching my kites overhead in those days the weather was always sunny and we didn't have children.

All the time, events were moving closer to the formation of N.K.G.

The year 1977 had been a bumper year for kiting, with quite a few rallies, including Old Warden and one up here in the north, at Northwich. People were getting to know one another, and the nucleus of a Northern Group was gradually emerging. In 1978 Greens of Burnley appeared on the scene and Sarah Green started pushing the idea of a kite group here in the north west. Finally Mike Ware and Martin Powell organised a rally in Rochdale, just to see how many people might be interested.

I saw a note in the Manchester Evening News and went along. It was amazing! There seemed to be dozens of kites in the air, of all different kinds. The Green's train of Cody's was visible from far away; I can't now remember many of the others, except for a Hewitt Flexykite and Lionel Lowe's Red Arrows – that was the first of several occasions his train came into contact with one of my kites, with painful results!

Someone came round collecting names and addresses and I stayed so long that my wife got fed up, and set off home, in the car without me.

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A HOBBY THAT STARTED BY ACCIDENT (OR WAS IT FATE?)

It all began when my wife “suggested” that the loft area in our house could do with a clear-out and a bit of a tidy-up. Ours is a typical loft, the place where you store things that you feel you will never use again but are reluctant to dispose of, like Auntie Amy's green coloured flower vase or the remnants of the hobby you were interested in ten years ago, etcetera.

Having prepared myself for a safari across the ceiling joists and roof trusses (I'd even managed to find myself a torch, complete with batteries with sufficient 'life' left in them) and changed into my 'working clothes'. It can get rather mucky in these places!

I hauled myself up through the trap door, set off towards the rear of the property, turned left at the arm chair with the broken spring (must get around to repairing that one day) when ... hold on.... How did we get that? There in the beam of my torch was a small plastic kite with a butterfly on the face. It had been lying there for at least four years, because we bought it for our son Cal-lum, when he was only five years old. (It had never been a success with him, he's just not into kites) but my daughter Mhairi was very excited by the find and we had to promise her that we would go and fly the kite, the next week-end.

The following weekend happened to be Easter, so on Thursday we made plans to go to the Yorkshire Dales to try the kite. We ended up near Settle on a very windy day (I had heard somewhere that you needed plenty of wind in order to fly a kite) and proceeded to launch the kite. Of course, as you have already guessed ... the kite crashed. At about the same time my credibility with my Mahairi also went down to zero. There was little to do but to pack away one broken kite, and one skriking sprog, into the car and drive back home.

I tried to regain some esteem and credibility in my daughters eyes by saying that I would repair the kite in order that we might try again, on another day.

How is the biter bit!

I could make no sense of how this thing had been put together. It must have come from an Oriental mind (Hong Kong actually). It was then that my wife suggested that I nip down to the local library and see what they have on 'kites' which might help solve the puzzle. At that time the library had only one book on kites and to be honest, I can't remember the name of the book or who wrote it, it did however show how to make and fly ten or so, different designs of kites.

That was it, I was hooked. It didn't take long before I had made AND FLOWN every kite in the book. Upon glancing at the appendix at the back of the book I found various the titles of other books on the same subject and the address of The European Kite Flyers, a club for people who were interested in kite flying. From this organisation I got the contact address of Mr Ian Walton, of the Northern Kite Group, I have been flying with them ever since and became editor of 'KITE' in 1986.

John Rigby (February 1991)

Reprinted from Issue No 50 of the KITE magazine.

Now 'Come On'. How about an article, suitable for the next magazine, telling us all how YOU became interested in flying kites. DO IT NOW!

Jackcee

NKG XMAS FLY-INS 2008

STAINLAND CHRISTMAS FLY-IN (14th December)

The Stainland Christmas Fly-in Meal this year will be held, the same as last year, at The Waggon and Horses at Outlane, (HD3 3YP postcode for those with Sat-nav or multimap access).

I will book the meal for 3.30pm. See below the ordinary Sunday Lunch menu plus the Christmas Fayre Menu, either of these menu's can be chosen.

A £5 deposit per person is required at the time of booking, so will anyone wishing to attend please let me, Sheila Smith know as soon as possible but before 28th October please, as we are away all of November.

Either by

Telephone ---- 01422 376208

or E-mail ---- rayandsheilasmith@tiscali.co.uk

sending cheques payable to:- S.T.SMITH at

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HALIFAX.
WEST YORKSHIRE.
HX5 9EH

They would like to know your choice of food. (This is because the restaurant part will be staying open just for us, (they would normally close at 3.00pm). If you can decide what you want to eat and let me know I would be much obliged.

Sunday Lunch Menu

Pate & Toast £2.65

Homemade Soup £2.25

Prawn Cocktail £3.25

Yorkshire Pudding & Onion Gravy £2.55

All Main Courses £5.65

Roast Beef, Horseradish & Yorkshire Pud

Roast Loin Pork, Apple Sauce, Stuffing & Yorkshire Pud

Roast Chicken, Stuffing & Yorkshire Pud

Homemade Meat & Potato Pie

Deep Fried Cod in Batter

Spinach & Ricotta Cheese Canneloni

Leek & Mushroom Shepherds Pie

All Served With Fresh Vegetables & Potatoes

Desserts £2.75

Chocolate Sponge with Honey Rum & Chocolate Sauce

Sticky Toffee Pudding with Butterscotch Sauce

Apple Crumble with Ice cream

Meringue Glace with Hot Summer Fruits

Christmas Menu

3 Course £14.95

2 Course £12.55

Main course only £9.75

Homemade Minestrone & Parmesan

Prawn Cocktail with Rosemarie Sauce

Egg Mayonnaise Salad

Yorkshire Pudding with Onion Gravy

=====

Roast Norfolk Turkey, Chipolata Saus, Cranberry Sauce, Chestnut Stuffing

Roast Loin of Pork, Chipolata Saus, Apple Sauce & Stuffing

Vegetarians Choice

Roast and Creamed Potatoes

Fresh Seasonal Vegetables

=====

Christmas Pudding & Brandy Sauce

Homemade Apple Crumble & Ice Cream

NKG XMAS FLY-INS 2008

OTTERSPOOL CHRISTMAS FLY-IN (14th December)

The Otterspool pub is currently undergoing refurbishment due to a change of brewery, but Menu's are expected to be available after 3rd November when the pub re-opens.

Flying is until 4-5pm when everybody will be heading to the pub for the meal, if you want to get your name down please contact Flo, Beryl or Dave Green and let them have a £5 deposit in advance.

The meal is expected to be in the range of £14 per head but Flo will contact you when the menu is available and confirm the prices.

KITE SAFETY

- Never fly near overhead power lines
- Never fly near roads
- Never fly near buildings
- Never fly near animals
- Never fly within 5KM of an airport (2 miles)
- Never fly using lines longer than 60m (200 feet)
- Always check the wind before you launch your kite, beginners should start in light wind, and progress with experience.
- Beginners should avoid gusty wind conditions.
- Always fly within your ability, never underestimate the power of the wind.
- Always be aware of people around you, spectators can become curious, if they move to close, land your kite and wait until they have moved on.
- Always wear appropriate safety equipment for the activity you are doing.
- Always pay attention to any local rules or by-laws
- Check your equipment regularly for signs of wear, replace any worn parts.

BLUE PETER AND THE CAST OF THOUSANDS...

Bristol International Kite Festival, August 2008

About five weeks before the festival an enquiry came in from the BBC through an introduction by Andrew Beattie, Blue Peter wanted to celebrate their 50th Anniversary at the Bristol International Kite Festival. Karl was asked to design a shield shaped kite that could fly individually and be made up into a train of 50 during the day, after children had decorated them. He was also asked to produce 3 team rokkaku kites for the three Blue Peter presenters to fly in the rokkaku fight on the Sunday.

Sunday 31st August 2008 dawned as a grey day closely followed by heavy rain. This did not bode well for the festival or the BBC. The producer and cameraman arrived on the field at about 8:30am to see the rain pouring off our 'sun shelter' into the dog's drinking bowl. (We were holding a race with Derek Kuhn at the time to see whose dog bowl filled the quickest....)

We all ignored the weather and started to prepare for the job in hand; taking the materials into the marquee ready for the children to paint and decorate the Tyvek shields which we had stencilled in advance. The children began to arrive, Simon Hennessey's girls, Jason Mark's twins, Kelvin Wood's two children, a few multiline offspring plus some others and on went their aprons; we could recognise the kitefliers' children, they were dressed ready to paint! We did warn the parents that we were using acrylic paints that would not wash out of clothing; a good job really when one very smartly dressed offspring managed to get blue paint on their nice pair of new white leggings.

The children worked in twos or threes for the most part and soon the first kite was complete, at which point out came the kite line and the clothes pegs I'd thrown in at the last minute; we had to get these kites dry, only 49 to go! The children were fantastic, they worked together to produce some real masterpieces whilst I was rushing round trying to make sure every kite had the artists name(s) on the back. In no time at all, the announcement was made 'they're here'. After a brief introduction the presenters were in there, happily painting away and chatting to the children, it was a lovely relaxed atmosphere. Every now and then some filming took place but it was so low key that the children remained calm and cool. We had to clear the marquee for some of the longer shots but food and drink was provided and a break was enjoyed by everyone.



Once the presenters and crew had disappeared and the children were all given a treasured Blue Peter badge, the painting continued, well by a couple anyway; possibly the more star struck needed a quiet lie down! Amy Baker, Clara Kuhn, Thomas and George Bindon and Rhiannon Hollingworth all stepped in at this point to help and in no time at all it seemed we had come to the end of the blank kites; a few had been taken away for some other shots.

Thank the children, make sure they too had badges, send them off and sit down for a couple of peaceful minutes before clearing up. One of the crew helped as we emptied the paint pots and got rid of most of the mess; I'd kept mostly paint free until then, still it had to be done. Now let's just check how many we've got.... 42, 43, 44..... s*** there's not enough.

Panic? No. Where are those kites they took away? OK, get them back and count again. Oh dear, still not enough were painted. Now I know we had made 55 kites, I knew 4 were not stencilled and the producer had painted one on Saturday evening that Karl had been flying as an individual shield earlier for the film. Right get that one back and paint the prototype just in case. There we were the two of us quietly painting away when in comes Sam Collins, with his sister, the timing could not have been better.

Painting over, 51 decorated kites, 51 kites with wet paint. Where is Karl in all this? Not only had he been flying the single shield kite, he had also been giving some rokkaku flying lessons to the presenters ready for the first battle of the day but he did manage to creep back to base camp for a bit of peace and quiet. Bob Cruikshanks, Stuart Lafferty and Dave Johnson all had the (un)enviable task of working with a presenter each in the rokkaku battle and from what I could see those Blue Peter rokkakus flew a long time, well done you three.



Quick lunch, start to assemble the stack with the first few dry kites and back to filming; playing on the question as to whether the kites would be dry in time. Karl had to show the presenters how to assemble the kites, a few rehearsals, a few takes and a few kites to reassemble once the film crew had gone. Some people just have perfect timing, Michael Goddard appeared from nowhere and helped with the final assembly of the train and disappeared just as quietly, thank you Michael.

Into the main arena ready for the launch, Karl was getting nervous and the wind was getting up. In came the film crew, the children, the presenters, the extra cameramen, the parents with cameras, oh, and me. A final shot of the children with the presenters and then the time had come, the launch began. Well, not quite, the first five were launched a second time and then one by one they came out of the bag. The crowd was quiet, as was the PA (because of the filming) and as the last one flew there was a huge round of applause from the Great Ouse Kite Fliers and a few others too I'm sure. Another thank you here for Dave Nicholl who happened to be there at the right/wrong time and became anchorman for the train. There were a few anxious moments and not every kite was perfectly aligned at all times but the train flew and flew well, much to everyone's relief. There was a camera mounted under the manta ray sending back aerial footage of all this but they hadn't quite got the right shot and the arena slot was over. Let's get this train back in the bag then we'll do a relaunch in the other arena to get the right shot; minor job. Anyone who thought that, ask Nick Moss, yet another person who helped at just the right time, great stuff.

Thank the children, make sure they too had badges, send them off and sit down for a couple of peaceful minutes before clearing up. One of the crew helped as we emptied the paint pots and got rid of most of the mess; I'd kept mostly paint free until then, still it had to be done. Now let's just check how many we've got.... 42, 43, 44..... s*** there's not enough.

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A few of the kites needed new spars but considering the immense pressure the sails were under in that wind, the shields stood up to the conditions very well. Karl's reputation was intact, well except for the small lifter kite that totally refused to fly straight on the second launch, let's hope Nick did throw it away and not put it on ebay as a Karl Longbottom failure.

As a bit of a challenge to Karl, he had been presented with a pair of men's cotton briefs, late on the Saturday afternoon, to make into a kite that would fly. The two male Blue Peter presenters had been 'discreetly' displaying their underwear in the fashionable way during the day whilst filming, especially during the rokkaku fights. Whichever of the two of them lost, had to fly their pants. Funny enough there were three identical pairs that day, two were worn by the presenters and the third flew at about 20ft with a long blue tail so I hear. They must have heard about Karl's flying underwear.

The weather had been kind to us all and totally defied the forecast. The rain must have stopped by 9:00am and the skies slowly cleared to a bright and moderately sunny afternoon. It had been a long day, we just needed to hand the train and rokkakus over to the BBC and enjoy a peaceful, pleasant evening hoping we had managed to express our thanks to all the fantastic flyers who did whatever we asked, whenever we asked.

The cast of thousands?

They were our bed fellows on the Friday night at that nice hotel around the corner from the festival, Greentree Ledge or something. Luckily we spotted them before they began their feast and we changed rooms; I believe another kite flier was not quite so lucky.



Sara Longbottom

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NOVEMBER 2008

- 7 - 9 21st Fuerteventura International Kite Festival, La Playa del Burro, Corralejo, Fuerteventura, Canary Islands
16 MKF free flying day, Market Bosworth Country Park, Market Bosworth, Leicestershire
16 NKG fly-in, New Brighton Dips, Wirral, Merseyside

DECEMBER 2008

- 7 NEKF fly-in, Seaton Carew, Co. Durham
14 GOKF fly-in, Ferry Meadows Country Park, Ham Lane, Peterborough,
14 NKG Xmas Fly in and Lunch, overlooking the Mersey, Otterspool, South Liverpool
14 NKG Xmas Fly in and Lunch, Stainland Recreation Ground, Stainland, near Huddersfield and Halifax, Yorkshire
28 GOKF fly-in, Ferry Meadows Country Park, Ham Lane, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire

JANUARY 2009

- 4 MKF New Year fly-in, Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre and Country Park, Sutton Cheney, nr. Market Bosworth, Nuneaton, Leicestershire
12 - 14 19th Gujarat International Kite Festival, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India

FEBRUARY 2009

- 6 - 8 NZKA Annual Kite Festival, Crown Park, Taupo, New Zealand
15 NKG fly-in, New Brighton Dips, Wirral, Merseyside
22 Sale Moor Kite Festival, Moor Nook Park, Norris Road, Sale, Manchester

APRIL 2009

- 5 15th Calke Abbey Kite Day, Calke Abbey, Ticknall, near Melbourne, Derbyshire

MAY 2009

- 3 & 4 Weymouth International Kite Festival, Weymouth Beach, Dorset
29 - 31 3rd Exmouth Rotary International Kite Festival, The Imperial Recreation Ground, Exmouth, East Devon

JUNE 2009

- 6 & 7 Beacon Park Kite Festival, Beacon Hill County Park, Up Holland, nr Skelmersdale, Lancashire
13 & 14 Blackheath Kite Festival, Blackheath Common, London

JULY 2009

- 18 & 19 Leominster Kite Festival, Berrington Hall (National Trust), north of Leominster, Herefordshire

AUGUST 2009

- 29 - 31 Portsmouth International Kite Festival, Southsea Common, Portsmouth, Hampshire

SEPTEMBER 2009

- 5 & 6 22nd Bristol International Kite Festival, The Plateau, Ashton Court, Beggar Bush Lane, Bristol, Somerset



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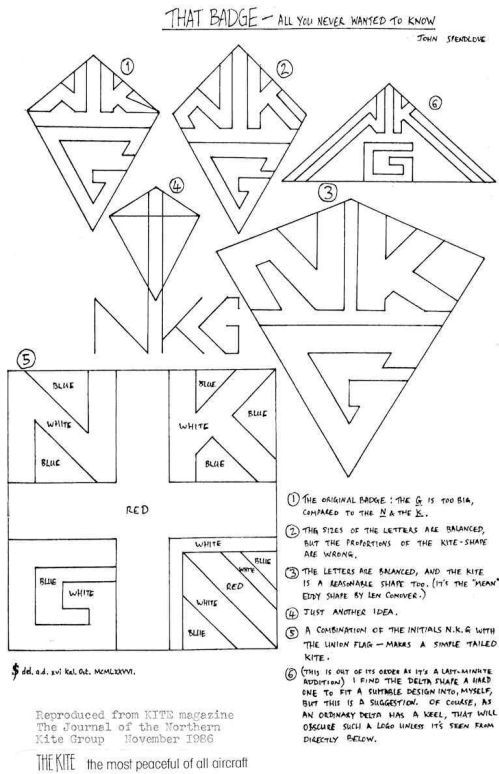
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Power sled 24	46.99	30.00
11ft mesh delta	120.00	80.00
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Cody 30	41.95	30.00
4m ostend birds	49.95	35.00
Eddy train	52.99	35.00
Large flying fish	139.00	90.00
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Bizarre flight of fancy helps thrill kite festival crowd

KIDS and adults alike were in seventh heaven at the Oldham Kite Festival.

Dozens of enthusiasts turned up for the seventh annual event on a bright and breezy day at the borough's highest point, Oldham Edge.

Tony Kidd, of the Northern Kite Group, wowed the crowd with his 30ft legs - in fine flying form, that is.

And youngsters of all ages showed off their own colourful kites as the wind whipped up a treat.

The event, organised by Oldham Arts and Entertainments in association with the Northern Kite Group, also featured guests from the North Eastern Kite Group.

Circus Sensible taught revellers to juggle, spin plates and walk a tight-rope, while Master Chu's Lion Dance Club and stiltwalkers showed off their amazing moves.

Revellers also took part in a mass balloon launch, with a prize for the balloon that travelled furthest.

High kicks... Tony Kidd flies his 30ft long creation at the Oldham Kite festival

