

BKFA COMMITTEE MEETING 28th October 2008-11-17 starting 7.30 PM

Held via a Skype Conference link and recorded on Pamela for accuracy.

Members on the link

John Caton - Chairman
Jerry Swift - Treasurer
Ernest Barton - Secretary
Arthur Dibble
Keith Griffith

Mike Lowe sent his apology that he was unable to take part.

Matters Arising from previous Minutes

1. Establishing Links with Traders had been deferred to a later date but this had not been mentioned in the minutes. Ernest apologised for this oversight.

2. Safety of Large Kites – The Chairman said Andrew Beattie had been interviewed with a Mini recorder to get a verbal account of his recent accident sustained from falling off the main kite rope he had been lifted by while flying the giant Kuwaiti Flag kite. However he did not come up with any useful statement that we could use on the website.

NB - Since this Skype meeting an article about the incident written by Andrew has appeared in the American Kiteflier Magazine next to the one on the death from similar circumstances of Steve Eideken 25 years ago – a salutary reminder of how dangerous giant kites can be, even to experienced fliers.

3. Insurance

4. Website RSS receiving – The Chairman said he was not having much success. The Treasurer asked if we needed another piece of software but Jon thought that this could be obtained as a free download. Ernest said that he now had a password to access the BKFA website but had made no alterations because there was a long screed built into the system asking why alterations were needed before one was allowed to make them. He found this unhelpful. There was therefore still one glaring error in the Short Form - Code of Conduct which is one part of the site every kite flier should read. Arthur Dibble said he had found at least one typo error on the site but had not noted where it was.

Jerry asked for the amended Code of Conduct passage to be sent to him so he could make the changes

NB - The error in this Code of Conduct has since been corrected.

5. WEBSITE CAP393 The Chairman asked if anything had come back from the Civil Aviation Authority regarding the legal position on kite flying in relation

to aircraft? Jerry said that the legal guy at CAA had spoken to him and it appeared that his previous assumptions about the relevant legislation had been correct but that the actual Kite expert at the CAA had not been available to speak to when he phoned.

6. It appeared that George Webster's article – relating to Historical Kite Competitions from the 1900's was not on the site yet. It was decided that Peter Bindon had to be asked to put this article on site to save time and complication.

7. BKFA Presence at Kite Festivals –The Chairman had come to the conclusion it was a waste of time turning up with leaflets and displays. It was agreed that there was little interest and what there was came mostly from non kite fliers. Jerry again posed the much reiterated question – who is our Target Market? There was very little interest from the rank and file members of kite clubs.

Jerry said The BKFA needed to produce useful support material for Kite Organisations. **We needed to target the Officers.** Perhaps by send them a Roundup of what we have done so far plus the Kites in Schools letter (see *below*).

8. Extended Contacts Scheme. Did we still want to get in touch with Foreign Clubs with the idea of becoming a central clearing house for invited foreign fliers? We could share these contacts around a bit more than the average club or Society.

Keith Griffiths suggested we could contact clubs so that if they have requests or invitations they could not do we could offer to pass them around to our other members. It was thought this should be mentioned in the next newsletter.

Jerry said that in the same way we might make a similar offer to European clubs.

It had been suggested last meeting that Ernest should send out invites to foreign clubs to get in touch with us and offer them a link on our website. Ernest confessed he had not found any functional European kite clubs to contact. The chairman said that the French no longer have a National Body that speaks for all French kite fliers. Keith Griffiths said that Sport Kitefliers in France have an FFEL Affiliation, but Jerry had found the FFEL link here is to the Royal Aero Club so there is no mention of Kites on it.

Jerry informed us that the Germans were in a similar position – their Organisation fell apart 2 years ago. German Law required a clear ongoing purpose and financial regularity for clubs which few could sustain. Jurgen Ebbinghaus does a bit still, but the club is going nowhere.

Concerning the American Kitefliers Association it was felt that formal contact through their Committee might be more appropriate than relying on informal contacts with individual members.

Ernest asked if anything had happened about the Afghanistan kite appeal.

Nothing had been done yet in the way of sending materials or western kites.

JC said that they had seen an Afghanistan stall at Bristol Kite Festival run by an organisation that were offering kits to make Afghan kites. He spoken to one of their team who thought that their organisation would offer to help and advise about us sending kites The Canadian girl on their stall thought that from what she had seen the people in towns were not that anti-western so might be amenable to flying western kites but out in the provinces she was not too sure.

AGENDA

Jerry had sent a letter to Zurich Insurance to see if they could insure the BKFA and individual members. Arthur said Whitehorse had a cover of £10Million from Zurich and Brighton had followed them. Nothing had been heard from Zurich so far.

Jerry said we needed a universal insurance Policy but getting anybody in insurance to take on the BKFA seemed nearly impossible in the present Financial Climate

CAP393

Jerry had done a lot of work on this Civil Aviation Authority document –

NB - it runs to 444 pages and is available as a PDF file from the CAA website

The CAA lawyer who he spoke to confirmed his initial opinion on a couple of things. There was no NEW legislation that gave us problems however the kite scene has changed a great deal in the last few years and Kites seen at Festivals have got much bigger.

The regulation says that any aircraft under 2 Kilograms in weight is not covered by these regulations but as soon as you cross this 2 kilogram limit some of the legislation becomes compulsory.

For most single line kites this is not a problem. For example the 3 metre European Air Gallery Edos with all their 36 metre bridles were each under 2 Kilograms in weight, so most kites under about 3 metres will be. However people are going for bigger and bigger inflatables, most of them weighing far in excess of 2 kilos so what are the minimum safety requirements for these?

Jon asked if kites below 2 Kilograms were classed as aircraft Jerry said that ALL kites were by Definition aircraft according to the CAA.

Thus there is a school of thought that Andrew Beattie should have reported his accident to the CAA. As the Kuwaiti Flag Kite weighs over a hundred Kilograms.

The Chairman asked about IASA self certification. Jerry explained that the aircraft industry is largely self regulating. So in being allowed to produce an IASA certified aircraft the manufacturer is assumed to be complying with all the requirements of an IASA specification. A Boeing 747 is an IASA aircraft, so is the Airbus 380.

All kites are aircraft by Definition so the CAA Lawyer's response was that indeed IASA **could** specify a standard kite if they wanted to, but the actual possibility of them bothering to do so was zero.

Ernest wondered if the greatest danger was actually from the rope breaking under strain – and whether building regulations about the breakage of steel hawsers might be relevant to large kites. Jerry believed that such catastrophic failures were covered by The Health and Safety at Work Act but it did not apply to these situations.

He thought that in such a case The Event Organiser would be deemed to have a duty of care and therefore would probably be liable for something but that the individual kiteflier responsible could only be charged with Criminal Negligence if an injury occurred and it was unlikely anyone would be.

What actually happens when a kite accident occurs? Generally kite clubs are not interested in finding out and it appears that the CAA is not interested in kites because nobody is perceived to have a problem.

We have been VERY LUCKY SO FAR

There have been a couple of known accidents so far Andrew Beattie was one And Carolyn (*Mrs J Swift*) spent time in Scarborough casualty 2 years ago after being hit by a flying ground stake pulled out by a kite.

Jerry said he often asks himself IS THIS A STONE WE SHOULD LIFT?

Or just leave it be and hope. And the answer is emphatically YES WE SHOULD ACT NOW because Ignorance under the law is no excuse.

Ernest said he would search the CAA website for Accident Report Forms.

Jerry and Jon thought if no aircraft accident form was suitable balloon accidents would be the nearest thing to kite accidents because of the mass of

the objects and the speeds involved. We could alter a balloon or hang glider form and put it on the website for clubs to use.

Sitting back and ignoring the potential danger is naïve. Our only defence would be that we had made every effort to deal with accidents before they happen. The Royal Aero Club for example, maintains it is effectively self policing. The trouble starts when organisations are seen not to be monitoring themselves...

Proposal to circulate to clubs saying they should report accidents

There was the Secretary thought a question here which passed largely unanswered- should we in the near future CREATE A CAA-VETTED REPORT FORM and get clubs to report any accidents to us so that we could pass them on to the CAA after assessing their severity, by the usual index method, so that way everyone is seen to be acting responsibly?

Kites in Schools project

Steve Sutton is in the process of getting backing for kites in schools in a project involving Lever Brothers and Flora Margarine.

Unilever have decided that kite flying is a sport they can promote There is talk of them putting in a significant amount of money for Kites in Schools in Leicester.

There seemed to be some doubt about which of two different organisations was actually involved.

Was it Kite-Sports in Schools which is connected to the Flexifoil Organisation possibly concerned mainly with the after schools activity they can promote or Kites in Schools run by Steve Sutton

How could we back this one?

Arthur asked What is Steve Sutton accomplishing with the schools, because White Horse Kite Fliers were already doing a number of workshops in schools and so could not expect their members to devote any more time.

Jerry agreed it was now a bizarre situation with a major sponsor wanting to put money into kiting, but clubs finding they no longer have enough of their membership who are young enough to respond to the challenge.

This raised the more general problem of an aging population of predominantly single line fliers in clubs when sports kites were now the only way to attract new members. Some kite clubs are historically not for sport fliers.

If we can get the Leicester organisation to actively support Steve Sutton we can promote him on the BKFA website.

Jon was advised to contact Flexifoil via their website to find who is actively involved in this project and what it really involves.

CCPR Update

Jerry said that he gets an endless stream of information, with about 10 -15 updates from CCPR every week. He has been to them to discuss the Free the Fields Campaign and is working with Natural England, The National Trust and DEFRA. CCPR are happy to assist.

Jon made mention of the Malmesbury Kite Festival in 2 years time and the Ailmer the Flying Monk connection – for those of us interested in non-stalled flight, without a tail.

BKFA possible changes in Constitution

Lack of Interest from Clubs so could we have individual membership.

According to the Constitution Members could get individual membership and be represented in proportion to their numbers as though they were the members of another constituent Kite Club.

The Secretary said he would be willing to join as an individual member regardless of whether he also a member of the NEKF but would prefer it if we could get the Individual Insurance sorted.

The Chairman said that there was now a pressing problem for the BKFA Constitution in that 'No person who has been an elected member of the committee for three years can be elected to another office.'

Both Chairman and Treasurer have now held their respective posts for three years and in order to change this limit we should have made a proposal at the previous Council Meeting, which in our case was the previous AGM.

Keith asked "Is there anyone else who would do it" and there was general laughter...

There was a possibility of co-opting Council Members onto the Committee and we shall see how this works in practice.

Keith asked if there was any chance of re-interesting clubs who have withdrawn - Great Ouse for example. We were told they were unlikely to rejoin.

We were then asked to ponder new approaches to recruitment ready for the AGM.

With this in mind Ernest asked if it was within the bounds of possibility that the BKFA could ever organise Kite Festivals under its own name. Jerry did not see it as a BKFA role and if we did it would put us head to head with KSGB. There followed some discussion as to whether there was any point in that or what consequences might ensue that we could not live with.

Keith Griffiths said he was willing to talk to the KSGB about the BKFA.

AOB

George's Rules for historical type competitions were to be put on the website.

Jerry had been invited to judge kites at Lunen where Jurgen gave him the German Rules. Those rules when translated will be included on the website.

Analysis of kite events for the website – in progress.

Kite Records revisited.

British Kite Attempt reached 4000ft this year. Peter Lynn is going for the Multi kite record. He does not think the Lindenberg Kites reached 39,300 ft in 1919 but has yet to tell anybody why.

In America Richard Synergy may be having another go.

Tony Slater died on Sunday after flying his kites that morning.

The Treasurer said that condolences would be sent on behalf of the BKFA. Paul Morgan seemed the most likely person to contact to write an obituary.

Carl Longbottom has had his cancer operation and appears to be doing well.

June Johnson has just finished her chemo-therapy and is now active.

George Penny – is having some painful stones shattered

Eric Storey – suffered a severe stroke last week.

ET IN ARCADIA EGO