

What's Up?

The Newsletter for Kitefliers

Number 100

August 2011



New Zealand Kitefliers Association Inc.

Visit our website at : www.nzka.org.nz

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What's Up?

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Presidents Notes

Well here it is finally, the 100th issue of *What's Up?* Hopefully there is something for everyone in this issue. And with a bit of luck your photo will be on the front or back cover. This issue is dedicated to you the members. I hope that I have given notice of all the upcoming events. Maybe its time to check the web site again for any other upcoming events that have snuck in. As with all print media we are always out of date. After I had finished the article about big kites I started hearing about an even bigger kite Peter and team are working on. More news on this next issue. I hope you enjoy this issue.

Welcome to Wei-Hang Chua and wife Kate from Palmerston North.

Up coming events

Dannevirke

Just had a phone call from Dannevirke Lions – really impressed with last years kite day _and it was just me!!!

Really keen to do it again and have set date of Saturday 1 October

At centennial garden (??) at end of main road – was really good flying last year, so who knows

Usual thing – latish mid morning till about 3.30 ish

Contact is Andrew Thompson at 06 374 8650

They have food caravan etc and were quite hospitable and welcoming.

Not the Labour Weekend workshop

Is on again at Pukeora Estate over the weekend including the 15th October. As indicated this will be mostly a finishing session for attendees, but if interested we will have spars and fabric (and plans) to make a “block of flats” delta which is over 2m wide and about 2m on the spine. You can make a weekend of it and arrive on the Friday and depart on the Monday. We will be sharing the accommodation with the BMW bikers again.

Contact Anne Whitehead (04)4767227

Taupo 19th 20th November

The Taupo homebuilt kite weekend is on again. This is for smaller kites to be flown at Taharepa Park on the waterfront

Contact Jim Court or Warren Ellery



Chateau at New Year

We have booked accommodation for the nights of Saturday 31st December and Sunday 1st January 2012. Flying as normal on the golf course, leading up to the Chateau on the 1st January. Some twilight flying may occur on the 31st December. Come and join the fun and enjoyment of a new year.

Contact Anne Whitehead or Ray McCully

Nelson Summer Kite Fest 20-22 January 2012

Though we had the 20th annual festival January this year, it was pretty much a no-show with ugly easterly winds on the days beforehand, then minimal easterly/southerly wind followed by rain on the public day. So maybe this next one is the 20th, take 2!

We have limited funding/help, but plan for similar to last year, with setup on Friday, warm up on Saturday and public day on Sunday.

You are welcome to come fly, we'll do what we can to host you, and free camping on the grounds again for those who wish to provide grounds security. Book local backpackers/motels by November/December if you need it.

Contact Ted & Gretchen Howard at 03)548 8707 or kitesfun@ihug.co.nz for more information.

NZKA AGM and National Kitefly will be in Wanganui 4th – 6th February 2012. More information and registration forms will be in the next issue of *What's Up?* (December)

Contact Richard Wotton

Jim Court in his own words Sunrise - January 1st 2000

My first kites where-made as a 6 year old-of brown paper and bamboo garden-stakes and flown in “Moo-Cow Park” (real name: Victoria Park) in Bathurst, N.S.W. Our main problem was the magpies bombing us if we got too near their nesting trees. Ten years later my family and I flew from Sydney to Auckland by T.E.A.L. Flying boat, a journey of 8 hours.

In Auckland, I was taken under the wing of family friends who were into yachting in a big way and I sailed when ever I got the chance in center boarders and keelers for the next 40 years. My last boat was a quarter ton class keeler which we raced and cruised in for the six years that I owned it. Somebody told me in 1987 of a shop in Devonport that had opened selling kites, windsoxs etc. and I thought that flying a kite from the stern of a moored yacht while cruising would be fun and free from magpies!

Oh, those ladies at the Devonport shop were great sales persons. I was trapped. Kites are cheaper and dryer than yachts! I joined NZKA about March 1998 (my first What’s Up is No. 19) and started buying and making kites to fly when ever possible. On my retirement in 1999, we moved to Katikati where for four years I ran a mobile kite shop called “The Katikati Kite Co.” which was quite successful until we sold and moved up the Coromandel coast to Whiritoa Beach. Then in 2001 we moved again to Taupo.

I have enjoyed so many kite festivals but the greatest was the first International at Napier where my mind was opened to the huge variety of shapes and types of kites from around the world.. That dozens of kites could be flown as a stack and that a kite could be controlled with more than one string, was a revelation.

Now that I am 80, my kiting outings are getting fewer and my kite making is mostly little sleds for the local Hospice shop to sell for funds. Warren and I are again holding our annual “Home Built Week-end on November 19/20th. Hope to see you there. Taupo’s Taharepa Reserve

Jim Court

This is a story that should have been written ten years ago.

I made a kite from a broken golf umbrella. It had more than the usual panels in rainbow colours. The first stage was the removal of the handle and wire supports. Three panels were cut out to make a dove tail. I taped the outside of the panels to take a fibre glass spar and the spine was the remains of a fibre glass fishing rod.

I made and attached a long wide tail with words “Welcome to 2000”.

I carefully planned to fly it at the exact arrival of the new century, sunrise on the first day. The timing was carefully worked out on my watch and the alarm set. I awoke to a cloudy day and no wind.

The golf course behind our house was the flying field. I propped the kite against a tree and unwound my string down the fairway. Consulting my watch I then waited for sunrise. At the precise moment I pulled on the cord and the kite rose into the air the accompaniment of a hooter sounded from the local yacht club. There was no one to see this event as most residents must have been sleeping off the celebrations of the night before.

For some years I had not thought much about this event but I suddenly realized that this might have been the first kite in the world to bring in the new century.

I don’t know if any other kite fliers in New Zealand had flown at the same time, if so, I would love to hear about it. If anyone on the east coast had flown a kite they would exceed my effort in being the first kite in the world to fly in the new century.

Every year since 2000 the kite has been flown on New Years Day with only the tail date changed – now 2011.

by Jim Ayres

Big Kites I have seen.

It all started back in 1984 when a group of us went to China. We had the privilege of seeing the current World's Biggest Kite. The CS550 (or blob) as it was known was a very non-descript large inflatable wing shaped kite. There was also a smaller model that they had used for proving purposes. We stood well back from the launches in China as it was very windy and managing to throw the Chinese guards around, who were helping to launch the kite. This was too big to be transported easily as it was in one finished article, not like some of the following kites that were made to zip together. The fact that it was so big limited its flying to Weifang only, but we helped fly the smaller prototype on YinTai beach. I met up with the largest kite again in 1986 at Schevening where the winds were much kinder and I was able to stand under the kite and use it for a sunshade. This kite was then brought out to New Zealand for the 1990 World Kite Festival in Napier. I then saw it in Thailand where it suffered the indignity of being ripped in two while flying. It was probably still the World's Largest kite even in this state. I saw it again in Napier in 1995 and it suffered a few indignities at Wigram the week later.



At about this time Peter Lynn decided to upscale one of his kites and the Trilobite became the Megabyte. Anne and I flew down to Ashburton for the launch of this monster. As it was the first flight it took Philip McConichie a while to zip all the pieces together and do a little final bridling. A few weeks later we flew to Bondi and were able to show photos of the beast to attendees. We were reviewing photos on the plane to Sydney and some of the hostesses were impressed that the kite was nearly as large as the fuselage of the plane we were in. I am sure that the next year at Nelson we encountered the

Megabyte.



Not long after this Peter built another large kite, a sting ray. This was the same size as the Megabyte, but much better in the colour department. My first meeting with this kite was at Nelson, and then I was in Thailand with Peter and Clyde Cook helping fly this creation.

A few years later we were getting mysterious

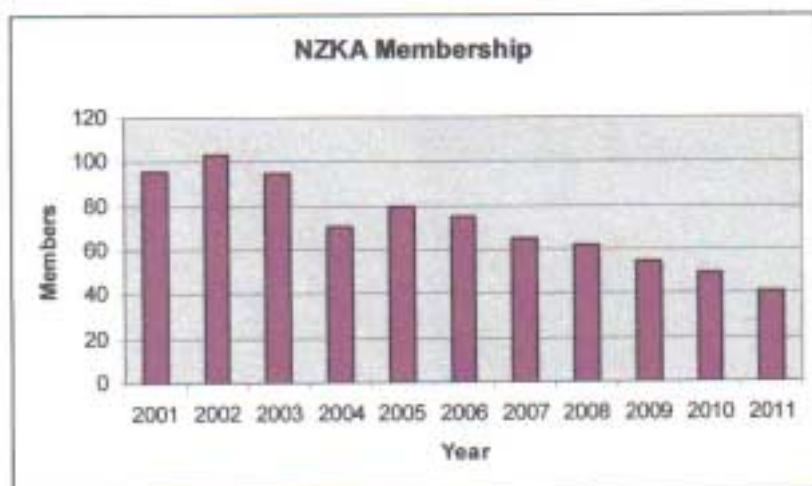


phone calls from Peter hinting at an even larger kite, but very secretive as to what it was. It then splashed on the evening news and in talking to Peter he said that the next weekend was to be the hand over flight to the Kuwaiti owners. John Whibley and I went down to be on the flying team to test fly the Kuwait Flag Kite. That was a memorable weekend, not only for the flying but also for the sheer size of this latest creation.



NZKA Membership

Over the last 10 years the membership of the NZKA has shown a steady decline from about 100 members to 41 today. Unfortunately, this seems to be a trend that is not confined to just kiting. Most clubs seem to have declining membership especially those that involve people in making items using the collective experience of their members e.g. model trains, radio controlled aircraft etc.



Why?

In general, I believe the main cause of the decline is the trend towards instant gratification that has developed world wide as a result of computerisation and access to cheap imports of ready made kites, radio controlled aircraft and helicopters etc. It is a minority who are still prepared to put in the hours at home making something and **participating** in a club.

Participation by members in the activities of the NZKA has always been at a low percentage of total membership. A consequence of this is that events have had to be targeted at those likely to attend. Committee requests for workshop ideas, expressions of interest in events etc generally receive a minimal response so the organiser goes with what they know has worked in the past. It is worth noting that number of responses to requests for ideas/expressions of interest is the same now as they were when we had twice as many members.

The NZKA faces other head winds caused by us being NZ wide which means travel costs are

always an issue. Our membership has declined despite in the last 10 years having the following new annual events:

- New Years Day kite day at the Chateau Tongariro. It has been going 8 years next January 1st.
- Fathers Day weekend flying at Wanganui and Ohakea since at least 2002.
- Around Labour Weekend we have had workshops most years since 2000 at Wellington and more recently at Pukeora Estate. The attendees seem to be the same group of mostly experienced kite makers so the projects are often quite challenging. Simpler projects can be made available for those new to making kites and there are plenty of teacher/helpers.

Kite making in the past depended on access to books and/or the knowledge of others, hence the value of a club. Now plans are available to all on the internet or you can go out and buy a lot of great kites which you can fly anywhere at any time – no need for a club.

Despite the information available on the internet I continue to be astounded that most schools, kite days and parents still consider the diamond kite the only one to make. Hence their first experience of making and flying a kite is usually a failure – not great for attracting new people to kite making and flying..

Clubs are not only for sharing knowledge but are also social gatherings of people with similar interests. It is the social aspect that is probably sustaining the NZKA at present. The above three events are great social occasions that complement the kiting activities. Why not come along and see how much fun you can have. Both the New Years Day event and the workshop are subsidized by the NZKA.

Ray McCully
Membership secretary



8.1



8.2



8.3



8.4



8.5



8.6



8.7



8.8



9.1



9.2



9.3



9.4



9.5

What's Up?



9.6

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Knots

There's a train of maxi's up and something goes wrong requiring that the main line gets de-tensioned for long enough to re-do some knot. This is a very common situation- happens a few times every flying day. In stronger winds, it's almost impossible to do solo; requires two people. So, I can take the tension, and I can undo and re-tie whatever has to be done, but I can't do both at the same time. If the other person is female, they won't be able to hold the line tension AND they usually won't know how to tie knots.

This bit we can fix right now;

Just four knots cover almost all situations; larks head, bow line, keeper, and sheet bend (with variants).

(The second most annoying person you ever meet on the kite field are those with some special complicated knot they MUST show you.)

The definition of a useful knot is one that develops as much of the line strength as possible, can be tied one handed (while the other holds the line tension) and doesn't come undone UNTIL YOU WANT IT TO!. This last is the key bit, knots must be easy to untie, even after line breaking tension.

THE most annoying person on the kite field ties some stupid knot while you're not watching, usually a double overhand, than buggers off when it's time to undo it. The only supporters they have in this world are dentists (Leathermans destroy line but teeth are excellent for extreme de-knotting).

Larks heads are easy to tie, always easy to untie but only develop about half line strength. Photo 1 : Larks head and keeper knot on a bowline.

Bowlines do a bit better- but are harder to tie,

and require a bit of technique to undo (always possible though) - push the loop back up over the out-line to loosen the remainder. Photo 2 : Bowline

Sheet bends are easy to tie, are always undo-able, AND, in the double sheet bend form develop more line strength than larks heads or bowlines. Photo 3 : Sheet bend to line with keeper.

Photo 4; sheet bend to bowline.

Photo 5 : Double sheet bend.

Photo 6 : Double sheet bend with doubled end for untying.

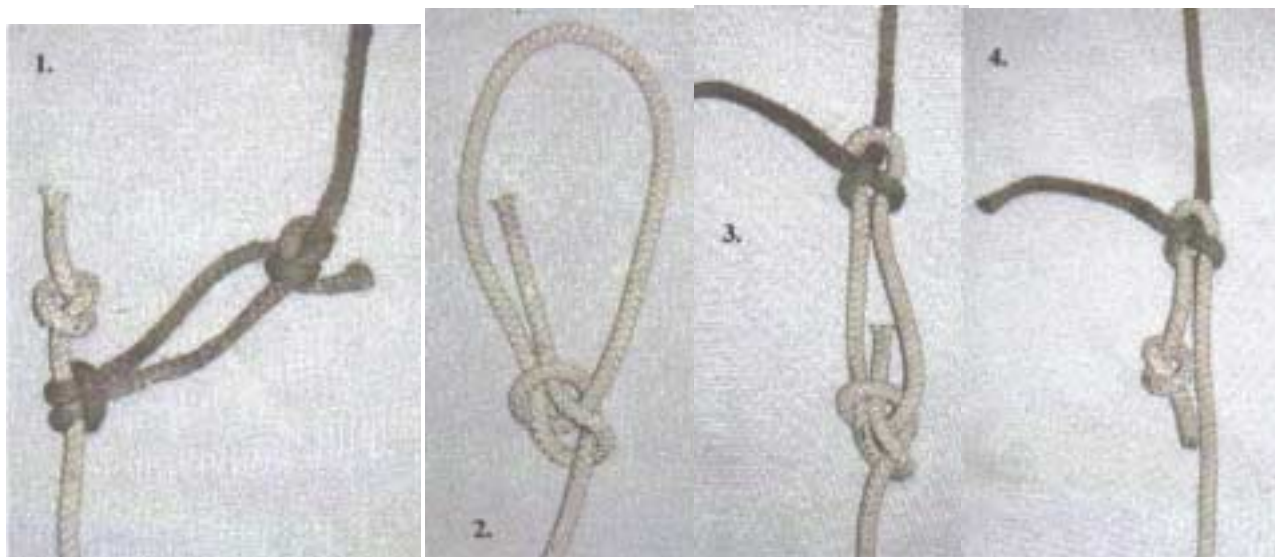
Some situations, especially with Spectra/ Dyneema which is especially slippery, require a 'keeper' knot to prevent lines gradually working thru (Photo 1 and others).

A knot you should NEVER use (except sometimes) is a double overhand - easy to do, but impossible to undo, Photo 8: Double overhand.

In the last 5 years I've twice had a double sheet bend with doubled end (for quicker releasing, Photo 6 pull thru and let kites loose. A total solution for this is to add a half hitch after the sheet bend, (Photo 7 ; Double sheet bend with doubled end and half hitch). but often when launching in the morning, wind is barely sufficient for flying, so gale secure knots are a long way from your thoughts.

And there are just two more knot things to cover:

When tying off to a pole or similar; do a double loop around so that it won't slip up the pole as the kite apexes- and tether closest to the ground where the anchor's strongest. Photo 9; Tethering



And, for tying off a kite or windsock to a kite line, a half hitch loop then a larks head (or use the loop to make a sheet bend of any variant) does the job- holds without slipping and can always be untied later (Photo 10).



The Ups and Downs of Kiting

A missed opportunity.

“Not the labour weekend” workshop was being promoted – my annual opportunity to make a kite or two, and socialise a bit.

Anne had kindly offered two dates, either of which could suit me – but I also had to visit my daughter in Hamilton to help with some house decorating – wall and ceiling painting.

After a bit of to-ing and fro-ing the dates were established – I could do the kite workshop one weekend, and go to Hamilton the next. I put the dates in my diary, and organised work leave and painting equipment.

Now to organise my workshop items, particularly the sewing machine – travel from Wellington to Waipakurau on my motorbike would not be good for it ‘Anne, can I bring it round this week for you to take up?’

Yes says Anne, but next week is fine, no rush. “What” says I, “the workshop is this weekend, and I am booked into Hamilton the following weekend!”. - I was wrong.

So, I missed out on the kite workshop, the wine and the good company, but I did get to paint walls and ceiling in Hamilton. Bother! And two kite kits arrived for me to make, with one set of instructions and a brown paper template.

Another missed opportunity ...



Some months before I had agreed to do a kite workshop for a Scout jamboree in Hamilton over Xmas or New Year. Scouts would pay materials, and how many scouts I asked? About 3,600!. But still I only had a couple of days out of the nine of the jamboree so would not do that many. Julie in Christchurch gave some advice, eventually got an order and payment, and a package arrived for me – thanks Julie.

I chose sled kits so the scouts could roll them up to keep in their tents and take home in their packs.

We had a good Xmas in Hamilton – admired my wall and ceiling painting from a few weeks earlier – and did my two days of kites – over 200 in the two days, some of the time quiet, and some of the time very busy as scouts came and went individually or in small groups. An enjoyable experience all round. I even met a scout leader who had worked with Julie previously who recognised the kite kits. The logistics overall for a Jamboree with nearly 7,000 people on site in tents etc are mind boggling. All scouts cook in their tented areas and over 1 tonne of meat was used each day.

The reward for me was to see the sudden smiles on faces as the kites flew, especially for those who had never made or flown a kite before. And during my breaks, to see several kites flying around the encampment, some right to the ends of the lines.

Rose and family had flown home earlier, so I was able to drive myself back to Wellington in my own time, and chose the ‘scenic route’ through National Park. I had a nice leisurely trip enjoying the scenery. Got home and that evening on TV was a photo of kites at the Chateau!! Bother again! I had driven through National Park and never thought of side tracking briefly. I could have called in and flown the kites I had with everyone else there.

All in all I was missing out on opportunities to fly!

And the Brassington kites??

I usually have to ask simple questions during the (not the) Labour weekend workshops – the only time I make kites.

The ‘Kindness of Strangers’ kite had instructions in the kit, so slowly at home I sewed and cut and measured etc and read instructions, and after several nights over a few weeks I had completed that kite.

It looked good, but would it fly?? Brilliantly and straight – though not a light wind kite. Highlight of my first fly was as the breeze died down in the evening. The kite drifted lower until about 2 metres above the edge of a big hedge, very thick and about four metres high. The evening breeze was not enough to hold the kite aloft, but was obviously rising over the hedge – the organza tails of the tribal drifted upwards at about 70 degrees or so, the kite hung in the air just above the hedge, the flying line with about 80 metres out, went slack and my kite just floated (I could snake big curves into the line, there was no pressure on it at all) and I relaxed at last, happy that at least one aspect of my kiting was going well.

And then to the ‘double shield’ kite. No instructions, some verbal comments about importance of layering fabric correctly, but no detail, some kite corners in a curved reverse shape with no indication of how to achieve it. Completely beyond my making experience. An email sent to

those who had made this kite for advice and just one response from Malcolm Hubbert that was maybe sort of helpful – Thanks for the very broad advice- . No one in Wellington had made one for me to look at, so I had no sample to follow.

And then a brainwave ... the original workshop invite had a photograph, fortunately backlit, and was of high quality. By blowing up the image I was able to see the sparring arrangement, but no measurements. I could see some bridling, but one seemed to be a single point bridle and the other a two legged bridle.

So in the end I guessed all the measurements – its first flight was to be at Eltham and to see how close I came to what was needed.

Family came first ... and then

Eltham attendance was planned and accommodation booked, and then our youngest daughter in Hamilton had a baby, a month earlier than expected, and my kiting plans fell through again. But I was able to go to Hamilton to check that my wall and ceiling painting still looked OK! And new grandson Tobias is a delight.

But all was not lost. A local Wellington kite day at Ngatitua Domain shortly afterwards, and only John Whibley and I were there. A sunny day, really great breeze, and at last I could try my 'double shield'. First time off the ground, and it just went up and sat, steady as a very good kite should be, and looking great! Success at last.

And when the wind died it floated to the ground, just resting. And when the breeze came up again, so did the kite with no assistance from John or I. A really satisfying end to a lengthy saga of not achieving, and finally being highly satisfied with the result.

The only down side is that the 'Kindness of Strangers' has a habit of nodding back and forth – a small adjustment will take place one day, unless something else intervenes

Onwards and upwards

Stephen Cook



Trade Directory

Below is a key list of what kite retailers around the country are offering.

Key: SL-Single line, DL-Dual line, C-Custom made kites, Bu-Buggies, F-Fabric, Ka-Kite making accessories, Re-Repairs, Kw-Kite making workshops, D-Demonstrations, BM-Books and Magazines, W-Wind related articles, G-Gift items, O-Other recreational items, MO-Mail order catalogue, KK-Kite kits, Ex-Exhibitions, RL-Reference library.

Kiteworks

111 Symonds St. Auckland.

Phone/Fax (09) 358 0991

Services offered: SL, DL, C, Bu, F, Ka, Re and W.

A Kiwi Kite

1a Sunshine Rise, Raglan.

Phone (07) 825 7290

Services offered: SL, DL, C, Bu, Re, Kw, D, Ex and RL.

Raven Kites

1 Victoria Avenue. Wanganui.

Phone (06) 348 5805, Fax (06) 348 5806

Services offered: SL, DL, Bu, C and power kites.

Rainbow Flight Kites

19 North Road, Nelson.

Phone/Fax (03) 548 8707

E-mail: info@kites-rainbowflight.co.nz

Website: www.kites-rainbowflight.co.nz

SL, DL, C, Bu, F, Kw, D, W, O, KK and Ex.

Skylines and Bylines

2 Opawa Road – corner of Opawa,

Wilsons and Shakespeare Roads.

P.O. Box 2194, Christchurch.

Phone (03) 365 3907, Fax (03) 337 2669

Mobile (027) 431 7716

E-mail: julie@kites.co.nz

Services offered: SL, DL, C, F, Ka, Re, BM, W, G, O, Mo, KK, Ex and RL.

2011 Committee

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Flying Sites/Regional Reps

Auckland

Bastion Point
Contact : Perrin at Kiteworks
Ph 09 358 0991
kiteworks@xtra.co.nz

Bay of Plenty

Fergusson Park, Tauranga (3rd Sunday)
Lake front by Sound Shell, Rotorua (only when the wind is off the lake) Taharepa Reserve on the lake front at Taupo
Contact : Ray McCully,
Ph 07 348 3828
mccullyR@xtra.co.nz

Christchurch (Last Sunday)

Hansen's Park, Opawa
Contact : Julie Adam,
Ph 03 365 3907
julie@kites.co.nz

Napier/Hastings (2nd Sunday)

Anderson Park, Greenmeadows
Contact : Sharon Russell,
Ph 06 844 0689
rj.russells@paradise.net.nz

Nelson (3rd Sunday) Neale Park

Contact : Ted Howard
Ph 03 548 8707
kitesfun@ihug.co.nz

Wanganui (Every Sunday)

Springvale Park
Contact : Richard Wotton
Ph 06 343 2770
rwotton@xtra.co.nz

Wellington (1st Sunday)

Elsdon Park, Porirua
Contact : Anne and Peter Whitehead
Ph 04 476 7227

