

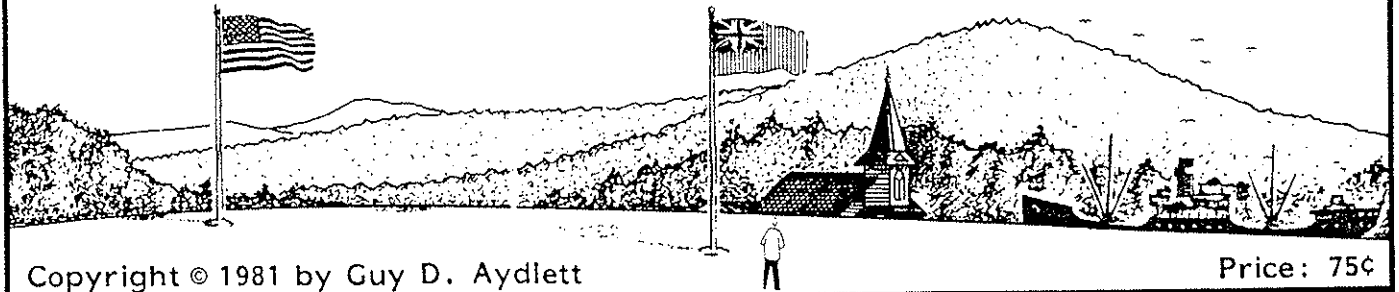
PINEY MOUNTAIN AIR FORCE

DATA - LETTER

VOLUME 1, No. 12

HAPPY GUY FAWKES DAY!

5 November 1981



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Price: 75¢

Dear Kiteflier:

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

HARRY YEOMAN has done it again! This time, he sent us a splendid *Red Ensign*, the official flag of the British Merchant Marine. In keeping with PMAF's tradition of flying the flags of visitors whenever it is possible to find their colors in our locker, we are now prepared to hoist a welcome on the visitors' pole in the event that COLIN GLENCANNON, CAPTAIN BALL, and MR. MONTGOMERY steam up the North Fork of Rivanna River and tie up the fabulous old three-island tramp steamer, *Inchcliffe Castle*, to RAY BALLARD'S loading dock at the Advance Mills general store.

Our trolls are also prepared to brew up a convincing imitation of Duggan's Dew O' Kirkintilloch to help to slake the legendary insatiable thirst of Chief Engineer Glencannon. [*Beauforce Stringfellow, our resident man of parts, contends that only one living person's talents rival those of the ingenious and resourceful Colin; Piney Mountain has ORBERT DAVIS: stockman, veterinarian, engineer, and raconteur without peer—Ed.*]

THANK YOU, HARRY!

*
TYRUS O. GRIM of York, Pennsylvania, sent a pretty compliment to PMAF when he decorated his subscription check with an accurate image of Hornbeam Mark I Kite in buoyant flight. Good show, Ty!

*
WALTER M. LEUZINGER of Pittsburgh gave our household familiars a great morale lift:

He'd bid *DATA-LETTER* into the "Kite Hall of Fame" for being mailed early in each of the months noted on the masthead. [*Your praise may be misplaced, Walt: there must be other readers who'd like to see the expediency backed up by better format and content. But we'll continue to try to deserve your kind words. . . .*]

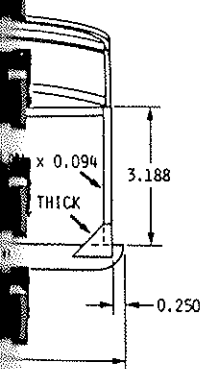
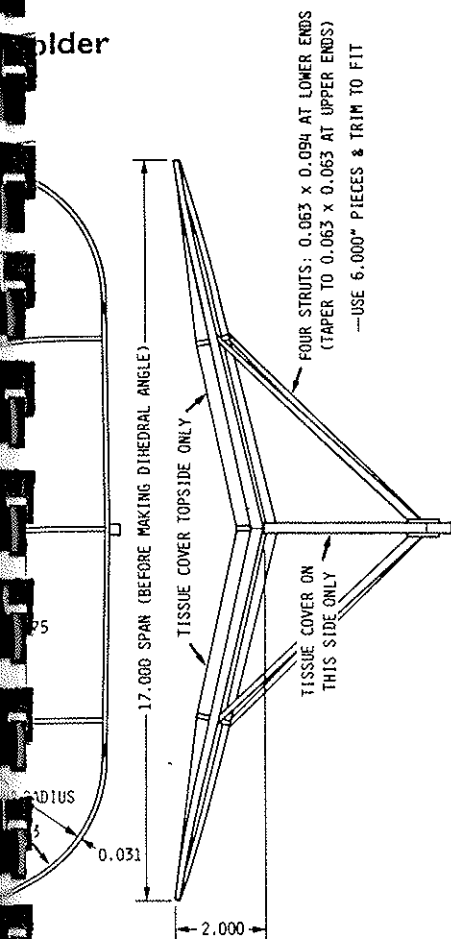
Walter sets a high standard of kite lore publishing. His 28-page booklet, "Tips on Buying and Flying Kites" is an excellent work. PMAF has a small stock of Walter's booklets that are available free of charge to DL subscribers. Anyone who wants a copy is asked to send us a self-addressed 6½" x 9½" clasp envelope stamped with U.S. postage for two ounces of first class mail.

*
P² MORRISONS, Cambridge, Massachusetts, gave great joy to Nisse, our Graphic Arts Troll. Their letters arrive in envelopes of laid paper stock exotically illustrated with engaging genre scenes and superb calligraphy. Collectors' items, Nisse believes. Does anyone collect PMAF DL back-issues?

*
ROBERT T. ESKRIDGE, of Miami, has enriched PMAF archives with news of a rotor kite—a clipping—that is proposed as means for generating electric power. Hm-m. . . .

*
CARLOS B. WENBERG, Houghton Michigan, sent us a clipping—plan of a rotor powered model boat, but he also fattened our library with nine back-issues of *KITE TALES*. . . !

older



SHOWN BY 25.4). FOR CLEARER PRESENTATION, CERTAIN VIEWS.
 DENSITY ABOUT 8 LB./FT.³ USE WHITE GLUE
 DENSER PAPER. ALTERNATIVE: USE JAPANESE PAPER OR THINNED CELLULOSE CEMENT.

SIZE OF WINGTIP (STABILIZER AND WING).
 FOR THE SCARF JOINTS. 3) SOAK EACH TIP IN A JET OF HOT STEAM SUCH AS THAT TAPE IT IN POSITION UNTIL IT IS COOL &

PINKY IS A KORAT. According to CARL BREWER, the proud designer of the kite that holds the world's indoor record for duration, "Pinky". . . is the name of my daughter's Korat. Korat? It is a blue-gray breed of Burmese kitty cat. . . ."

Piney Mountain Air Force is pleased to make the details of Pinky's namesake available to DATA-LETTER readers. Indeed, our own air-minded Boris, Beauregard, and Missy insisted on giving Pinky the place of honor in the DL centerfold. If our readers have been caused to believe that all kite research and publications of Hornbeam Hall are exclusively troll-controlled, we must correct that belief: the cats are the real rulers of the plantation; the trolls scrape the second fiddle. PMAF cats own a summerhouse that is the first and only officially registered and approved cathouse in Mr. Jefferson's Albemarle County; but since the story of that architectural feat already has been thoroughly covered in other prestigious spaces, we'll get on with the Pinky Story:

On 31 January 1981, CARL BREWER and TOM SISSON set an indoor world record for kite-flight duration under the Seattle Kingdome: time, 9 hours and 13 minutes. The kite was kept aloft by manipulating the tether in successive pull-ups followed by slack-line glides; an ingenious application of the "air ratchet" technique that is often employed by outdoor kitefliers to keep kites in flight during lulls in flukey winds. Pinky was designed to be an efficient canard glider; that is, the smaller supporting surface—the stabilizer—was at the front during a glide (the Wright Brothers' *Kitty Hawk Flier* was a canard).

In Carl Brewer's words, ". . . The glide *must* be perfect for average air conditions to conserve human effort." Attempting such a feat fatigued human beings, the airframe, and even the kiteline; as Carl remarked further: ". . . On the 2nd record attempt, it was necessary to use carpet thread for line (a very dirty floor area). This line was changed every 4-6 hours with the exception of about 20' of line that was never in contact with the floor. We decided to do this after JIM GREENO lost duration when a sturdy line of dental floss broke after 6 hours & 37 minutes because of excessive contact with the floor."

BOB McCORT, President of Washington Kitefliers Association, joined Carl and Tom on the second attempt: a successful effort on the 6th, 7th, and 8th of February 1981. The record time of flight was 39 hours, 53 minutes!

Any kiteflier who has dabbled in model airplane construction should be able to duplicate *Pinky's Floater* with little difficulty. It is suggested that a sturdy plywood transport box should be fabricated for protecting Pinky against damage between flights.

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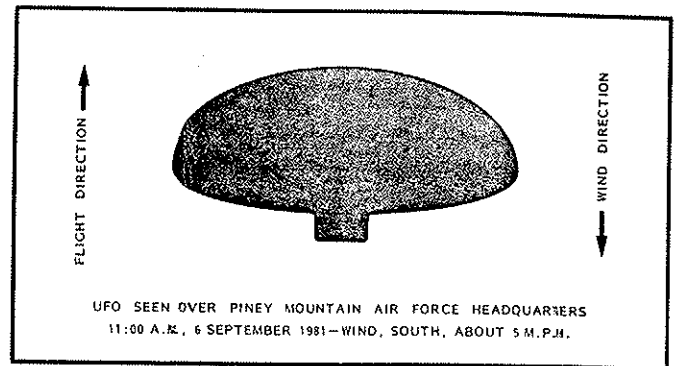
WKA NEWSLETTER of August-September 1981 reports that Carl established another world record at the Seattle Kingdome on the 20th of June. This time, the record was for indoor ALTITUDE. Carl used his "indoor, no-wind kite" [*Pinky?*]: ". . . The roof of the Kingdome is 250 feet, top-dead-center. Carl Brewer flew his indoor kite over an electric cable hanging about five [feet] down from the center of the roof, so we'll have to hurl out the challenge to other fliers to top 245 feet." [by J.V.G.]

ANOTHER UFO

PMAF HAS ITS OWN UFO. Really. . . !

Because of inclement weather during the night before, we did not raise our flags at our usual time on the morning of the 6th of September; but by late morning the solidly overcast sky became bright—white—and a warm, gentle breeze promised a fine ending for the day. Just as we had secured the colors of The Commonwealth of Virginia on the visitors' mast, the black silhouette of a south-moving flying object grabbed our attention: A hawk? No, the shape was not right for a hawk. A vulture? Not so (all Central Virginians know well the shapes of our ubiquitous turkey vultures and the less frequently seen black vultures). An artifact? Hm-m, maybe, but not a break-away kite; free kites don't work to windward on straight, nearly bobble-free courses. . . .

To the best of our judgement, the black object appeared to be about one metre in span; at about 150 metres in altitude. It was seen to yaw twice—slightly and quick-



ly—during the 30 or 40 seconds that it was in sight (an indication, we think, that it was a small object with low mass). As the UFO faded from sight towards Charlottesville-Albemarle Airport, it was evident that in elevation it was of a uniform, plane-like thinness (no body-bulge as a bird or bat would display in elevation).

Independent measurements of a series of memory sketches gave us the proportions that are given in the accompanying drawing. Has anybody else seen such a thing?

△
DR. P.J. MODJESKI, Richmond, VA saw his first copy of *DATA-LETTER* when he attended PAT HAMMOND'S great kite show at The Science Museum of Virginia. He had never flown a kite before: "I received a free copy of *DATA-LETTER* #4 at our Science Museum in Richmond. I built the 'Sanjo Rokkaku' using a trash bag and a few sticks. It flew beautifully—my very first flight. Since subscribing to *DATA-LETTER*, I have built several Hornbeams, 3.5 to 8.9 sq. ft., and the Nelson-Allison sled. I must say their performance is exhilarating." [All kites mentioned were made from plans published in DL.]

Although recently retired, Phil Modjeski is keeping busy. Among other efforts, he is aggressively experimenting with methods for coloring Tyvek®. His samples look good!

△
METRICATION has arrived at Piney Mountain. Recently, a visiting authority gave us an unassailable conversion constant: ". . . Uh litter is about two shots more'n uh quart." (He's no relation of our Oriole Surgeon who fixes Hyannis Hernias and Migrant Headaches.)

△
MARGARET GREGER and STORMY WEATHERS have presented PMAF HQ with ingenious, stickless, ALLIFLEX kites (they used to be misnamed "sleds"). Both were made of thin paper: Margaret's from a department store shopping bag; Stormy's from a newspaper's colorful cartoon page. Margaret stapled four-thickness pleats in the Hornbeam Mark I that she made; Stormy used two-thickness pleats fortified by two-sided and one-sided sticky tape in the "Horned Allison" of his own design. More will be told about them later.

△
DATA-LETTER NUMBER 12: This is it! You charter subscribers—bless ye!—have now received a whole year's worth of PMAF's yellow journalism. As a sneaky way of enticing you to re-subscribe, we want you to know that great things are planned for the December issue which will include a detailed, two-page index insert for the entire Volume 1. Don't miss out on the good things that are planned; don't forget that your continued patronage provides vital balm for PMAF's fiscal bruises. A handy subscription form is included in this issue of *DATA-LETTER*. Please use it if your mailing label shows "NOV" in the upper righthand corner. U.S. subscribers who renew before 1 January 1982 can still receive a one-year subscription for \$7.50, even though a second round of postage increases is imminent. (Commencing immediately, all overseas subscriptions will be \$10.00 a year by surface mail; \$12.50 by airmail.) Remember: extend your subscription before 1982; save!