

PINEY MOUNTAIN AIR FORCE

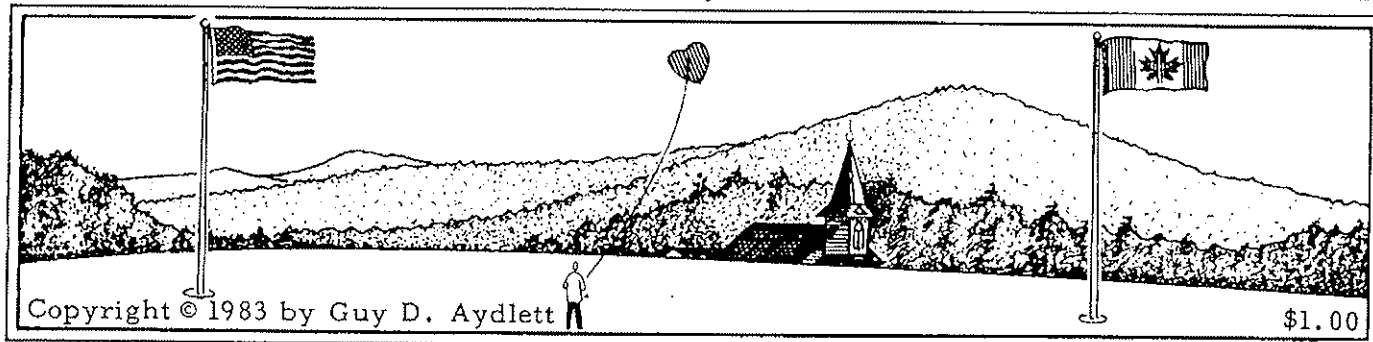
Box 7304 * Charlottesville * Virginia * 22906-7304

DATA ★ LETTER

VOLUME III, No. 2

February 1983

Whole Number 27



LITHO IN U.S.A.

FEBRUARY, The Second Month, includes the founding anniversary of Hornbeam Hall and Groundhog Day, both on the 2nd. Dorothy Day, the 6th, is also the birthday of Piney Mountain Air Force's favorite architect, none other than SHEILA McDONALD, transplanted Canadian and Brown's Mountain kiteflier. We show the Maple Leaf Flag to honor Sheila and to convey our special gratitude to JANET and CLARK NEWELL, Highland Beach, Florida, who generously contributed the splendid 4' x 9' nylon Canadian flag to the PMAF flag locker.

Abraham Lincoln's birthday comes on the 12th, Ash Wednesday on the 16th, George Washington's birthday on the 22nd, and—don't forget—*fly the Full Moon* on the 27th!

*

ELIZABETH COX WORDEN RICARD, Orlando, Florida, says: "I built a Hornbeam Mark I. . . from Margaret Greger's plans. You should have seen my four-year-old daughter's face at having a kite that flew so well for her!

"It flew so well, I'm intrigued by your plans—any chance for some back issues? [Yes.]

"From your index, I think I want [several issues and] the Hornbeam Rotor (yes, I have a lathe & drill press). . . ."

In another note, Elizabeth sent this: ". . . Took 3 of our kites to the beach Sunday: our Bullet flew, but Delta fell onto its nose; the Hornbeam flew beautifully—in striped plastic—solidly above our heads, for hours! Lovely kite! Best wishes. . . —Elizabeth."

*

BRUWER VAN GRAAN'S 9th November letter from Pretoria, South Africa, quoted in part

in DL #26, continues here as we promised: ". . . For many years I have tried to make a kite out of a rigid Rogallo Wing, as used in the early days of hang gliding. This proved impossible. Eventually I made a hybrid by suspending a 42" box kite beneath a 36" Rogallo. This worked very well. Splitting the Rogallo and attaching it to the sides of the box kite did not work as well. Some of the magic was lost. Such an arrangement performs differently to a box kite with delta wings.

"The Rogallo on its own had a very high rate of climb, continuing past zenith, the wings lost their billow, and it would crash down. Sometimes it would sideslip while climbing and come crashing down. I eventually gave up.

"Many years later, in 1977, I had a brainstorm. (Very rare.) Why not have two lines on the Rogallo; this way, I could control it whilst climbing. This way, I could win all those climb-to-time and angle competitions [that were] then the rage in England; become rich and famous; retire and fly kites all day while patient servants attended to my every need! . . . Easier said than done; but after several months of trial and error—and many more crashes—I had my winner. The added bonus was a very fast and strong pulling stunt-kite which would run rings around all but the Flexifoil.

"In 30 mph winds, I have broken 100 lb test line. On one occasion, I did a big semi-circle from ground level. [When it reached] the highest point, I brought it down into water with such force that all the 3/8" dowels

(continued on page 4)

LELAND TOY COMES TO PINEY MOUNTAIN

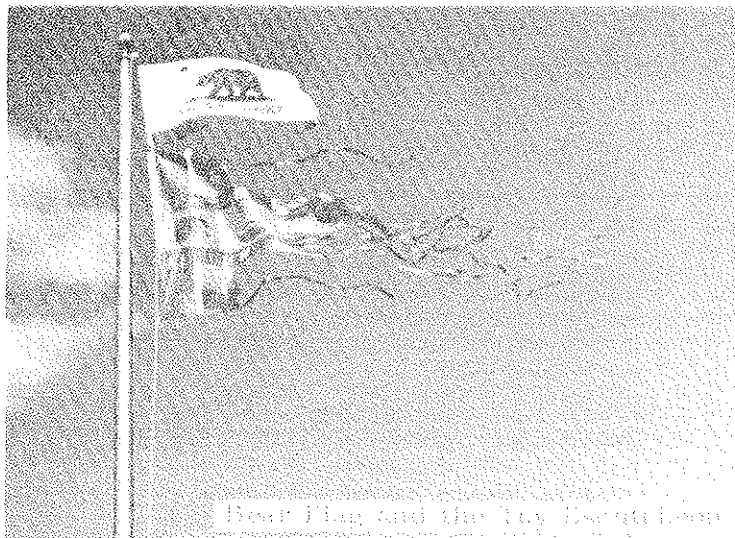
AKA'S peregrinating motorecyclist and director visited Hornbeam Hall on the 15th, 16th, and 17th of December and sampled our air currents, moonshine, spicy pasta, rice—and curry. He gave us AKA Convention news and gossip about his travels and visitations en route. In the early hours of the 17th, we fed him and aimed him at Walton Mountain and Atlanta. He made it.



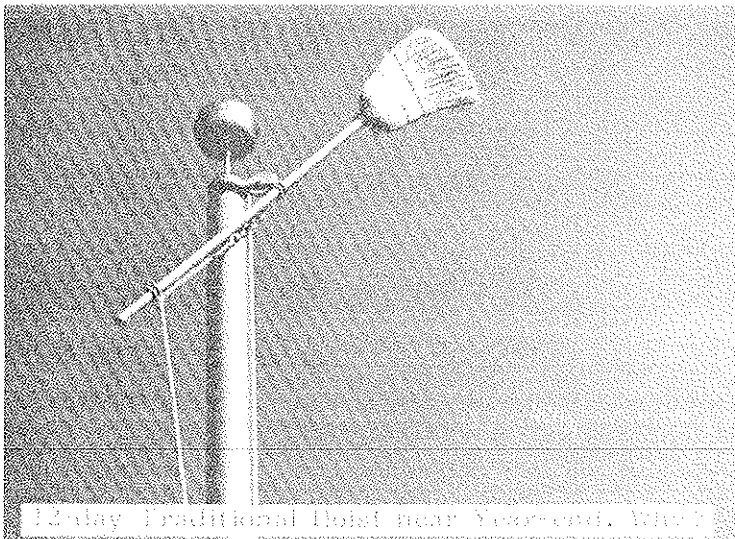
Mrs. Hornbeam and Lela Toy



Great Wind of '83; nothing at the Ground



Bear Flag and the Toy Description



Edley Traditional Doist near Year-end, Whiz!



Dorothy, a Pea, Mary E. and Kermud-Jinn

PINEY MOUNTAIN AIR FORCE'S INFAMOUS RAINCOAT KITE CONTEST HAS TWO WINNERS!

CARL POEHLER, Melrose, Massachusetts, and JERRY HARRIS, Nashville, Tennessee sent in the two best entries in the raincoat—or any other garment—kite contest. Their verifiable, unretouched photographs proved their success to PMAF judges. As reproduced on this page, the pictures had to be retouched by Nisse, because the gossamer materials used for the kites made them contrast poorly with their sky backgrounds. Each winner has been awarded an autographed rotor kite plan and assorted other goodies. Photo captions are owners' comments.

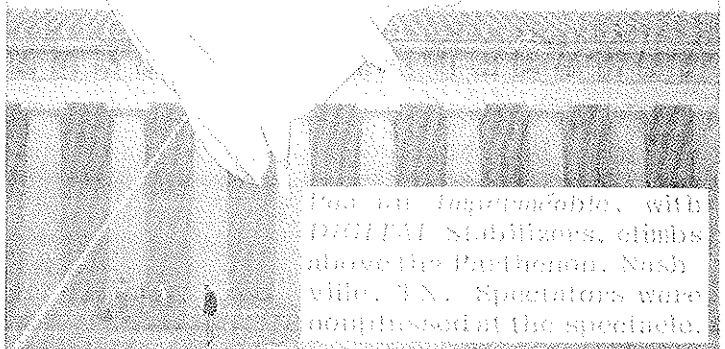
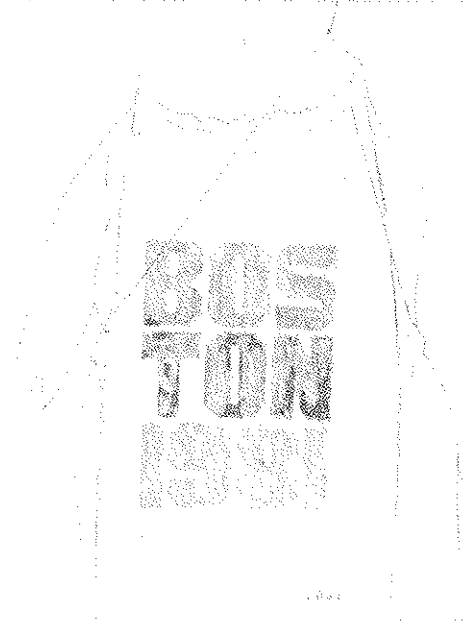
CARL POEHLER'S ENTRY: ". . . I made it for the Boston Kitefly in the spring of '81. . . . The lettering is slightly washed out, as the kite took a dive in the Charles



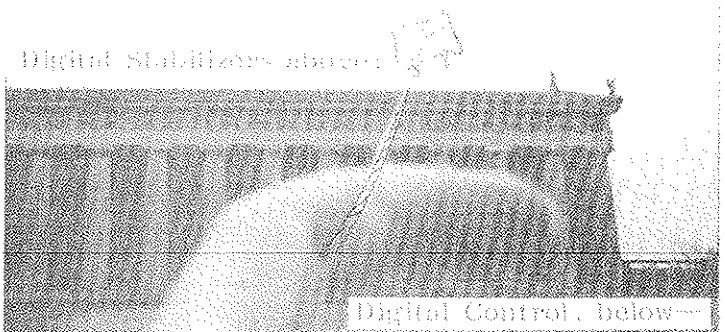
River; but the plastic showed no harm. . . . As I remember, the coat cost \$76 in Krosge's—plus 5% state sales tax. It's a great flyer and gets a good reception wherever I go. . . . Pleasant breezes, Carl."



JERRY HARRIS'S ENTRY: ". . . J. Winghead Trone tests (*Pas un Imperméable*)* near the Parthenon replica in Nashville. *(. . .) is NOT a raincoat. The Parthenon is NOT the real Parthenon. The writing on the kite is NOT readable. Kite line is NOT a clothesline. All else is real. (Photos by Crazy Arrow). Remember Valentine's Day



Pas un Imperméable, with DIGITAL Stabilizers, climbs above the Parthenon, Nashville, TN. Spectators were nonplussed at the spectacle.



Digital Stabilizers abogen

Digital Control, below—

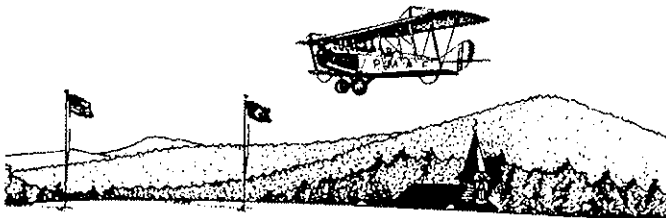
(Brewer van Graan letter; more from page 1): broke and the Tyvek® covering was ripped apart. I have flown it in a 50 mph wind (I have a Simms Anemometer) at the coast. Even in this wind it climbed over 70 degrees. I did not try any stunting, as I could barely stand with the wind. . .and the kite. . .trying their collective best to topple me. . .The very same kite is now being sold. . .patented in the U.S.A.

". . .I am trying to get hold of the inventor's name and address. . .swap some ideas with him. Frankly, I cannot see what there is to patent. The Rogallo Wing has been patented long ago in 1948. Two-line control kites are very old. . .Combining ideas in existence should not give a patentable idea.

"It is my firm belief that whoever can make a Rogallo fly on a single line is going to have a very good kite. . .—Brewer van Graan." [Editorial Note: Brewer's experience is not unusual. The patentable novelty of any idea, discovery, or combination is moot; probably always will be. We suspect that most government patent offices are Pandora Boxes filled with aging troglodytes who shuffle through labyrinthine passages and make half-hearted "searches" through thousands of mildewed documents and decaying models representing the hopes, heartbeats, and brainchildren of frustrated inventors. We further suspect that most searchers, patent attorneys, and patent courts are no better than they should be. We think kite inventors often waste treasure and time in seeking letters patent for their creations; because most kite inventions are easily duplicated, altered, and re-patented by anyone who will put about \$2,000 into the effort.

We understand that pre-publication of an idea voids its patentability; permits the dis-

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coverer or inventor—and all others—to make, use, and sell the invention; but the inventor has the satisfaction of having his name permanently associated with his invention. Publish or perish. Send your hot idea to your kite club newsletter—or even to PMAF. . . .]

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PUNGENT, COMPACT PATENT INFORMATION may be found in Nos. 1 & 2, the first issues of DATA LETTER published by PMAF. Both copies are available: send \$1.00 and a SASE.

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TOM DRISCOLL, Science Educator of Science Museum of Virginia—in Richmond—sent this: "Received my first issue. Thank you for your promptness. Couple of questions: Are back issues available? How Much?" [We gave Tom the back issue information that can be found on each DL subscriptions order form. The Commonwealth of Virginia now owns a complete file of DATA LETTERS. Do you? —Nisse.]

Tom asked us to include this notice for the museum: "We sponsor a kite festival each spring and are very interested in having experienced fliers demonstrate kite flying and building. Also are interested in display/demonstration of ultralights. Please pass the word for interested parties to contact me. Thanks."

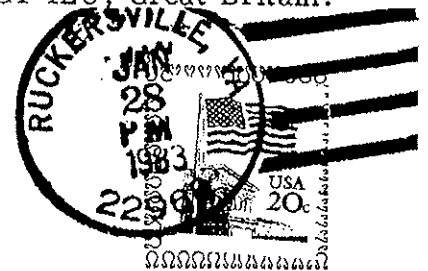
Tom's address: Science Museum of Virginia, 2500 West Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23220.

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GLIDER RIDER'S subscription price has increased to \$15.00. Other information: DL #26.

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KITEFLIERS OCCASIONAL NEWSLETTER is an excellent quarterly that comes out on time, belies its middle name, and is a good mix of plans, news, and John Barker's currytoons. Four issues, airmail: £5; K.O.N., 31 Grange Road, Ilford, Essex IG1 1EU, Great Britain.



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(S 332)

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