

# PINEY MOUNTAIN AIR FORCE

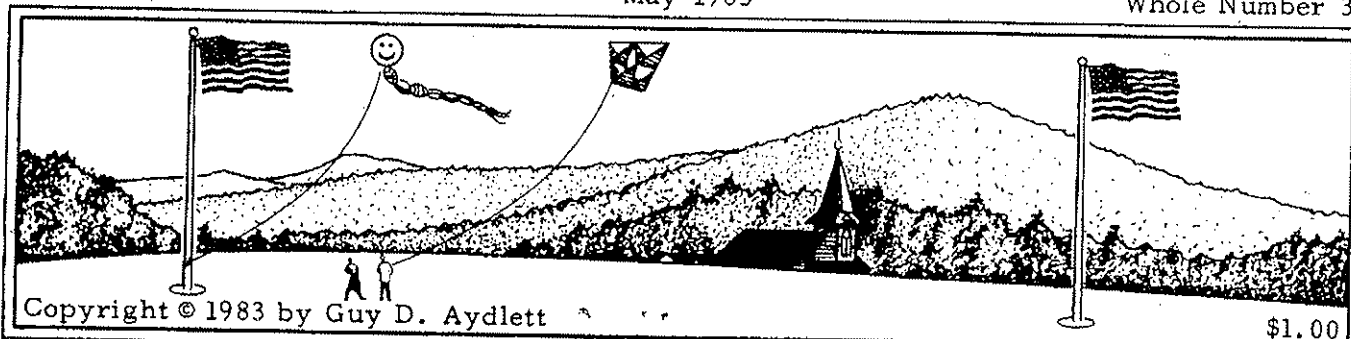
Box 7304 \* Charlottesville \* Virginia \* 22906-7304

## DATA ☆ LETTER

VOLUME III, No. 5

May 1983

Whole Number 30



LITHO IN U.S.A.

MAY, The Fifth Month, hath 31 days. Most of them should offer salubrious weather and joy to kitefliers. At Piney Mountain, the daylight hours will range from about 13 h. 46 m. on the 1st to about 14 h. 35 m. on the 31st.

On the 8th, be sure to celebrate Mother's Day and Rogation Sunday; celebrate whatever full moon jinks you prefer on the 26th; but be sure to display our nation's flag and remember our departed friends on the 30th.

DEDICATED FULL-MOONERS have asked us who was responsible for the botched date of April's full moon. Well, we won't say for sure; but we shot the proof reader and shipped his sieve-like carcass to Newfield, New Jersey. (Growl-Hole Trapezoids al-1-1 over his hide!)

LORD HARRY ARTHUR JOHN YEOMAN, The All-Time Flag Maven of Kodak City, couldn't rest for fear that PMAF might not have a fine green flag to fly on St. Patrick's Day. According to Lord Harry, "one displaced Limey, a Deutscher, and a Lithuanian" incorporated a Mini-League-of-Nations Betsy Ross Loft: designed, sewed, and shipped a superb 4' x 6' flag with a professional quality canvas-reinforced hoist with sturdily planted grommets.

Our great regret is that the Nashville Pole Society was not on hand to see the brave exposition on the 17th of March.

Most of our Piney Mountain folk knew the reason for flying the Yeoman & Company flag; but two brilliantly arrayed bicyclists showed up clad in Kelly-green tights, shamrock appliquéd tops, and turtle-shell headpieces that

evoked thoughts of Belgian WW I trench helmets. They innocently asked why the devil we were flying a green flag. "It's a rite of spring, lads;" we replied, "great for grass."

We sold each rider a forget of PMAF's best souvenir flints. They departed with saggy tires and happy thoughts of a bargain made.

ALL YOUR OARS IN THE WATER SOCIETY sent this: "We charitably concede that your non-editor may possess a full complement of straws in his bale, but isn't he a bit schizophrenic?" [Not only that, but each of us believes he is a multiple person. —Non-editor.]

THOMAS R. ABRAMS, Portage Michigan flier, is a Mensa member and an enthusiastic builder of tetrahedral kites—thinks they are too often maligned by misguided kite design experts: ". . . It's interesting to note that some collapsible tetras are finally hitting the market. Being tension held, they save weight and fly better. Could we be on the brink of a new era in tetra kiting? I can't help getting excited—I fell in love with tetras when I got into kiting as an adult with the purchase of Will Yolen's book, and am still hopelessly enamored.

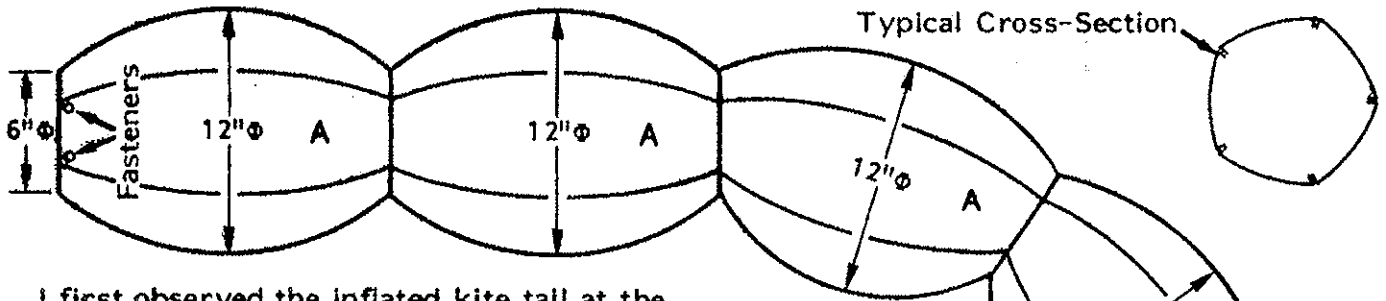
". . . I've really enjoyed perusing DATA LETTER, even the parts I don't understand, and would like a full set. I'd like to get to know the Trolls of Piney Mountain a little better and see what other tidbits I can glean from your tabloid. I always wondered where everybody got all this technical stuff. Now I think I know, and want to do some catching up."



**KITE TAIL — PUFF BALL, BEAD, OR MELON**

(Call it what you will, it's beautiful. This one is tapered!)

by Carl Poehler



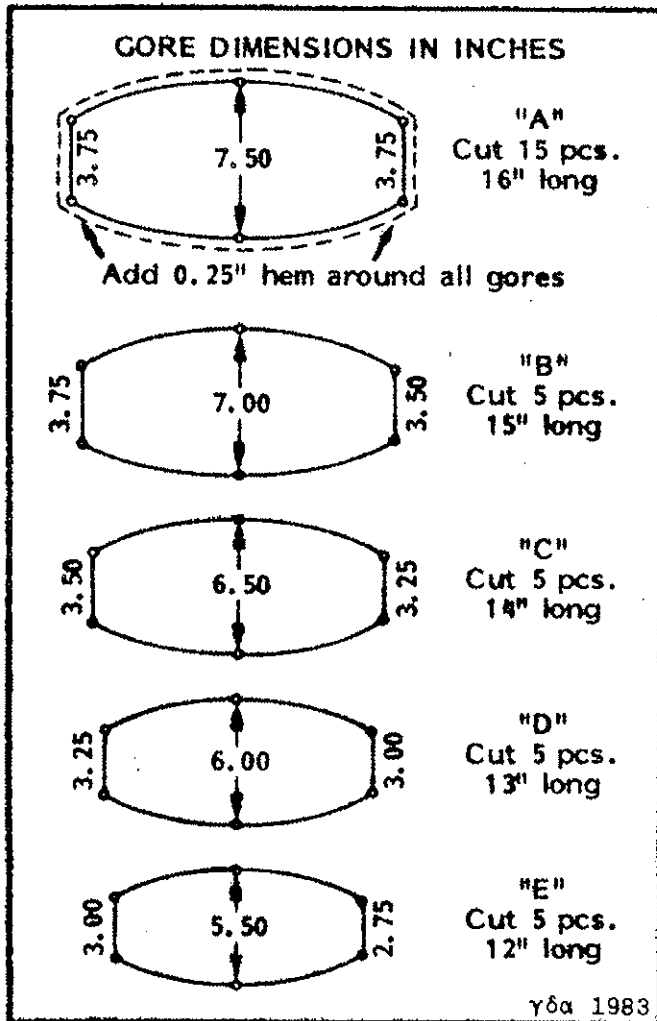
I first observed the inflated kite tail at the AKA Detroit Convention this past fall (1982). I believe one was flown then by a Canadian gentleman of perspicacity and great taste. To obtain a modicum of greater distance or perspective, I chose to taper the end sections slightly. The tail-to-kite attachment is by two snaps you may see on a woman's blouse or other finery. The visual effect is super. . . .

**PROCEDURE:**

1. Lay out patterns to suggested dimensions. Connect the points with fair curves.
2. Use ripstop material. Stitch the five pieces of each melon face-to-face. Do not sew the final seam, yet.
3. Stitch the ends of all melons together. Hem the free end of the first melon. Add the streamers to last melon.
4. Stitch the final seam full length; then, turn the tube inside out.
5. Fasten the open front (or top) of the tail to a kite of your choice with snaps, ties, velcro, or whatever.
6. FLY AND ENJOY!

**HINTS:**

1. Bright multicolors add to the visual impact
2. Length may be varied.
3.  $\phi$  = Approximate diameter.
4. It's not as difficult as it may appear.



[DIAGRAM, above, after an original drawing by Carl Poehler; revisions and errors: TAA.]

# A TENSION-FRAMED TETRAHEDRAL KITE

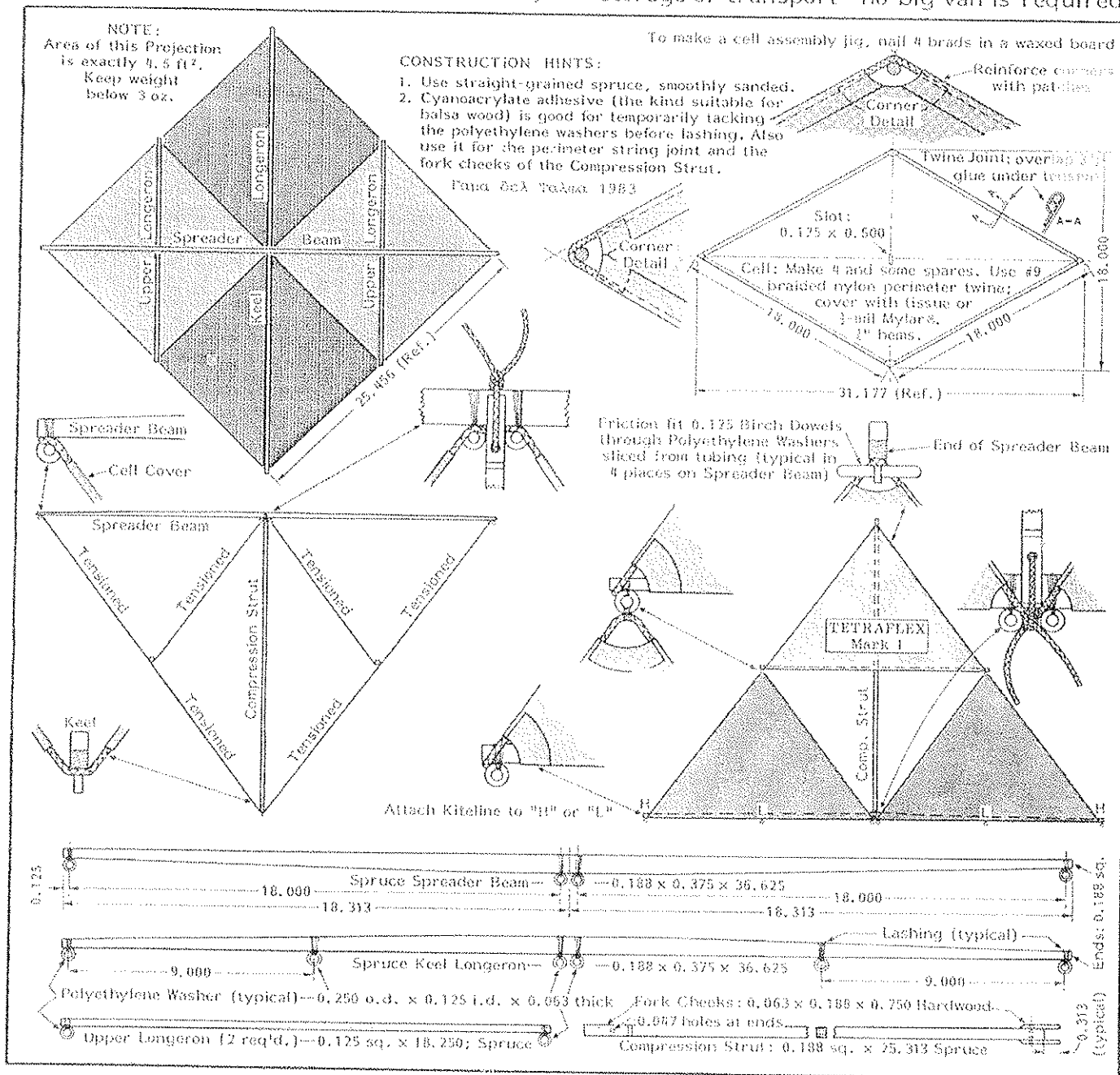
(Spare the woodpile; fly in lighter air.)

by Beauforce Stringfellow

THE BELL TETRAHEDRAL KITE traditionally is fabricated with 12 linear units of framing for each square unit of projected lifting area: i.e., a single tetrahedron-shaped cell or module, framed with 1-foot edges and having the usual covered pair of triangular facets, will require 6 linear feet of framing; will offer only 0.5 ft<sup>2</sup> of area to the wind (keel longeron perpendicular—normal—to the wind vector).

This tensioned 4-cell configuration employs a string fixed in each cell-cover hem to replace 4 out of the usual 6 frame-units. Added is a compression strut that is not commonly found in a tetrahedral kite; but even so, the traditional 36 feet of timber has diminished to only 5 pieces totalling less than 12 linear feet.

This kite is readily dismantled for compact storage or transport—no big van is required.



More from Tom Abrams regarding his tetra-kites: ". . .I'll be sharing my ideas in an upcoming AKA NEWS and hope others may see the rewards of tetra-building. . .Blue skies."

\*  
STEPHEN HOBBS of Bedford, England sends this recommendation: ". . .Try the *Monthly Weather Review* for 1896 (published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture). I was delighted when I found it full of gems, some good anecdotes, and some extremely sound theory; i.e., the work of Professor Marvin. I hope you find it and like it. . . ."

\*  
ROB FLETCHER uses a frog pond address in Issaquah—spelled—53 more—ways, Washington. Rob's best friend is Filip, the frog who was made famous by Lisl Weil's book, *The Wiggler*, published in 1971 by Houghton Mifflin Co.

He (Rob, not Filip) suggests that rotor enthusiasts might care to investigate the gyro-kite plan that appeared in *Popular Science*, August 1954, pp. 197-200: "Whirling Rotors Lift This Gyro-Kite." The kite plan features contra-rotating dual rotors, a rather stout structure, and a cardboard pilot-silhouette seated in a trike-frame that strongly resembles the present-day structure that converts a hang glider into a powered ultralight craft.

The coaxial twin rotors—two blades each—sweep a tip circle diameter of about 32 inches. Principal materials: balsa, wire; cardboard.

Ask Marion The Librarian to find the plan.

Rob also highly recommends "Up Through the Atmosphere" by Jim Carnwath in *Puget Soundings*, a regional publication that is popular in The Northwest. If Marion can find the title in her archives, look for "Dad's Kite," an aeroplane simulacrum, pp. 18+, June '67. Materials are wood, paper, string, and glue.

JAMES ROBERT CARNWATH, granted U.S. Letters Patent No. 2,494,430 on 10 January 1950 for "Rotating Kite," probably is or was the Jim Carnwath who wrote the article that Rob Fletcher found in *Puget Soundings*. Of interest is Carnwath's advice to use single-faced corrugated cardboard—corrugations to the outside—on Savonius rotor vanes or for other airfoil configurations, (For more about rotor kite airfoils, see *DATA LETTER* Nos. 10, 29, and the PMAF Hornbeam Rotor 661 Kite Plan.)

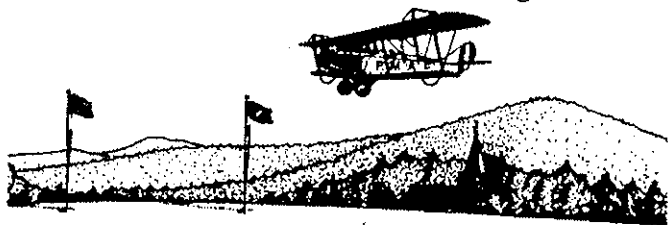
Do any of our readers know Jim Carnwath?

\*  
K.O.N.E. (Kites Over New England) sent us a copy of Volume I, Number 1, the society's first quarterly newsletter—an excellent effort that promises to become well-known to the flying fraternity. To learn more about K.O.N.E., send \$5.00 for a one-year membership and four issues of the, as yet, unnamed six-page quarterly. The address is: Kites Over New England, Box 635, Westboro, Massachusetts 01581. Learn all about the shenanigans of Lar and Cyndy Moeller, founder George Stantis, Marty Shigeo Sasaki, David Elliot, David Newton, and Carl Poehler.

Contest: send in a name for the quarterly; the winner gets a free one-year membership.

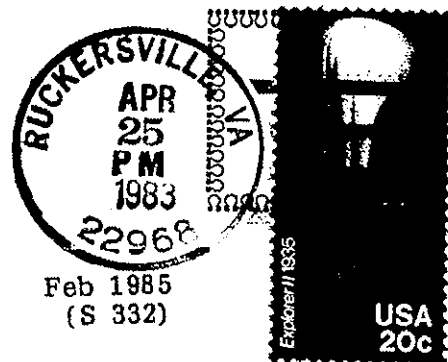
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SHORT NOTICE: May 8 is the Ash Lawn 4th Annual Kite Day (Rain date, May 15). Fliers are invited to create kites to fly at the rural homestead of President James Monroe. Prizes are awarded for the best design and the best flight. Kitefliers admitted free; spectators pay a small admissions fee. Fields will open at noon; judging at 4:00 P.M. The address: Ash Lawn, Route 6, Box 37, Charlottesville, Virginia 22901. Telephone: (804) 293-9529.

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