



The Scoop

Volume XV, Issue 3, March, 2002

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For more information, contact Mick Murphy Editor PO Box 53, Southbury, CT 06488

Announcing the new home offices of the Scoop and its editor.

19 West Street
2nd Floor

Morris, CT right above the Morris Spirit Shop. For all angry and disgruntled customers wishing to stop by and complain about your subscription please arrive no later than 7:45 p.m. to ensure the offices are complete stocked with the appropriate beverages for such a conversation. Our office door is always open and easily located one mile west of the intersections of RT 63, and RT 109. If you arrive at Bantam Lake you went too far!!!! For those customers who are unable or do not want to drop by and visit about current events, please feel free to write our offices at the following address and contact information.

Aer Blarney Balloons

Mick Murphy

PO Box 1528

Litchfield, CT 06759

Home Office (860) 567-3448

Mobile (203) 910-4955

Work a.k.a. the real job that pays the bills (860) 945-5865

PS. In the moving process I have rediscovered many interesting articles and stories that will soon be published and two of which are in this month Scoop. The first is an article from Al & Beverly Theodore that was given to me many months ago, which I misplaced. I do apologize and hope you understand it was nothing more poor organization on part causing your awesome article about Albuquerque to be misplaced for many months. **SORRY!** The second article is about the flight of Double Eagle as told by Bob Rice. I hope you enjoy them.

Mick

Scoop

Minister of Propaganda

Albuquerque 2001

Submitted by Al & Beverly Theodore

By Beverly Theodore

Albuquerque 2001 was our third trip to Fiesta and the best one yet. We attended from Monday through Saturday and with a possible six launches we were only winded out on Friday.

Morning temperatures ranged from 38 to 60 degrees with daytime temperatures from 65 to 75 degrees. Winds were a little stronger than we were used to in

Connecticut but made for more interesting chases.

The best part of the trip was being a member of the chase crew for Rick Jones from New Hampshire, the pilot of Polar Sun balloon. Rick is also the president of the Balloon Federation of America. His motto is "I love to fly" and he proves it by flying longer and farther than anyone else.

Al's Tuesday morning flight started blocks away with many other balloons that flew back towards the field for the competition

part of Fiesta. I stayed back at the field to take photos. After an hour, Rodney Schabel, another one of Rick's crew members, suggested we chase the balloon. I told Rodney that Rick had probably landed by now. "You don't know Rick", he said. So we set off to find him. After 20 minutes of driving, Rodney spotted Polar Sun and we were close enough to see the approach and landing. The flight time 1 -hour and 55 minutes.

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2002 CLAS Officers

President: Tony Roswell
Phone: 203-264-5066
E-mail: Trozwell@aol.com

Vice Pres: Daryl Smith
Phone: 860-742-3681
E-mail: Daryl@kbz.com

Secretary: Jim O'Brien
Phone: 203-891-8333
E-mail: webmaster@lighterthanair.org

Treasurer: Jack Perry
Phone: 203-263-5962
E-mail: Jackp02@sprynet.com

Historian for Life: Mike Bollea
Phone: 860-677-0647

Staff Photographer Charlie Perreault
Phone: 860-426-0814
E-mail: Worldadvr@aol.com

Webmaster: Jim O'Brien
Phone: 203-891-8333
E-mail: webmaster@lighterthanair.org

Committee Chair Members

BFA Liaison: Santo Galatioto
Phone: 203-397-0521
E-mail: Santo.galatioto@yale.edu

Competition: Mike Bollea
Phone: 860-677-0647

Education: Daryl Smith
Phone: 860-429-9462
E-mail: Daryl@kbz.com

FAA Liaison: Robert Zirpolo
Phone: 203-250-8441
E-mail: robertzirpolo@attbi.com

Flight Manual: Penny Christy
Phone: 860-638-3803
E-mail: pmchristy@earthlink.net

Membership: Ellen Dressel
Phone: 203-272-6116
E-mail: Edressel@99main.com

Nominating: Open

Products: Cindy Smith
Phone: 860-429-9462
E-mail: Daryl@kbz.com

Refreshments: Carlos Kebe
Phone: 203-639-4883
E-mail: tato@aol.com

Sunshine: Terri Rollinson
Phone: 203-264-5066
E-mail: Trozwell@aol.com

Winter Dinner: Al Theodore
Phone: 860-658-0228
E-mail: abtheo@aol.com

Windsor Locks Flight Standards District Office



Tele: (860)654-1000 or Fax: (860)654-1009

Kenneth D. Roach **Manager**
Bob Martens, **Safety Program Manager**
Robert.Martens@faa.gov

(860)654-1002
Peter Lindberg, **Safety Program Manager**
(860)654-1033

Peter.Lindberg@faa.gov

www.faa.gov/region/ane/flight_standards/index.htm

AOPA'S NEW DRIVER'S LICENSE:

AOPA last week petitioned the FAA on the subject of pilot photo IDs, suggesting that the mission could be accomplished by requiring that pilots be in possession of a current government-issued photo ID, like a driver's license or a passport, while acting as pilot in command. It seems the initial concern of producing a less forgable pilot's certificate has been too much for the FAA to swallow. But few of us make it to the airport without our driver's license, and few manage to take any FAA written test without presenting one ... which seems to imply that AOPA is suggesting that virtually no change may be change enough.

Santo

2K2 CLAS Meeting Schedule

January	17	Business
February	21	Education
March	21	Business
April	18	Education
May	16	Business
June	20	Education
July	18	Business
August	15	Education
September	19	Business
October	17	Education
November	21	Business
December	19	Party

Ode to Delinquent Dues Payers

It's March 2002

And the flying season has begun
There's mud in the fields
And the farmers are spreading dung

You may not be current
But three landings don't take long
So spread out that envelope
And tell the nesting mice to move along

But one thing you've forgotten
That you'll want to correct
Your CLAS dues aren't paid
So send off a check

CLAS Education Meeting: February 21, 2002

Meeting called to order at 7:40 p.m. Members present: Carlos Kebe, Penny Christy, Gloria Koczera, Mike Bollea, Charlie Perreault, Tony Roswell, Terri Rollinson, Kevin Brielmann, Al Theodore, Matt Dutkiewicz, Santo Galatioto, Jim O'Brien.

Minutes

Penny Christy treated the members present to a preview of the new CLAS Flight Manual she's been busily working on. A combination of colorful marked maps and itemized text will make this an invaluable resource for flying in Connecticut. There was unanimous praise for Penny's hard work, and the effectiveness of the soon-to-be-finished product.

The main event of the evening for this Education Meeting was a lively presentation/group discussion led by **Santo Galatioto** on the theme "Getting ready for flying season." Lots of areas were covered, ranging from equipment preparation, to FAR's regarding maintenance, crew training/briefing, etc. Santo promised to summarize the discussion in a future article in the Scoop.

Miscellaneous

The next meeting will be a business meeting on Thursday, March 21, 2002 at 7:30pm in the Plainville Municipal Building.

Don't panic if you get there and find no balloonists: the meeting will be held in a different room, Room 302, so check the notice board in the lobby of the building.

Respectfully submitted, Jim O'Brien, Secretary.

Meteorological Summary of the Flight of the "Double Eagle II"

0043GMT August 12, 1978

to

1750GMT August 17, 1978

Crew: Maxie Anderson, Ben Abruzzo, and Larry Newman

Prepared by: Robert Rice Chief Meteorologist, September 25, 1978

The flight of the "Double Eagle II" is now a matter of history, having accomplished the first crossing of the Atlantic Ocean by manned balloon; departing Presque Island, Maine at 0043GMT on August 12, 1978, then 137 hours and 7 minutes later landing in Miserey, France at 1750GMT August 17, 1978.

Since the first flight was successful, it follows that the meteorological conditions prevailing during the flight were conducive to success; the balloon performance being in large measure dependent upon the meteorological processes taking place during its airborne period. This assumes the correct design, construction and flying the balloon. This burden placed on the meteorological support becomes much greater when it is clear that the foregoing assumptions have been met. Past performance indicated that the balloon, design by Ed Yost and Rich Schwoebel, constructed by Ed Yost and flown by Maxie Anderson and Ben Abruzzo, was unlikely cause of failure. The weakest link in the chain to success would have to be the meteorological support, in particular the forecast. The general philosophy of the flight profile and pattern selection was relatively easy to derive, based on climatology and the subjective experience of the meteorologist. Putting these theoretical aspects into actual practice by selecting a specific weather pattern, and then forecasting the pattern, was not as simple, due to the inherent fallibility of weather prediction, particularly the long range forecast of five days or more.

The flight profile and the more desirable type(S) of weather pattern were derived through numerous discussions with the pilots during the year and a half period preceding the successful flight, relating to the anticipated weather sequences to the flight characteristics and aerodynamics of the balloon. Without that a successful meteorological support system could have been generated.

This overall learning process was fortified by the experience gained while forecasting for the flights of the "Silver Fox" in 1976: Ed Yost, pilot, and the "Double Eagle I" (although at that time, like World War I, we suspected but didn't necessarily know that there would be a need for a qualifying number attached) in 1977. To a lesser extent, further experience was gained off the record forecasting for the flight of the

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THIS IS CUTE..... AND SO REAL.....

A man in a hot air balloon realized he was lost. He reduced altitude and spotted a woman below. He descended a bit more and shouted, "Excuse me, can you help me? I promised a friend I would meet him an hour ago, but I don't know where I am."

The woman below replied, "You are in a hot air balloon hovering approximately 30 feet above the ground. You are between 40 and 41 degrees north latitude and between 59 and 60 degrees west longitude."

"You must be an engineer," said the balloonist.

"I am," replied the woman, "how did you know?"

"Well," answered the balloonist, "everything you told me is technically correct, but I have no idea what to make of your information, and the fact is I am still lost. Frankly, you've not been much help so far."

The woman below responded, "You must be in Management."

"I am," replied the balloonist, "but how did you know?"

"Well," said the woman, "you don't know where you are or where you are going. You have risen to where you are due to a large quantity of hot air. You made a promise, which you have no idea how to keep, and you expect people beneath you to solve your problems. The fact is you are in exactly the same position* you were in before we met, but now, somehow, it's my fault."

Events Calendar

Ed. Note: I will update this calendar as I find out about various events. If you know of one that should be listed please let me know.

May 24-26

Harwinton Balloon Festival, Harwinton CT

Julie DiCicco (860) 582-9977

CHANGE TO COMPETITION SCHEDULE

We need to make one change in our competition schedule. The April 27 or 28 in Willimantic needs to be changed to May 4th or 5th. Otherwise all else is good.

Tentative competition schedule is as follows with the second day planned as back up:

March 23 or 24 Skylark

May 4 or 5 Jillison Square (Willimantic) with breakfast at Daryl and Cindy's

May 25 or 26 Harwinton----- (Bristol Balloon Festival)

June 22 or 23 Litchfield

July 20 or 21 Cheshire----- (Ushchak Aerodrome)

August 24 or 25 Plainville

September 28 or 29 Southington--- (Aqua turf)

General rules: The competition will be canceled if the winds are greater than 6 knots on the surface and greater than 25 knots at 3000 ft as reported at the closest reporting station.

Sign in: To be included in the competition it is the PIC (Pilot-In-Command's) responsibility to sign in. (Sign is required and will take place at Mike Bollea's truck.

Pilot Briefing: To be included in the competition it is the PIC responsibility to attend the Pilot's briefing usually conducted 15 minutes before flight time.

Competition Tasks: To be announced at the Pilot's briefing.

Questions: Call Mike Bollea @ 860-677-0647 or Erwin Dressel 203-272-6116

BOOK REVIEW

When Giants Roamed the Sky

Karl Arnstein and Rise of Airships from Zeppelin to Goodyear

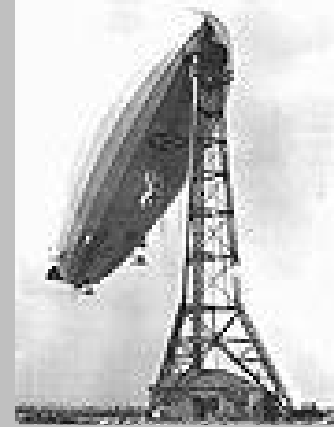
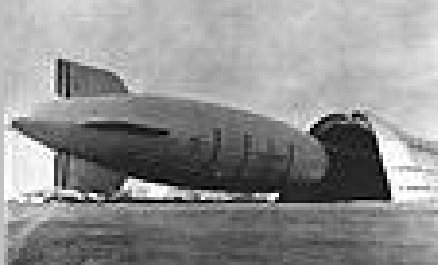
By A.Dale Topping

Edited by Eric Brothers

Karl Arnstein's life was defined by the wars that shattered Europe not once, twice during the first half of the twentieth century. Were it not for the consequences of such belligerence, his life's work would likely have been far different, and even less likely would have involved construction of airships.

Counting both Zeppelins and blimps, Arnstein participated in the design development of more airships than anyone did—more than eighty rigid airships and more than 230 pressure airships.

He could have been a philosopher or mathematician, but a desire to be practical attracted Arnstein to civil engineering. This knowledge spared him from the horrors of trench warfare, and a favorable impression he made on airship pioneer Count Zeppelin unexpectedly took him from the front to an aircraft factory in Freidrichshafen, Germany. Here Arnstein adapted his analysis of utilitarian structures fixed firmly to the ground to examination of flying structures the Zeppelin contributions to Zeppelin design that Arnstein should be remembered. The Goodyear blimp remains the tire company's corporate icon and serves as a familiar mascot that recalls Akron's large airship heritage. Arnstein and his team produced a blimp design that is still current and operation from its mid-1920' antecedents, although modern in its material and equipment..



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and

This is a well-written book that is reasonably priced and available at most local bookstores. The cost of the book 39.95 Cloth ISBN 1-884836-69-0 and Paper 27.95 ISBN 1-884836-70-4. If you are unable to locate a copy please call me and I will locate a copy for you.

BFA Board Conference Call Highlights

The BFA Board of Directors met in a regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, 2/26/02. Accordingly the Board...

Heard an update on 91.119 – the BFA proposal to study the reduction of minimum safe altitudes continues to be reviewed and revised by the FAA. President Rick Jones reported that final approval of the test program would hopefully be received in March.

Discussed the newly issued Sport Pilot NPRM as it relates to ballooning and agreed to study the matter further before adopting an official position.

approved a new Mission Statement for the organization and ordered its publication in the next issue of Skylines.

Agreed to explore an offer from the EAA to provide a tether balloon in exchange for booth space at the annual Sun N Fun in Lakeland, Florida coming in April.

Received a proposal from the North American Ballooning Association seeking to form a partnership with BFA to sanction and operate competitive ballooning events. After discussion the Board voted to refer the matter to the Competition Committee, Gas Division and Airship Committee for their review.

Accepted the resignation of Board Member Joe Bream, who has been our NAA representative for many years, and expressed thanks for all his help over this period. Also, accepted the appointment of Jim Thompson by the NAA to be their new member of the BFA Board.

(Continued from page 3)

Zanussi" in July of 1978; Don Cameron and Major Christopher Davies, pilots.

It is possible that an entirely different meteorological philosopher might work, but the fact remains that after 100 years of trying, this one was successful. While all of the details discussed and accepted cannot be recounted, it might be a desirable at this time to state the more basic premises of the successful system.

ALTITUDE OR FLIGHT PROFILE

It was our initial feeling, augmented by experience, that a successful flight would have to take place at altitudes not normally associated with a free balloon; a foal of 500MB or better was set, preferably with a mid point altitude of 20,000 feet or better. This means the associated with extended use cal conditions during the flight from obtaining the desired be a direct cause of the ulti- The pattern selection for the goal of eliminating any recur- the planned profile, with the able to attain and maintain the important factor was the pi- maintain these heights even in comfort, which in all probabilit- edge that allowed the flight to

Some of the reasons be- these altitudes include:

1. The more conservative While convoluted pat- level, it is generally amount of curvature is the rate of change of lower levels by a sig-
2. The normal westward weather features in the suggests that the ad- cyclogenesis can begin while at higher levels it still remains in a more benevolent position relative to this development. This factor became very important during this flight.
3. Wind speeds are generally higher with altitude. While this flight was quite slow (averaging about 25knts) it was none-the-less faster than it would have been lesser altitudes, indeed, assuming that it would have been successful at those lesser altitudes; about which we would express serious doubts.
4. The ability to over-fly weather. Any convective activity or precipitation shields would tend to be below the 20-25,000 foot level, particularly at the relatively high latitudes that would be anticipated during the flight. These levels also dictate that the cloud type most likely to be encountered above the craft would be the generally less dense cirroform, which would have a lesser cooling, or "sunset" effect on the balloon. While it turns out that even the most fibrous and thin cirrus has some effect on buoy- ancy, the problem is directly proportional to the opaqueness of the cloud.
5. The longer-range 72-96 hour objective computer prognostic charts available are generally produced for the 500MB level. While inferences can be drawn from these charts and related to other levels, it is true



various cascading problems of crew oxygen. Meteorologi- of 1977 inhibited the balloon altitudes, which we believe to mate failure of that flight. 1978 flight was made with the rence of an inhibiting factor to result that the balloon was desired levels of flight. A very lots' mental determination to the face of the physical dis- ity provided the one single be successful.

hind the desire to fly at

nature of the wind field. terns can take place at any true that the amplitude or less at high levels. Also, curvature lags that of the nificant factor. slope with altitude of Northern Hemisphere verse effect of upstream directly under the balloon,

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that the long standing forecast techniques and corrections that have been applied to the 500MB prognostic charts leave less room for interpretive error when utilizing these computer products.

6. A "fail-safe" outlet. While it's possible that a given forecast will be perfect throughout the duration of the flight, this is not realistic. It should be assumed, in the interest of safety and success, that the forecast will go awry, particularly after the 48-72 hour phase. This may not occur, but as implies in # 1 and # 2 above, if it does, the higher

level flight pattern attained at a coincidental time period of 48-72 hours may offer the outlet to compensate for the developing error in forecast. By and large, the initial pattern forecast for this flight worked out very well throughout the duration of the flight. The one item that might be considered as error in forecast, the flight levels maintained during the development negated the rate of development of the upstream storm (discussed in more detail later).

LAUNCH INTO HIGH PRESSURE

The pattern configuration

that we desired for the initial portion of the flight was one of high-pressure ridge. Specifically, we wanted to launch into the trailing edge of the low level (surface to 900MB) high pressure, in order to obtain an east to northeast injection into the flight. This is desirable to obtain in the higher latitudes necessary to enter Europe and to avoid the dominant Azores High, ever ready to suck a balloon southward into the easterly trades. The amount of northward displacement desired on this flight was less than that of 1977, due simply to the more northward launch location; Presque Isle, Maine vs. Marshfield, Mass. After the

launch plus 24 hour period, the normal climb dictated by the preflight profile would have allowed the balloon to climb into a position just ahead of the upper level ridge, due to the normal westward slope of the high pressure feature. Thus, the longer-range goal was the climb into the west and northwesterly wind flow allowing the tract re-curvature from the northeast to east..

Stay tuned for the next few issues of the Scoop and the complete summary of the flight of Double Eagle.

Ed.Note: Anyone interested in learning more about the Flight of Double Eagle or the Zanussi, Aer Blarney Collecti-

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My flight on Wednesday morning took a different track, heading straight for downtown Albuquerque. We launched with the second wave and there were balloons everywhere; above, below, in front and behind us. What a glorious sight! We flew straight over the X's set up for the beanbag competition. After flying with the crowd, the wind direction took us away from the city and over the Rio Grande River. Our approach to landing scared up a coyote from the brush as we landed on outskirts of a housing development. Our flight time was – 2 hour and 15 minutes. Add in a day trip to Santa Fe, a visit to a casino, the "zoo party", shopping at the Balloon Fiesta Park and in Old Town Albuquerque, to being surrounded by 750 balloons and you have the makings of great vacation. We are already planning our next trip to the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta.

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With America's entrance into World War I, Connecticut Aircraft Company suddenly found itself fully occupied, building 21 balloons and two "B" class dirigibles for the Navy and about 100 kite balloons for the Army. Unable to find business in the meager post-war aviation market, the Connecticut Aircraft Company closed its doors in 1921 and dissolved in 1927. So ended Connecticut's first viable organized aircraft manufacturing enterprise. Ed. note for more interesting aviation history check out

www.neam.org/avindct1.htm

Or visit the New England Air Museum

2001 in Review
by Tony Roswell

Last year was a very successful for CLAS with a membership of 96 members and an average meeting attendance of almost 20 . We successfully lowered dues and the minimum age to 14 as wells as a total redesign of the landowner appreciation card along with a successful photo contest and calendar . Donations were made to the Ed Yost commemorative marker in Bruning , Nebraska and the Stifung Mayday Foundation to aid the pilot families of the September 11 tragedies. In addition we were also able to contribute to our annual charity the Plainville food pantry as a special thanks to the town of Plainville for allowing us to hold meetings at the Municipal building since 1988.

The accomplishments that CLAS achieved were is due in large part because the membership worked as a collective group, so please be sure that your dues are paid so you will continue to be part of CLAS and also receive the Scoop. Let's keep the momentum going that allowed us to accomplish those things !

I personally like the quote by Ed Lappies at the Iron Butt Seminar ,
“ Great things can be accomplished if you don't care who gets the credit “ .

Think about it and what we can achieve by working together?

Tony

Stephen Hawking Rides In Balloon

Tuesday March 5, 2002 6:40 AM

LONDON (AP) - Stephen Hawking, the scientist who has turned ideas of time and space on their heads, fulfilled a lifelong dream of riding in a hot-air balloon. On Monday, the 60-year-old theoretical physicist, who has been confined to a wheelchair for most of his life, floated across the Cambridgeshire countryside with his wife, Elaine. Changes were made to the hot-air balloon's basket to accommodate a wheelchair, according to Virgin Balloon Flights, which arranged the trip.

“It's something he had always wanted to do and had been a lifelong dream for him," said a Virgin spokeswoman, who declined to be named. “But to take a balloon flight in a wheelchair is extremely difficult.”

2002 Iron Butt Seminar

Once again Maryann and Ed Lappies hosted a very successful safety seminar. As usual it was a very long day and by the end the day the seats were very hard but the information provided made it worthwhile.

Chuck O' Neil presented an FAR quiz consisting of 15 questions from defining a “ flight “ to maintenance a pilot can perform, and currency requirements. This was an interesting and interactive way to present those regulations that we too many times overlook.

Program Safety Manager, John Wood from the Portland FSDO spoke about the importance of putting as much preflight knowledge together as possible, i.e. weather, safety, communication, geography, navigation, and pilot and crew fitness, so that everyone involved knows what to expect during a safe flight.

Also on the subject of pilot fitness, Ed Lappies put together a Personal Minimums Checklist with elements from the fixed wing world. This checklist can be a very useful tool in recognizing risk factors and making the decision to fly safely.

Paul DePew spoke about pilot and crew safety. Through personal experiences and stories of others he made the point that you should be prepared to make the right decision about flying before you even step out of the chase vehicle at the launch site. He also stressed the importance of proper clothing, training, and equipment maintenance and propane safety both at refueling and during storage.

Maintenance was also the subject of Paul Stumpf's presentation. Paul stressed the importance of having all cur-

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Boffin's balloon dream is realised

Shropshire balloonist, Per Lindstrand, has enabled Britain's best known physicist, Professor Stephen Hawking, to realise a dream.

The wheelchair-bound professor, famous for his book *A Brief History of Time*, soared into the skies above his Cambridge home this week. And his purpose built balloon basket was constructed at the Oswestry Lindstrand factory.

Professor Hawking's wife, Elaine, contacted Lindstrand about the possibility of having a balloon flight for her husband's 60th

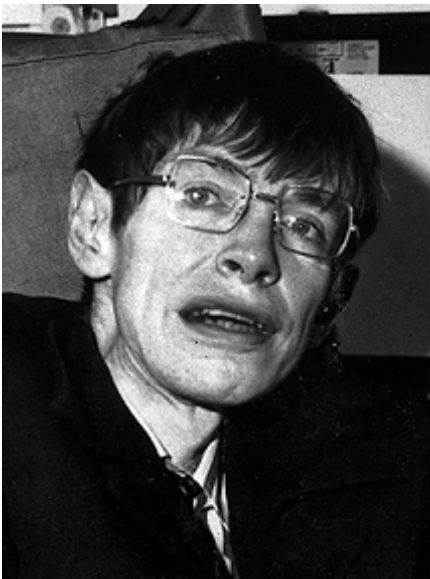
birthday. She commissioned the building of the basket as a birthday present. Mike Webb, the company's sales and marketing director, said: "Naturally we were delighted to be chosen to turn Stephen's hopes for a balloon flight into reality." The basket incorporated a special viewing platform and wheelchair access ramp and was typical of the work carried out by Lindstrand for those with special needs. Mr Webb said: "Hot air ballooning is both awe inspiring and fun and we believe that everyone should have the opportunity to share in the experience."

Brief Biography of Stephen Hawking

Stephen Hawking was born in Oxford, England on January 8, 1942. His parents fled to Oxford for safety during World War II. Both of his parents attended Oxford University. He was a slow reader and lacked behind in school and many of his classmates teased him and come anything.

Stephen attended Oxford in 1959. In his first year, he fell. In 1962, a graduate student of Cambridge diagnosed him with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). With his current happening in his personal life, he chose to study cosmology. He married Jane Wilde in 1965. They had three children together and are very happy.

Stephen Hawking was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) in 1962. He first noticed a difficulty in his movement when he was 17 and felt very clumsy. When he was taken to a hospital for tests, they told him there was nothing they could do. This gave him the motivation to take control and do research in cosmology and black holes. He is still continuing his research. He is now in a wheelchair and speaks with the help of a computer. He says he couldn't be happier



bet one another that he wouldn't be

last year at Oxford Stephen often bridge he was diagnosed with having ALS and gave him few years to live. He was fighting bouts of depression. ALS slowed down and he eventually had three children together and are very

ALS in 1962. He first noticed a difficulty at Oxford. He would trip a lot and family doctor, and by his 21st birthday they gave him his diagnosis and he would rapidly die. This gave him something for his future. He began to research cosmology and black holes. Now, Stephen Hawking is still living. ALS slowed down and he is now in

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rent serial numbers and information about system components entered in your logbook. Through the use of slides he showed many damage situations and how to properly repair them.

After a great lunch with everything from homemade soup to cookies Sid Conn of the Balloon Works spoke about the building and flying of special shapes. It will give you a whole new appreciation for them when you hear what goes into making some of these giants airworthy. Laurie Rich from the Bangor FSS spoke about the increased security at their facilities and some of the tools that they use to compile a weather briefing. As well as a very organized presentation Laurie handed out a ton of useful information. Ray Fournier gave a quick overview of proper radio communications and after a short break Mark West from Aerostar Industries gave a video presentation based on a fatal balloon accident. Many interviews, much research and reenactments went into this presentation as part of a lawsuit and Mark has gone around the country with it in hopes that we may learn from mistakes made and how quickly and to what extent things can go wrong. The last but certainly not the least subject of the day was Ballooning As A Business presented by Chris Mooney who brings with him many years experience as a commercial pilot for ReMax. Chris handed out and reviewed an outline of the many things involved in starting up and maintaining a viable balloon operation. Thanks to all who made this a good seminar!

Tony Roswell

Before beginning this paper, we must plant a couple of aeronautical mile-posts around which we can weave the events of Connecticut aeronautics. After dreaming and scheming of flight for centuries, it was not until 1783 that man first flew by balloon in France. One hundred and twenty years were to pass before man first flew a fully controllable powered heavier-than-air aircraft, accomplished by the Wright brothers in 1903. In the intervening time, flight was wedded, for the most part, to aircraft which floated in the air called "lighter-than-air craft".

The balloonmania which swept the world of 1783 settled in Connecticut two years later. At New Haven, Josiah Meiggs, a former tutor of Yale and editor of the New Haven Gazette, built and flew across the New Haven green a small unmanned cylindrical balloon on three occasions, the first on April 25, 1785. A month later, he flew a somewhat larger unmanned spherical balloon across the green. The militia were drilling as this balloon sailed overhead. Like all true soldiers, they could not resist peppering such a tempting target with musket fire - the first anti-aircraft fire in America. In America, the first manned free balloon flight occurred at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on January 9, 1793 by famed French aeronaut Jean Pierre Blanchard.

A little known event took place at Hartford during the summer of 1800 which may have great significance in the course of American aeronautical history. John Graham advertised in the Connecticut Courant for ascensions in his "Federal Patented Balloons" at six pence per person. The advertisements lead one to believe that the balloons were tethered to a winching mechanism. What "Federal Patented Balloons" were is still a mystery. Much needed research could prove that the Graham ballooning was the first commercial aeronautical enterprise in America - a feeble beginning of our great air transportation system.

In America and in Connecticut, balloon flights were infrequent until about 1835. Connecticut's great

aeronaut, Silas M. Brooks, did not make his first balloon flight in his native state until July 4, 1862 and continued to make ascensions until his 187th on July 4, 1894, his last. While many aeronauts, including Brooks, thought much of using the balloon as a form of air transportation, the very nature of the machine and the elements it flew in prevented any sort of predictable transport. The balloon went wherever the wind carried it. It was obvious that some form of propulsion and control was required to navigate a balloon or air ship against the wind so as to travel in a desired course (dirigibility is the technical term), before any sort of air transportation could become practical. Again in France, the dirigible was conceived in 1785 by General Jean Baptiste Marie Meusnier and first built and flown at Paris by Henri Giffard in 1852. Thereafter, the dirigible concept spread rapidly.

At Bridgeport, inventor Charles F. Ritchel designed and had built in 1878 a crude hand-powered dirigible. A rubberized cylindrical gas bag made at the Goodyear Rubber Company in Naugatuck supported a brass frame work made at Folansbee Machine Shop in Bridgeport on which the aeronaut sat. The aeronaut turned by hand a drive gear that drove a small propeller which could also be moved directionally to pull the dirigible to the desired course. After much flying of the small dirigible inside one of the Centennial Exposition buildings at Philadelphia, Ritchel brought it to Hartford where on June 12, 1878 Ritchel's fly-weight aeronaut, Mark Quinlan, took off from the baseball field behind Colt's Armory. A sizable crowd of spectators watched Quinlan sail over the armory, turn over the Connecticut River, return and land at the starting point to shake Ritchel's

EDITOR'S NOTE: This paper was presented by Harvey Lippincott in 1977 at the Meeting of the Association for the Study of Connecticut History. Mr. Lippincott was the founder of the Connecticut Aeronautical Historical Association, which operates the New England Air Museum, and former UTC corporate archivist. He died in 1996.

hand. This was the first flight of a man-carrying dirigible in America. The next day Quinlan attempted a repeat flight, but the wind was too strong and he landed at Newington. Flights were later made at Boston and elsewhere. Ritchel's fertile imagination envisioned a trans-continental airline using a large dirigible cranked by eleven men.

Ritchel even got a minuscule aircraft manufacturing industry under way. He built at Bridgeport and sold five dirigibles. Interesting as his aeronautical work was, he made no contribution to subsequent dirigible technology.

Though balloons in Connecticut carried passengers, some for a fee, they and Ritchel's dirigible offered no solution for practical air transportation that would take one when and where he wanted. Yet, the dirigible was to play a further role in Connecticut aeronautics. A group of New Haven businessmen in 1913 incorporated the Connecticut Aircraft Company to design and manufacture aircraft, specifically dirigibles. A brash young Yale engineering graduate, James F. Boyle, who admittedly knew absolutely nothing about dirigibles, talked his way into the company as Chief Engineer. He and a few engineers designed, bid and won a contract from the U.S. Navy on June 1, 1915 to construct the first dirigible for the Navy. Construction of the 175 foot long pressure airship DN-1, as it was officially designated, began soon after. By March, 1916 the DN-1 was fully erected in the Hartford Armory for fitting out after which it was shipped to Pensacola, Florida, for delivery to the Navy. Due to the primitive technology available at the time, the Navy's first dirigible was not successful, completing only three flights.

(Continued on page 7)

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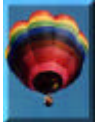
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