



# *Sport Parachutist*

**VOL. 2 NO. 2**

**SUMMER 1965**

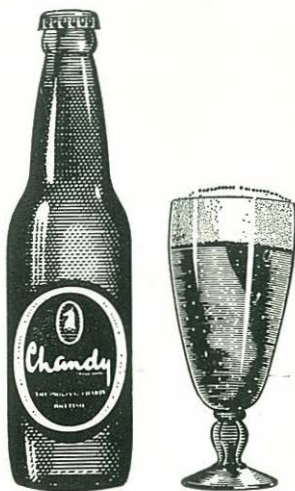
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# Sport Parachutist

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## JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH PARACHUTE ASSOCIATION

7c Lower Belgrave Street, London, S.W.1.

(SLOane 7907)



COVER: Not as you may think—a pas de deux, but Sgt. J. McLoughlin and Sgt. Russell about to make their 1,000th and 500th jump respectively at Changi airport.

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# Club Affiliation

to

# THE BRITISH PARACHUTE ASSOCIATION

## A Report of the BPA Proposals for the Affiliation of Clubs.

SINCE its formation in 1961, the BPA has always been diffident about enforcing its views and policies on clubs and individuals who were disinclined to accept them. In the early days the Association's aims were largely devoted to the provision of a bank of knowledge from the experience of a small number of experts. No one presumed to know all the answers, and advice and guidance were more easily forthcoming than rules and regulations. Only in the matter of approving instructors was the BPA firm. It was a matter of indifference whether a new club or any individual supported the Association.

In spite of this apparently casual attitude, and without any Ministerial support, the BPA has in the course of five years been forced into the position of assuming responsibility. Its membership has grown enormously from the original handful of founder members, and with this process of expansion has come the demand for guidance and direction. Parachuting is no longer an experience reserved for a few exceptional individuals, but rather a sporting activity recognised by government departments, the world of Aviation, the Services, the Press and the public at large. The only body representing this growing band of enthusiasts is the BPA. Responsibility has thus been thrust upon it.

In order to try and meet its obligations, the BPA changed its shape, its outlook and its character. In trying to protect the interests of the sport and establish respect for its followers, it has drawn upon the ever-increasing fund of knowledge, skill and experience of its most proficient members. It has established certain

procedures as safe and others as unsafe.

During this process of evolution it has repeatedly been requested to produce its views on parachuting procedures and standards for guidance of clubs and members. This it has done, and in the process has come to be recognised as the accepted authority for the production of Standard Operating Procedures and code of conduct for sport parachutists. In addition, standards of performance and qualifications for instructors and guidance for all concerned with the conduct of parachuting have been produced. Inevitably these have become regarded as the Rules and Regulations for the BPA. During their evolution one edition has superseded another until the stage had been reached (early in 1965) when those primarily responsible are confident that the time has come to print a comprehensive edition no longer labelled "Provisional".

### **A hardening of attitudes**

Inevitably perhaps, as the BPA has found its feet and its advisers have assumed the role of legislators, the differences in outlook, conduct and standards as adopted within clubs have widened. While the guidance based on experience has been accepted and, indeed, partly contributed by the majority of clubs, there is nevertheless a degree of built-in resistance to be found here and there. Rarely does it show above the surface, but perhaps it can be best measured by the support withheld in various quarters. It is at any rate sufficiently noticeable for anyone with his eyes open to see.

In the same way as the BPA was slow to produce its rules for the conduct of sport parachuting, so was it

reluctant to commit itself to paper on what it considered its precise Charter should be. This matter, however, in the fullness of time was also faced and the aims of the BPA were spelled out in black and white (Sport Parachutist Vol. 1, No. 3).

### **The burden of responsibility**

With each successive step in which the B.P.A. commits itself to some fresh undertaking, its responsibility increases. Since most of its commitments involve administrative effort they automatically involve expense. The mere increase in public interest itself creates a volume of correspondence and inquiries. The routine work of the Association carried out on behalf of sport parachutists in general is now immense for an organisation of this nature.

With the growth of the sport in Britain and the acceptance of the BPA as its representative mouthpiece there is a constant obligation to protect the interests of clubs, and thereby individuals, from the effects of adverse publicity and restrictive legislation. This is a never-ending struggle and it weighs heavily on those who conduct it on behalf of all parachutists, whether inside or outside the BPA.

### **Prestige**

With one major international contest of the first magnitude involving up to 30 or more nations taking place every year, competitive parachuting has already achieved an Olympic status and considerable prestige is at stake. During the past 3 years the BPA has assumed full responsibility for entering, equipping, training and transporting our national teams for major international contests. There they have represented British Parachutists in the eyes of the world and the impression has been favourable.

### **National Championships**

During the past three years the BPA has staged annual national parachute championships. With *minimum* support from many of its own clubs and members, it has striven not unsuccessfully, to provide an opportunity for the better performers to compete against one another and enjoy each other's company in an atmosphere of mutual interest and goodwill. But how much account is taken of the effort involved in staging these events? And by whom?

By means of periodical newsletters, memoranda, and more recently the publication of a magazine of the highest standards and quality production, the BPA has sought to serve its members with material of value and interest. Although these are widely appreciated, it is doubtful if many realise how much labour and expense is involved.

The stage has now been reached when the BPA is entitled to ask for and expect the complete moral and practical support of all sport parachute clubs and

schools in Britain. It can stand on its record (though not on its laurels) of the first five years; it can call upon all those who today count themselves as sport parachutists but have not joined the BPA, to do so. More important by far, it can call upon all Clubs and Schools to openly declare their whole-hearted support of the BPA and all it stands for. Unless this is forthcoming they at least will be in no position to criticise the Association for any shortcomings. What is more serious, they must be prepared to accept no small responsibility in the event of the BPA finding itself unable to carry on, either through lack of funds or the discouragement of the small band of individuals by whose labour the Association has established its presented position.

### **Therefore:**

1. The time has come for the BPA to call upon all Clubs and individual parachutists for their support. While there will always be individuals with their own reasons for remaining outside any organisation which works on their behalf, the idea that this can apply to Clubs or Schools is wholly unacceptable.
2. It is recommended that all Clubs and Schools shall be asked in the name of the Council to sign a Declaration of Affiliation to the Association. This will call for their moral support and the exercising of their influence to persuade all their members to join the BPA as individuals.
3. All Clubs and Schools should pay an annual affiliation fee of £5 to the BPA to assist it in its work on their behalf. In cases where a Club's membership is below an agreed strength, they might apply for and receive a concession rate.
4. No Clubs which are not affiliated to the BPA should be permitted to enter teams in the National Championships, nor should any members of such Clubs be allowed to enter as individuals in the names of those Clubs.
5. The full list of affiliated Clubs and Schools should appear on the introductory page of every issue of Sport Parachutist for all to see. It should be pointed out that Clubs whose names do not appear in this list can be presumed to disagree with the declared aims and objects of the Association.
6. Affiliated Clubs shall be permitted to use the BPA emblem on their stationery and shall be given 10% reduction on all bulk purchases from the Association.

**PLEASE give this your urgent and sympathetic consideration. It is very important for the future of Sport Parachuting in Great Britain.**

Dare Wilson,  
Chairman.

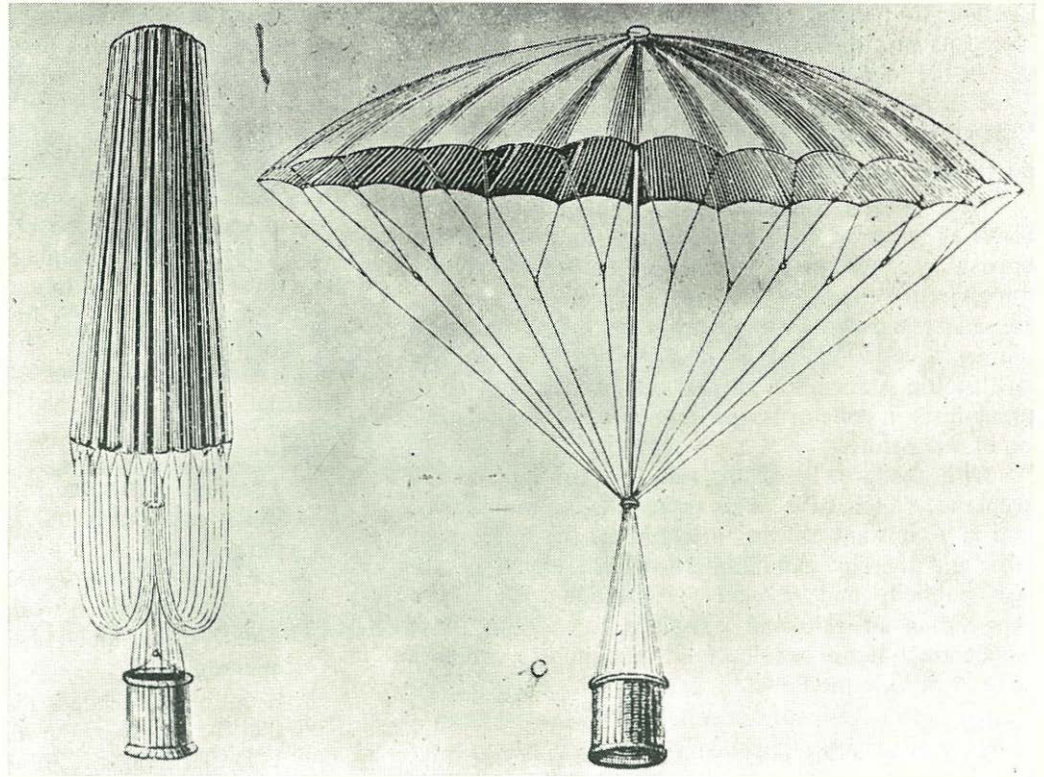


Fig. 2

# ***THE FIRST EXHIBITION PARACHUTIST***

**By S. B. JACKSON, B.Sc., A.Inst.P., A.F.R.Ae.S.  
Head of R. & D. Division, Irving Air Chute of  
Great Britain Ltd.**

In the first issue of "Sport Parachutist" in 1964 there was a brief note about a pioneer parachutist, Robert Cocking. Cocking's parachute has recently received a good deal of publicity, but in his day at the beginning of the 19th Century, the parachute which attracted popular attention was that of Andre Jacques Garnerin, the first successful exhibition parachutist. All the early descents by parachute were, in fact, made by exhibition

jumpers and the earliest descent dates from 1797, following the invention by Charles, the French Physicist, of the gas balloon which was an ideal vehicle for this spectacular occupation. These men were, however, not only interested in exhibition jumping, but just as the modern Sky-diver, they were genuinely interested in the science of their subject and in furthering the design of the parachute.

For those who are not familiar with the early history of the parachute this article will give, I hope, some background information.

It is commonplace to ascribe all modern inventions to Leonardo Da Vinci and certainly Leonardo does describe a parachute built in the form of a square sheet of linen, 36 ft. across the flats. Again, several others, notably Fausto Veranzio (1595) have mentioned parachutes during the 16th to 18th centuries, but I would like to suggest that the history of parachutes does not begin with any of these. I think it is obvious that many obscure "technologists" may well have decided that a sheet of cloth provides a resistance to air which could well be useful in attenuating the speed of a falling body. There is, after all, a good deal of the commonplace in the idea of the parachute, essentially a flexible body which can be stowed in small volume but will unfold to assume a shape giving high aerodynamic drag.

How many may have gazed from a high building to the street below or from a cliff, or from the high window in a prison and thought in terms of a primitive parachute, we shall not know. Until it was possible to make ascents from the earth, these ideas must have been largely stillborn. Even so, concurrently with the Montgolfier experiments with balloons, Sebastian Lenormand, a French Physician of Montpellier made a spectacular descent from an Observatory tower in the town in December 1783. He had advocated the use of his apparatus largely as a means of escape from tall buildings on fire. The diameter was 14 ft. which would have given a descent speed of about 27 ft./sec. or somewhat more rapid than that experienced by a pilot baling out, but it is understood that the flight was stable and Lenormand received no injury, even if his primitive basket, with his legs projecting below could not have been conducive to a comfortable landing. (Fig. 1.) Subsequently Jean Pierre Blanchard attached a parachute to his balloon in March 1784 and was reputed on one occasion to have made a descent from it which resulted in his breaking a leg. There is, however, some doubt about this. The "Mirror," a daily newspaper of the day, says that Blanchard made a descent by parachute at Basle, breaking his leg in the event, while O'Hubbard in "Aeronautics," Vol. iii, 1910 states that Blanchard merely dropped from a height in essaying the effect of landing in a parachute and broke his leg in this way.

There was also a design by an Englishman, Thomas Martyn, who advocated the use of a rigid parachute attached to a balloon as a safety device in 1783, but Martyn's design was a theoretical one only.

I think it is fair thus to ascribe the true invention of the parachute to the first recognised parachutist. He was a Frenchman who took up the art of ballooning and realised the advantage of having an efficient means of escape. Garnerin evolved the design of his parachute

whilst he was in prison in Hungary, having been captured at the Battle of Marchiennes in 1793. He came to Paris after his release from prison and at the age of 27 in 1797 built a parachute and made plans for his first descent. I have, in the July 1964 issue of the Journal of the Royal Aeronautical Society, described some misunderstandings which have arisen concerning the dimensions of Garnerin's parachute. Referring to the size again, it is because of the custom to refer to the diameter of a parachute in two ways, viz. the flat, i.e. the constructed diameter as a simple polygon which can be laid on the ground, and the flying, or mouth diameter. Modern practice in England is to describe the R.A.F. Emergency Parachute (the I.24) by its flat diameter, 24 ft. The I.24 has a flying or mouth diameter some two-thirds of this, i.e. 16 ft. and it is the flying diameter which is used in England as a basis for the drag coefficient of the parachute. Shaped gore parachutes, on the other hand, are always referred to by their mouth or flying diameter. Garnerin made a parachute of 23 ft. flying diameter, probably somewhat over 30 ft. in flat diameter. Descriptions of the parachute refer to its diameter as 23 ft. and it was, of course, the nominal similarity between 23 ft. and 24ft. referred to above which caused confusion in the minds of the writers on parachutes in the period between the two wars. Had these writers considered the reported fabric area of some 870 sq.ft. they would have realised that Garnerin's parachute must have been considerably larger than the I.24 which contains only some 540 sq.ft. of cloth.

The gores of Garnerin's parachute were not triangular, almost certainly forming a regular polygon as is the case for the I.24, but no exact information is, in fact, available on the shape of the parachute. Some slight evidence exists to show that it was made to the same shaped gore construction as the balloon itself. Even so, there is a big variation in the sectional shape of the parachute shown in the various prints in existence, a typical one of which is shown. (Fig. 2.) Let us consider Garnerin's parachute in some detail. It was constructed of 32 gores and manufactured in a heavy cotton cloth similar to sailcloth. Underneath the parachute with its 30 ft. long rigging lines was a wicker basket, 4 ft. high and 2 ft. diameter. At the apex of the canopy a round piece of wood 10 in. in diameter was held secured by 32 short pieces of tape. Inside the canopy a hoop also made of wood, 8 ft. diameter, was sewn to each of the seams at about 4½ ft. from the apex of the canopy. This hoop served to keep the parachute partially open as it hung suspended like a cylindrical curtain beneath the balloon. This was a very useful idea and may well have been done because earlier experiments with models showed that the rigging lines could twist during an ascent and prevent inflation of the canopy during the subsequent descent. The resistance to closing by such a hoop would have prevented the twisting of the rigging

lines from occurring. Release was accomplished by simply cutting a supporting cord running from the balloon through the parachute to the wicker basket. It is interesting to note that Garnerin considered that the ideal descent rate should be 10 ft./sec., a good deal slower than the F.A.I. limit for the sport!! However, such a low descent rate was most desirable because Garnerin's parachute itself was very unstable (Fig. 3) and to the vertical descent rate must be added a considerable contribution due to oscillation. It is reported that Garnerin was often sick during the descent and a major contribution to the instability would have been due to the very flat shape and the lack of air permeability of the fabric of the parachute. Suffice it to say, considering a common fallacy, that even had there been an air vent at the apex of the parachute it is doubtful if much improvement in stability would have occurred. An interesting indication of the type of instability which did occur is given in the "Mirror" of 28th July, 1837 which stated that Garnerin's parachute has a rotatory motion. This is the only indication I have found that the parachute "coned" which is a typical form of motion for a so-called unstable parachute. Notwithstanding this, his various descents were widely acclaimed

Fig. 1

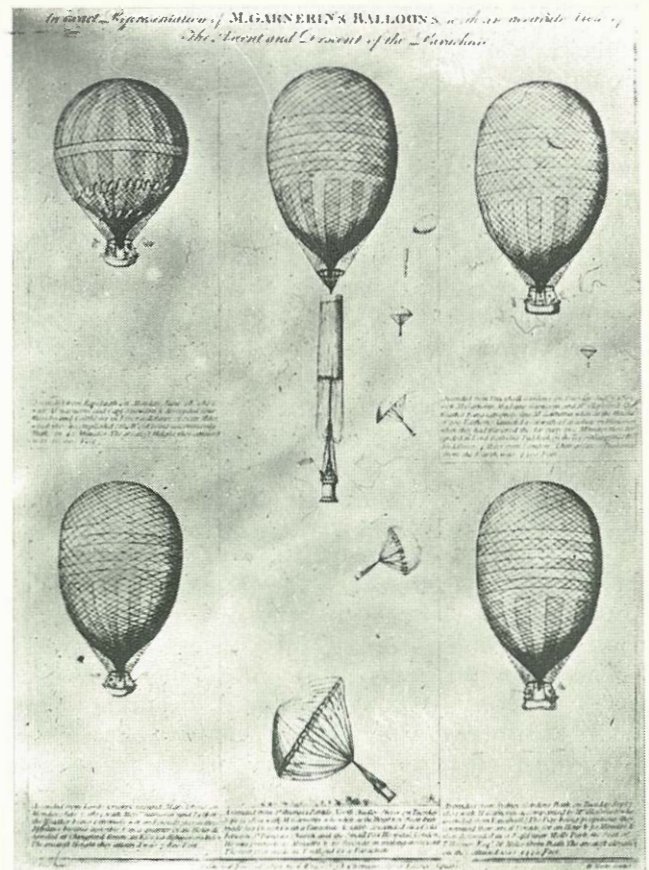
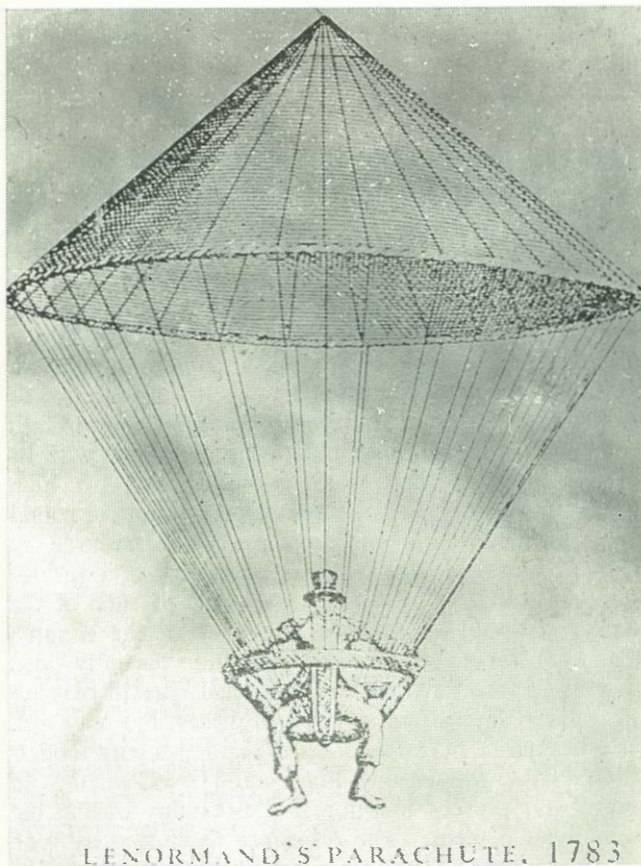


Fig. 3  
Illustrating the bad stability of Garnerin's parachute.

and he made many successful parachute descents throughout Europe. He made the first parachute descent in England on September 21st, 1802 ascending from Grosvenor Square to a height of 8,000 ft., and, cutting himself loose from the balloon, he descended in his parachute to a point close to where Euston Station is now. Parachutes of Garnerin's design were used both by himself and his wife Jeanne and also by their niece Mademoiselle Elisa Garnerin who made a number of exhibition descents in Europe.

The most important feature in discussions about Garnerin's parachute design had been its instability, and in 1810 Sir George Cayley presented proposals in Nicholson's Journal for a stable parachute based, effectively, on an inverted cone. This idea, aerodynamically correct, but structurally difficult to achieve and inefficient was brought to fruition by Robert Cocking. A water-colour artist by profession, and having witnessed Garnerin's descent in 1802 at the age of 25, Cocking made his unfortunate descent at the age of 61 in July 1837. His parachute (Fig. 4) in order to obtain adequate strength, was heavily reinforced with metal hoops and finally weighed some 400 lb. It was manufactured in





Fig. 5  
The descent of Cocking's parachute.

22 gores of Irish linen, 35 ft. diameter at its wide, upper end and would have probably had a normal landing speed of some 21 ft./sec.

A good deal has been written about Cocking's descent, but suffice it to say that the parachute almost certainly collapsed because of structural failure of the fabric and by distortion of the metal frame-work under the air pressure. Observers were no less unreliable in the 1830's than they are today and a number of conflicting descriptions of the event are found in the Press. In the Penny Mechanic for July 29th, 1837, several eye witnesses gave accounts and it seems to me that the most reliable of these, apart from Professor Airey, the Astronomer who was also present at the Inquest, was one who observed the flight through a telescope from Sydenham Common. This observer said that the parachute descended for some 10 seconds in its normal form and then the upper hoop collapsed, causing an increase in descent rate, and subsequent further distortion and break-up of the fabric structure (Fig. 5). There is, however, much that is obscure about the details of the accident; even in reports of the Inquest there are considerable contradictions. One interesting possibility perhaps, apart from that

described by Hegener in "Flight" last year, was that Cocking had an arrangement to make his parachute glide by tilting it, using a control line. It is possible that he operated this control line and the extra aerodynamic loading on the construction, at the particular angle of tilt produced, was the root cause of the collapse.

The first successful British parachutist was John Hampton who having made several balloon ascents, descended by parachute on October 3rd, 1838 at Cheltenham. After Cocking's unfortunate accident in 1837 there was considerable opposition to the resumption of parachuting though a great deal of popular "scientific" interest in parachute design.

Hampton's exploit at Cheltenham was made after a ruse in which he deliberately cut himself free after agreeing to make only a captive balloon ascent at the end of a restraining cable. The parachute descent was made from some 6,000 ft. and it is reported that the drop was stable and slow. Subsequently he made a further descent from Cremorne Gardens in London on June 13th, 1839 and there followed many other successful exhibition jumps.

Hampton's parachute (Fig. 6) was of a very interesting design. It consisted of a Gingham fabric umbrella reinforced by 16 radii or ribs of pieces of whalebone rivetted together and supported by 16 bamboo stays. These latter were like the supporting ribs of an umbrella. There was also a central copper tube passing from the apex of the parachute to the basket. At the periphery of the parachute was a 2 yard wide curtain and the whole parachute was covered in a net. 16 cords were attached to the net and 16 to the ends of the whalebone ribs, forming as it were a double set of rigging lines.

The details of parachute designs given in the various journals of the time were often at variance. Some observers gave the diameter of Hampton's parachute as 15 ft. whilst the "Mechanic and Chemist" of June 22nd, 1839 stated that it was 16 ft. In any case, Hampton's parachute would appear to be roughly the same diameter as the I.24.

Later a number of other Showmen made parachute descents in the 1840's and 1850's. In England there was Lt. Gale, R.N., an adventurer of many parts who later died in a balloon accident when he was not carrying a parachute. In this case, the basket was accidentally cut free and Gale ascended only holding onto the ropes of the balloon. He lost his grip and fell to his death. Other Englishmen at about this time made balloon ascents sometimes with a live animal which suffered the parachute descent. The period of circus exhibitions lasted throughout the whole of the remainder of the 19th century.

Of others, in 1880's Major Thomas Baldwin, an American, made numerous descents all over the world. Together with G. A. Farini, an Italian inventor who lived for some time in London, Baldwin patented a

flexible silk parachute, one of the early useful patents in the field. In England in the 1890's the Brothers Spencer, sons of the famous Edward Spencer, one of the balloonists who took up Robert Cocking in his parachute, did a large number of exhibition jumps. In Germany, Fraulein Kathe Paulus took part in many exhibition descents. She also made dual jumps with her fiancé, Herr Latteman, who was afterwards killed in a parachute descent. In France, somewhat earlier, (in the 1850's) M. et Mme. Poitevin became famous and they also made exhibition jumps on horseback. These latter with an inevitable element of cruelty to the animal which was suspended by a single strap about the body caused John Hampton to enter into a quarrel with the Poitevins. But on the whole, this later period of exhibition descents was one which contributed little usefulness to the art of parachuting.

By the 1890's, however, the general tendency among parachutists was to use a parachute of about 30 ft. flat diameter hardly more hemispherical in form than Garnerin's seems to have been. The apex of the stretched parachute was tethered to the balloon at some convenient position, usually at about the maximum

Fig. 4

Cocking's parachute.

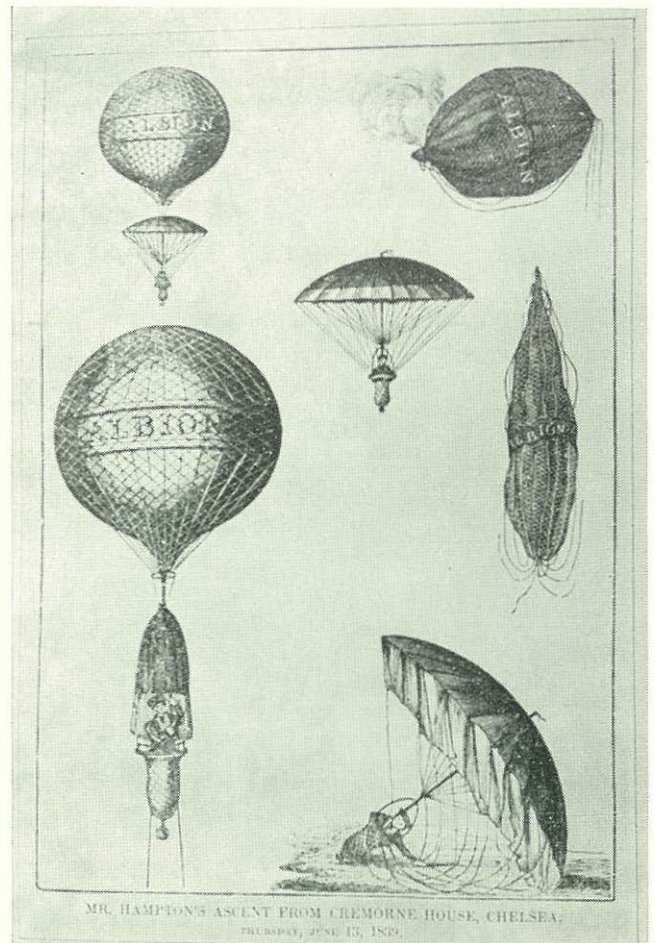
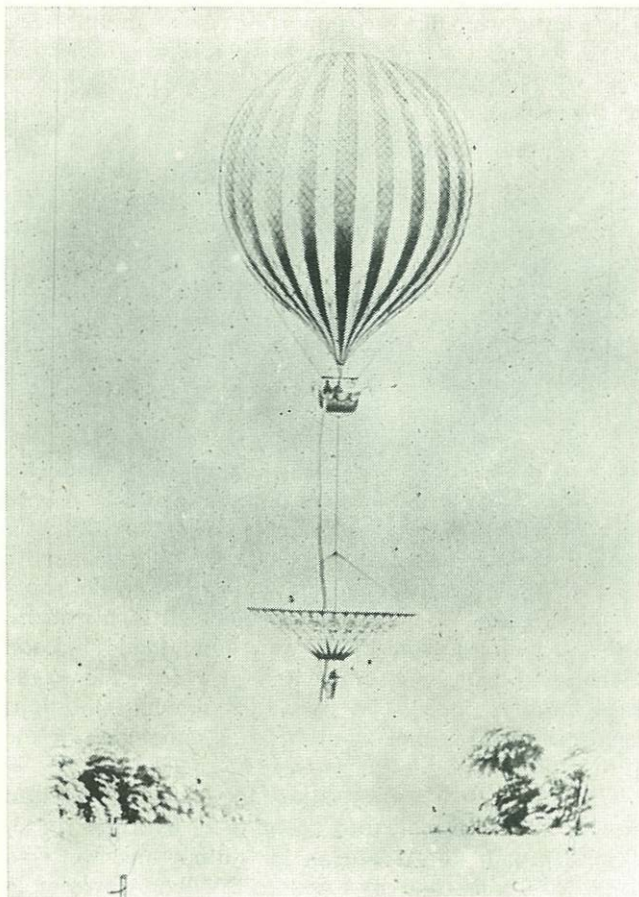


Fig. 6

Hampton's parachute design.

diameter of the balloon, by a cotton cord 80 lb. in strength. A crude attachment at the harness end had replaced the basket. This was often just a ring for the parachutist to hold on to. It is probable that the parachutist would now manually prevent or eliminate twists which might occur in the rigging lines during the ascent and the need for cumbersome devices to hold the parachute open during the ascent was obviated. The parachute weighed 30 lb. so that when the parachutist wished to make the descent, his weight plus the 30 lb. of parachute was well adequate to break the 80 lb. apex tie.

This state of affairs was to be the case until parachutes were adopted by the Balloon Corps formed for Military Reconnaissance. The introduction of the Military aspect led to the need for a pack and a harness, and the advent of the aeroplane led to the introduction of the idea of the auxiliary parachute and the need to design the pack and harness with a lighter construction. It seemed that the days of exhibition jumps from balloons were more or less over.

★

# The 1965 British National Championships

AT  
NETHERAVON  
AND  
ALDERSHOT

★

The Championships will be held in two phases: —

1. From 29 May to 7 June inclusive at NETHERAVON Airfield, Wiltshire.
2. (*Finals*) On 19th and 20th June at ALDERSHOT, in conjunction with the Aldershot Show.

The Finals will concern only the top 5 individuals (men or women) and the top 4 teams, based on the Order of Merit at the conclusion of Phase 1.

This year's National Championships will be run as far as possible according to the rules and conditions laid down for the 1966 World Parachute Championships.

There will be three events as follows: —

- EVENT I — TEAM ACCURACY  
EVENT II — INDIVIDUAL ACCURACY  
EVENT III — INDIVIDUAL STYLE

**Ladies:**

- a. There will be no special events for women but prizes will be awarded for the top women competitors in Events 2 and 3, and women may be included in teams entered for Event 1.
- b. A National Ladies' Champion will be nominated in the same way as the Men's Champion, providing that not less than 5 women enter the individual events.

**Event 1.**

Each team will consist of 4 bona fide members of a registered Service or Civilian Parachute Club which is affiliated to the BPA.

There will be 3 rounds, each of 2 jumps, with a process of elimination after each round.

All jumps of all team members will count.

The altitude for this event will be from 1000 metres with 0-10 seconds delay.

Four targets will be laid out within the jumping pit.

Competitors who over-delay will lose their scores for the jumps in question in all events.

**Event 2.**

There will be 2 rounds each of 2 jumps.

The individual accuracy jumps in Phase 2 will NOT constitute part of this event.

All jumps will count.

The altitude for this event will be 1000 metres with delays of 0-10 seconds.

**Event 3.**

There will be three rounds, each of one jump from 7000 feet with delays of 25-30 seconds.

Before each round the judges will announce the series to be performed. This will vary for each of the three rounds.

All competitors in this event must be able to prove, if called to do so, that they have been observed by a qualified witness to perform a complete series, in practice, within 17 seconds.

### Priority of Events

- a. The Championships Committee will decide the priority of events and the daily parachuting programme.
- b. Unless they have reasons for doing otherwise they will be guided by the following principles:—
  - (1) Event 1 will be confined to Saturdays and Sundays.
  - (2) Event 1 will not be taken beyond the first round during the first weekend.
  - (3) Event 3 will have priority over Event 2.

### BPA Volunteers

There will be a requirement for BPA volunteers of both sexes to assist BPA officials with the day-to-day running of the Championships. Those who are prepared to assist should offer their services to the Secretary General, if possible well in advance, specifying on which complete days they will be available.

### Assembly

All officials and assistants are required to assemble at Netheravon Airfield if possible at 1400 hrs. on Friday, 28th May. Those unable to do this are requested to do so by 0830 hrs. on 29th May.

All competitors are requested to assemble if possible by 1800 hrs. 28th May. Those unable to do so should assemble in time for the briefing on 29th May.

### Competitors' Briefing

0900 hrs. Saturday, 29th May.

### Officials and Assistants Briefing

1400 hrs. Friday, 28th May.

Accommodation will be available to all competitors and officials within Netheravon Airfield Camp. Sleeping bags will be required as no bedding is available. Camp beds should be brought by those in possession as the number of beds may be limited.

Messing will be available to those who require it at 10s. per day. This service, however, will only be available for those who intend coming for the whole period and clearly state their requirements for full messing on their entry forms.

A canteen will be provided for the use of competitors daily, also a bar for their use after parachuting has finished daily.

Messing and accommodation will NOT be available for families.

It is hoped that once again the US Army will provide the principal judging.

All competitors are requested to report at "Championships Reception" on arrival at Netheravon Airfield. They should bring with them their documents as referred to in Paragraph 8 of the Rules for the Championships.

### FEES

#### Competitors

1. General Entry Fee — £1.
2. **Messing.** Supper 28th May-Breakfast 7th June—£6 inclusive (This applies to Service and Civilian members alike).
3. **Accommodation or camp site.** No charge.
4. **EVENT 1 (Team Accuracy):** £4 per team member. (Optional refund of £2 to those eliminated after the first round).
5. **EVENT 2 (Ind. Accuracy):** £5 per competitor. (Optional refund of £2 to those eliminated after the first round).
6. **EVENT 3 (Ind. Style).** £6 per competitor (Refund of £2 per jump after elimination).  
Every opportunity will be taken to provide pleasure jumps to those eliminated from these events.

#### Families

BPA Associate Membership for the Duration of the 1965 National Championships:—  
ADULTS £1.  
CHILDREN under 15 10s.

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# The Sport Parachutist

The British Parachute Association, founded only a year or two ago, decided to produce its own magazine in 1964. The first issue came out on June 1st, and will be published quarterly. It is solely for Sport Parachutists, and written by them, although anyone is most welcome to take out a subscription. A sport such as this does need careful regulating, especially when enthusiasm in the country increases almost daily. It is this task of regulating and helping in all aspects that the individuals who form the nucleus of the British Parachute Association Committee have set themselves.

So *help* the sport by joining the British Parachute Association as a Full, or Associate member.

Your financial support can only do good, and will be most gratefully received.

Write to the Secretary NOW!

Some of the "hard core."

Left to right:—

**Back Row:**

F./Sgt. B. A. Jones, Sqn. Ldr.  
M. C. Stamford, F./Sgt R. R.  
Robertson, Sgt. N. Hoffman,  
Master Signaller G. Schellong  
(Pilot).

**Front Row:**

Sgt. A. Charlton, Sgt. B. Clark-  
Sutton, Sgt. D. Francombe,  
F./Sgt. T. Moloney.



# How it all Began

by

Squadron Leader M. C. Stamford.

AFTER reading 'The Khaki Airline' by J.S.W. in the 1964 Summer Edition, which I appreciated more than most, I thought it might be fruitful to add the experience of forming the RAF (Abingdon) Sport Parachuting Club to the record. I hope it may prove useful background for budding organisers of more and more new clubs in the U.K., whilst at the same time realising in retrospect the many advantages we have compared with our civilian counterparts.

The results of the 1964 British Championships showed a welcome re-appearance of RAF jumpers on the honours lists, with Sergeant Tony Charlton regaining the title and the very promising young Sergeant

Brian Clark-Sutton notching his first national success with 5th place. Together with veteran internationals, Flight Sergeant Tommy Moloney and Sergeant Norman Hoffman, they also landed the team prize for the RAF Club. Many readers will have noted this RAF revival and perhaps have wondered how it all began!

It is no secret that a small band of RAF Parachute Jumping Instructors have been active in British Sport Parachuting for a decade or more, and although they have banded together in several ventures of a private enterprise, sponsorship of any kind eluded them until October, 1962. At this time I was serving as a Squadron Commander at No. 1 Parachute Training



School, Abingdon, and was immensely thrilled by my own first experiences as a free fall parachutist under the auspices of the service. I was greatly impressed by the enthusiasm, dedication and enormous potential of what I chose to call the small "hard core" of instructors who were prepared to spend their own time and money, teaching others, giving displays for charity and travelling anywhere to pursue their sport of parachuting. I felt something must be done about it. It seemed ridiculous not to harness such wonderful talent to one wagon, and the old arguments of "you cannot do it" because of lack of air space, suitable weather and "it's too expensive", were sufficient to rouse my Yorkshire ire.

I made the first overture for the formation of a club on the RAF Sports network, which was proper, because military and sport parachuting should never be confused. Air Commodore I. J. Spencer was the President of the Transport Command Sports Board at the time, and both he and my Station Commander (now Air Commodore Neil Cameron) gave the idea their

whole-hearted support. The Air Council approved the formation of a Unit Club and the first objective of financial support was vigorously tackled by myself under the astute guidance of Group Captain Cameron. Whilst several attempts to produce capital from well-known schemes and organisations failed, the Group Captain negotiated the purchase of two ideal type aircraft, i.e. DH 89A Dominis which were being disposed of by the Royal Navy. Shortly after, due to Air Commodore Spencer's untiring efforts, there was every indication of financial help from the RAF Central Fund, but how much and when, could not be firmly established before the deadline for contract purchase expired. Crisis! There were generous offers of private help and talk of a syndicate purchase, but eventually Barclays of Abingdon, our appointed bankers, loaned



by kind permission of 'Punch'

the money and the first hurdle was safely negotiated. The over-draft was short-lived, however, and the RAF Central Fund approved a magnificent grant of £2,000.

Much time had been spent on costing the venture, and although I had stated initially £3,000 as the minimum working capital, the favourable aircraft purchase and the generous donation of several complete assemblies from Irvings of Gt. Britain and the 82nd Airborne in the USA enabled the sights to be lowered with safety.

At this stage the volume of correspondence and paper work seemed endless. Initial publicity, positioning the aircraft from Scotland to Abingdon, arrangements for hangarage and servicing, accounted for many late nights. Then the production of a constitution, regulations for flying, technical, training and safety, swelled the original file to omnibus size. With the many facets of insurance, such as aircraft, public/passenger liability, premises and stock, it finally erupted and a set of seventeen files and official brokers were established.

Administrative team work was essential at this stage, and here we were light on the ground. Little headway could have been made without the valuable assistance of Flight Lieutenants Peter Hearn, Bunny Rigold, and Sergeant J. S. Walker, who proved to be a very able Secretary.

Of the numerous hurdles ahead, the most ominous was the conversion of the Dominis to Rapides and the elusive but vital C. of A. It was decided to get one aircraft serviceable and keep the other for spares. With lack of experience as an essential ingredient to perseverance and endeavour, I tackled the various intricacies of paper work re airframe inspection, engine inspection and certification of primary flying instruments. At the same time, our technical member, Flight Lieutenant Dave Applegarth, ably assisted by Corporal Malcolm Eggleton, worked long hours into the night preparing the aircraft for C. of A. The "hard core", the worker parachutists, on whom the eventual load would fall, tried to allay their impatience and frustration of the seemingly endless "red tape" by preparing the small amount of gear and laying the foundations of a training organisation. As always in service enterprises, postings took their toll, and we lost the valuable services of Group Captain Cameron, Flt. Lt. Hearn and Sgt. Walker. Fortunately the new Station Commander, Group Captain Fred Sowrey, had previous knowledge of private aircraft ownership and as an official Observer of the Royal Aero Club, he quickly proved himself to be a most knowledgeable and enthusiastic President.

The "hard core" was composed of the four mentioned in the opening paragraph plus Sergeants Brian Jones, David Francombe, Jake McLoughlin and David Peacock—all experienced instructors and international parachutists. They were formed into an Instructors'

Committee initially under Flt. Lt. Hearn, who later handed over to F./Sgt. Moloney. They doubled up on the vital posts of Safety, Training & Equipment, each supposed to tend their own task, but such was their enthusiasm that there was much overlap and it was not all plain sailing. None the less, they emerged with credit after endless hours of preparatory work and "discussion". The Francombe/Peacock combine, latterly supplemented by Clark-Sutton, modified all the main and reserve assemblies; Charlton meticulously produced the training syllabus, record cards, DZ procedures, etc.—Jones worked on the clubhouse and the old Hoffman/McLoughlin combination toured the country far and wide for anything and everything useful. No member will begrudge a special mention for Sgt. Norman Hoffman, who performed the seemingly impossible in ferreting out materials for packing tables (we have three of the best in the country), auxiliary gear and organising the canteen.

The initial response to publicity exceeded expectations—120 applications from over 50 RAF Stations—ranging from "V" Bomber aircrew to clerks and cooks. By this time, when the weight of the files was more or less appropriate to the AUW of the Rapide, G-ASFC emerged with a C. of A.—just over five months from purchase. Spirits were running high!

Two captains from 47 Sqn., Flight Lieutenants Peter Lewis and Hugh Crawley, with the full support of Group Captain Sowrey, had recruited 11 pilots and set about the task of training for PPL's. In addition to the service-qualified pilots, the club was fortunate to have Master Signaller Gerry Schellong and Cpl. Malcolm Eggleton, both based at Abingdon with PPL's.

The big day came 'on 28th August, 1963, when Flt. Lt. Hugh Crawley plopped G-ASFC down at Weston-on-the-Green to emplane six of us on its first live sortie. I deemed it a great privilege to have christened her, and the club, with a modest 10 seconds delay from 3,300 ft., F./Sgt. Robertson, a veteran of almost 1,000 static line descents (known throughout the parachute world as "Big Rab") followed me out. We both christened the Irvin 32' Double L's too—whilst the aircraft climbed to 7,000 ft. to drop Charlton, Moloney, Hoffman and Peacock. The last three achieved a triple pass, with a plastic detergent container of well-known manufacture, but missed the golden opportunity of commercial gain by informing them of "how much easier it was on the hands".

Since then the club has gone from strength to strength, and when I left the U.K. for sunnier climes in April, they had 62 fully paid up members and over 500 descents without injury. During the Easter holiday we ran a 3-day course for seven cadets from the RAF College, Cranwell. Each cadet managed 2 descents

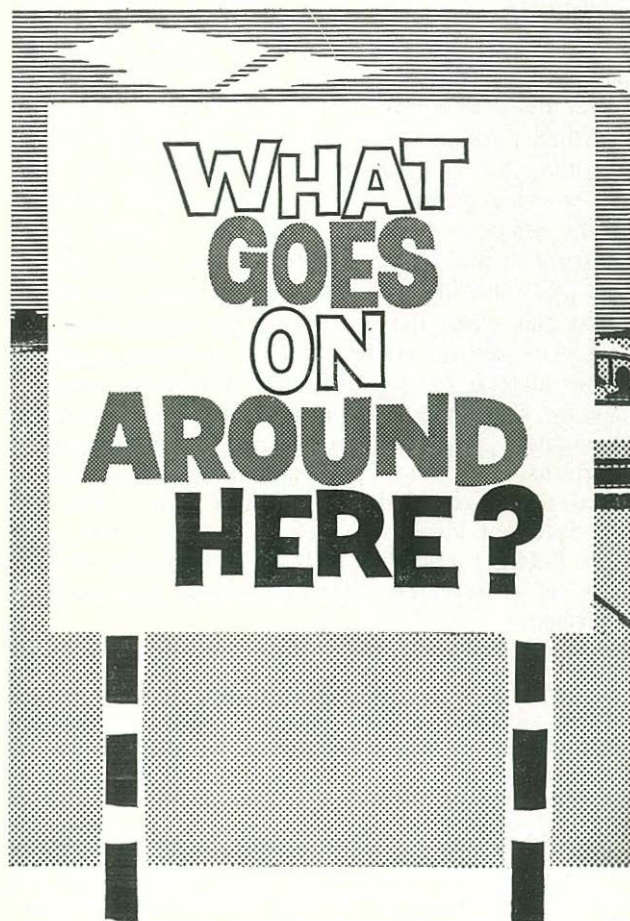
and they returned to College full of beans.

The jumping fees are probably the most reasonable in the U.K., but it is cash on the nail, or else—"Big Rab" is the most unrelenting Fees Secretary. The aim of the club is to "Provide adequate facilities for basic and advanced free fall parachuting at a reasonable cost to the individual in the Royal Air Force." The fees are controlled by a ticket system, and after payment of the annual subscription of £3, which includes cost of instruction, loan of parachutes and instruments and the first descent, all further descents are by ticket only. There are two types of ticket—3,000 ft. for 10/- and 2,000 ft. for 2/6d. One 3,000 ft. ticket is necessary for any descent and any combination of 3,000 ft. and 2,000 ft. thereafter up to 10,000 ft.

After the Easter course, an all-out effort was made to jump the instructors in the evenings to prepare for the British Championships. The results were self-evident and reflect much credit on the "hard core" who have devoted so many off-duty hours in furtherance of this truly adventurous sport. The contribution of their pilot, M/Sig. Gerry Schellong, was also a major factor.

The club produced the first-ever WRAF free-fall parachutist, namely LACW Libby Hart, of Upper Heyford, and it is hoped that through their good efforts, Sport Parachuting will soon be officially recognised by the RAF Sports Board.

When I left the Club last April, I handed over the reins to our "Parachuting Doctor"—Sqn. Ldr. Alan Johnson. He was also with the Club from the beginning, and has merely added the responsibilities of Chairman to his medical post. I trust they will continue to flourish under his abounding enthusiasm and leadership, and I hope by the time I return to renew membership that the Club has been lifted to the status of the Royal Air Force Sport Parachuting Club.



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No, it's not true about Scotsmen!

WE appear to be starting a busier season even than the last. Enquiries to join us are coming in from further afield than ever and enrolment is up considerably on last year. We are awaiting delivery of automatic barometric opening devices which we intend to fit to all reserve chutes after we have had time to test them for ourselves. A high scaffolding gantry will soon be seen over our sand pit where students will be able to try out and perfect landing techniques. We now have a full-time Rapide which we use in addition to our own Jackaroo; we are thus able to make more jumps for more members at heights up to 12,000 feet. A sign of the increase of popularity of our Sport is shown by the increasing numbers of bookings we have made for demonstration drops. These special displays are required for fêtes, agricultural shows, outdoor sporting events and for films. During the recent cold weather we supplied four parachutists to jump for a film. When they arrived at the D.Z. all were told they were to wear Highland costume . . . including kilts. The temperature was below freezing point and the kilts were almost as good as parachutes themselves. The percentage of ladies joining

# THE THRUXTON LETTER

By E.J.G.

us is still increasing, but we find that the ladies are anxious to do a few jumps but seem then to fade away and few of them seem to wish to progress further than that. The hard core of regular and enthusiastic jumpers continues to grow, and our Sunday jumping sessions, even in the early Spring, are better attended than ever. Even in the early Spring sixty to eighty descents are made on a Sunday afternoon alone.

For a long time we have been seeking another airfield more convenient for our Midland members, and at last we have opened our second Centre at Halfpenny Green Aerodrome, near Stourbridge. We are sorry to lose Mike West, but we had to part with at least one Instructor from here to enable our second airfield to operate.

Pressure on our London Office has been so great that we have now opened a second office at Runfold, where all enquiries for equipment are dealt with separately. If any parachutist wishes to know the enormous amount of work involved in dealing with inquiries, answering queries, arranging courses and filling in the multiplicity of forms necessary, he is welcome to visit our London Office and see there is more to parachuting than just jumping. We are fortunate in having Carole Stephens at the office all day and every day to handle our telephone enquiries and our mail. We are pleased to see her at the airfield whenever she can spare the time to call and see us: what about making a jump yourself Carole?

At least three more members hope to acquire Instructor Status in the near future: with the tremendously busy season we know is ahead of us we can do with all the Instructors we can get.

E.J.G.



The new 'home'

# News from $\frac{1}{2}$ d. Green

By E. J. GREEN

WELL here we are established and at home on our new airfield. We have three large brick buildings for accommodation and packing sheds. We have pretty well every type of aircraft that we could want and are now busily engaged in passing out pilots to obtain their parachutist dropping licences. The Midland Press have been very interested and seem to think that what we are doing is news. Already we have enrolled sufficient numbers of new students to keep us occupied for a long time to come: of all those who have joined us since we have been here, more than one-third are ladies. The aerodrome itself is very large and most convenient for us . . . there is plenty of space and surrounding grassland for overshooting.

Our first Resident Instructor is Mike West, who

has taken up residence in our new buildings. Each week-end we have very many visitors from all over the Midlands, so it seems that there is a very busy season for all concerned. So much seems to be happening here and so much about to happen that we feel certain that in your next issue we will have much interesting news for you.

Everybody here seems so friendly and already we are on the best of terms with the 32 private owners and all members of the Flying School. Some 30 pilots have intimated that they would like to assist us. With this friendly welcome and the large number of students awaiting instruction, we hope we are all set to put Sky-Diving on the Midland map.

E.J.G.



## **£25 Prizewinner**

*Lawrie St. John*

*at Blackbushe last year.*

*Prizewinner, eventually, of the  
£25 cash prize given in 1964.*

---

# **Scottish Club News**

THE SCOTTISH PARACHUTE CLUB resumed operations in Scotland after a year in exile (albeit pleasant) south of the border, at Glenrothes Airfield in Fife, the new Club H.Q., using the Rapide GAPAX belonging to and piloted by Group Captain Tulloch (Retd.), who did such sterling work at the Scottish Championships last September.

Fifteen club members and some 400 spectators were present for the opening meet. There were five first-time jumpers, three of whom were Scottish girls. A Frenchman, a Spaniard and an American were also present to add colour to the scene. The American, Tom Lecki, from the USS Hunley in the Holy Loch, was the target for a multitude of young Ripcord enthusiasts who kept enquiring whether he was Ted McIver!

Seventeen descents were completed successfully. All the beginners performed very well and were congratulated by Dr. Robertson (who dispatched them) on the stability of their exits.

At present there is no accommodation of any kind on the airfield, which is situated 3 miles WSW of Glenrothes, and packing will be done on strips of plastic initially. Until the weather improves jumping will take place every three weeks.

Visitors are advised to telephone Tom Dickson at Dean 1567, 3 Belford Park, Edinburgh, Doctor Robertson, at Langside 8626, 7 Corrou Road, Glasgow, or William Hall, at Dundee 22940, 8 Nelson Terrace, Dundee, to confirm that "jumping is on."

A full-scale Scottish International Parachute Championship will be held at H.M.S. Condor, Arbroath from 17th to 24th July, 1965. It is hoped that Russian, French and American teams will be among those present, thus ensuring a world-meet standard of parachuting.

Tom Dickson,  
Secretary/Instructor.



## High Altitude

Looking like men from outer space, the U.S. Army Team, "The Golden Knights", led by Capt. James W. Brydon, jumped from a C-130 aircraft, 22 October, 1964, for an altitude jump, from 23,500 feet, over 4½ miles from the base, in a training exercise for the "Golden Knights" and West German Generals. The drop, in which the U.S. Army Team and the Pioneer fastback APT-3 parachute team tested the manoeuvrability and also for training purposes, was not had prior training with oxygen. U.S. Army Team members carried two bailout bottles, each containing a tank of oxygen. Brydon, an expert in altitude jumps, said that the most difficult aspects of the mission were a great success.

The U.S. Army Team had themselves tested in 17 demonstrations away from the base, and their performances on the reservation.

During the month demonstration, the team was watched by spectators.

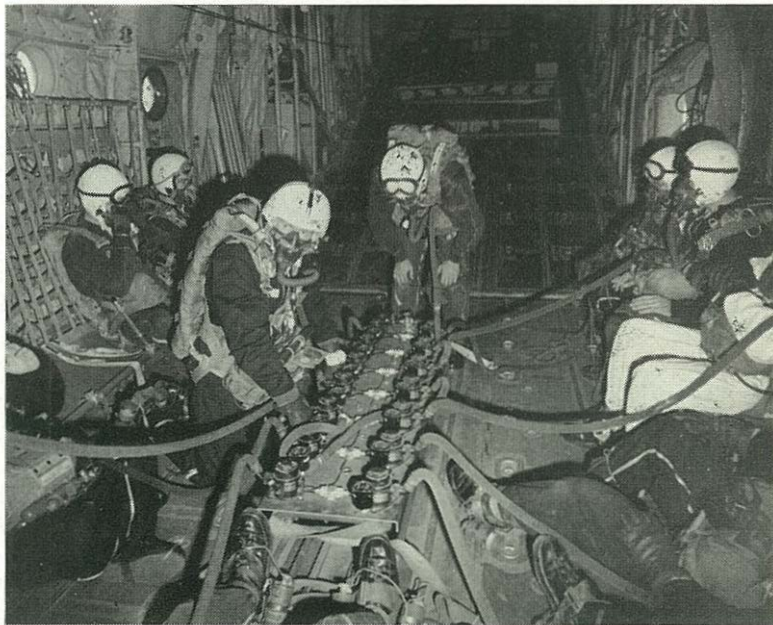


# the Oxygen Drop

...ce, twelve men of the U.S. Army Parachute  
... Captain Charles L. Mullins, took off in a  
...n altitude jump at Camp MacKall, N.C. The  
... up, was a multi-purpose demonstration and  
...ights". Observing from the DZ, were 21  
...n addition to being a demonstration for the  
...titude effects on films and cameras, testing of  
... assembly which will give the "chutist" more  
... jumps for members of the team who have  
... Upon exiting the big C-130, each man carried  
... ten-minute supply of oxygen. S/Sgt. E6 Loy  
... stated: "Both the testing and demonstration  
... ess."

...elves a busy month during October. They  
... from home base at Ft. Bragg and two per-

...n teams appeared before over 1,000,000



# NEWS from Cyprus

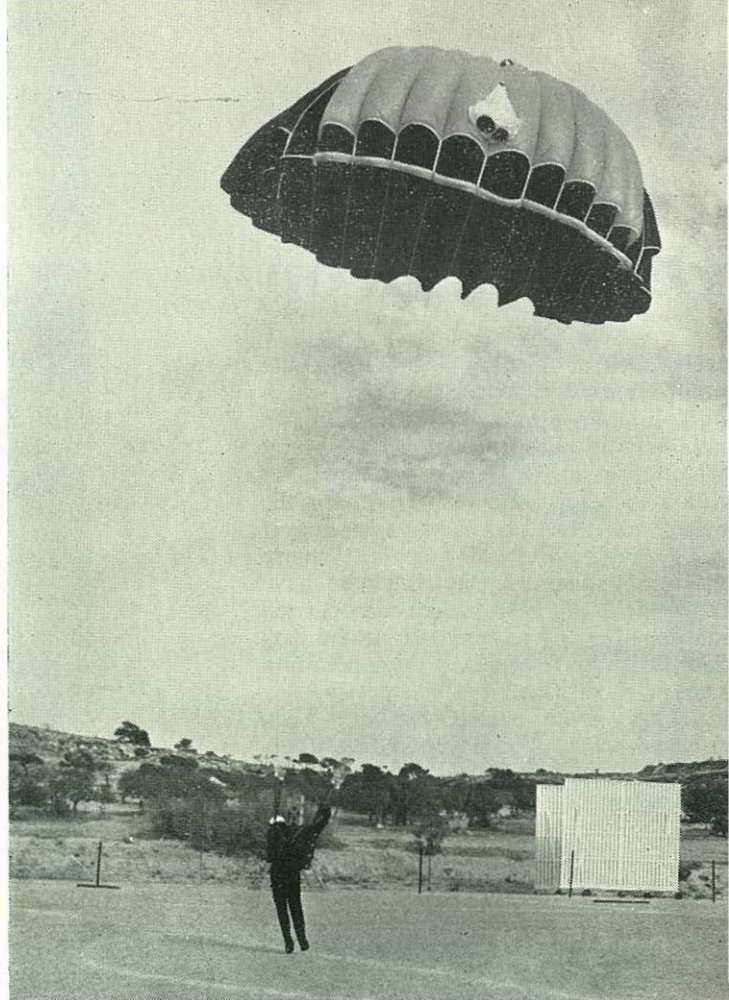
*by Doug Peacock*

The Club took a little time to settle down after the departure in May of 1 Para. and their Beaver, but we are now operating each weekend at Dhekalia under the auspices of the Army Parachute Association, represented on the Island by Major Ian Cartwright.

It will be remembered that the Club entered a team in last year's National Championships, being placed third to the RAF Sport Parachute Club and the SAS teams. Since then, over 100 injury-free descents have been made by Club members, jumping from Auster IX's of the Army Air Corps.

Club activities include basic training, competition training, and an aerial photography programme. The weather is consistently excellent and the D.Z. is flat, sandy and free from obstructions. B.P.A. membership is mandatory.

Two newcomers are S./Ldr. Gerry Wilson, lately O.C. the R.A.F. Regiment Parachute Squadron; and Tony Dale, ex-R.A.F. Sport Parachute Club. Guests at our last two sessions included Harry Hall and Eddie



Evans of the United Nations contingent, both hot-foot from a recent Rhine Army course. A welcome addition to the Demonstration Team is American Bill Ramey, ex-U.S. Special Forces. Bill arrived last September with two rigs, both packed! A long shot indeed, which paid off.

Club members are jumping new C9 double L's, and the Demo. Team is equipped with Irvin Skydriver 9's in conventional black with a light blue tail. The Team has been busy during the past few months, jumping at Nicosia, Akrotiri, Episkopi and Dhekalia. The usual demonstration consists of a two or four-man team jump from 8000 feet, with a crossover track pattern, staggered opening and precision landing. The act normally goes down well with the local populace, who seem to take an almost morbid interest in some of the faster landings!

Naturally, things are not always straightforward. One demonstration at Episkopi, for instance, took place in a 200 feet deep valley, which was rather on the narrow side. The streamers were released with clear conscience over the target, only to land in four fathoms of Mediterranean some distance offshore. Complex calculations, involving altimeter settings, stopwatch



**GEORGE BRUCE,**  
 explaining for  
 40 sec. delay.

readings and surf conditions were made, and a mutually acceptable opening point was finally decided on. This latter proved to be accurate, and in the absence of any sudden gusts of wind to blow us off, the target was duly bombed. The spectators were suitably impressed. So were we.

One final word. Visiting jumpers are always welcome, but rigs are in short supply. If you decide to visit us, contact Major Cartwright at Dhekalia or myself at Nicosia. We'll be happy to see you.

**DOUG PEACOCK.**  
 B.P.A. 125.

**CLUB MEMBERS**  
 before a training  
 session.



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**Johnny Balls shaking hands with His Highness the ruler of Bahrain.**

# Dateline in Bahrain

by  
**G. C. P. Shea-Simonds**

**SCENE:** Bahrain Island, an oil-prospered Sheikdom half-way up the Persian Gulf.

**THE DATE:** Saturday, 6th February, 1965.

For the last four years a unit of the Parachute Regiment has been stationed on the island, and permission has been sought constantly to start free-fall parachuting there. Only now has His Highness Sheik Isa Bin Sulman Al Khalifah, the Ruler of Bahrain, finally agreed to see a display.

The team is gathered at the civil airport at Muharraq awaiting take-off at 0730 hrs. They are led by Captain Edward Gardener, the remaining members are Lieutenant Charles Shea-Simonds, Sergeant Johnny Balls, Sergeant Colin Blythe (of the RAF Detachment), Corporal "Gus" Martin and Corporal "Mac" McIntyre. The wind is looking very borderline but we can't stop now—Royalty awaits! Soon we're climbing aboard the Gulf Aviation DC-3 Dakota, conducted by Bill Pallet,

senior pilot. We're all amazed at the size of the hole left by the removal of the freight door; the difficulty will be to stay in the aircraft at all!

Soon after 9 o'clock the Dakota gathers speed down the runway and we're off. Well-known landmarks pass below us as we fly southwards towards the D.Z., situated in the remote desert part of the island. Minutes later we're at 2,000 feet circling the target, waiting for the Ruler and his entourage to settle down before we do the streamer run. Then Edward is trying frantically to line up the aircraft, which is difficult because of its size, and away go the two brightly-coloured strips of paper. Our eyes strain to see them in the haze of the sun. Flight Lieutenant "Dally" Duncan, who commands the RAF Detachment, is doing D.Z. Control,

and we see his men rush out to mark the streamers. Meanwhile, upstairs, Edward is doing desperate little calculations with magic formulae on the back of an envelope; finally he's satisfied and we climb up to 9,000 feet for the jump run which takes us over the sea and then across wind over the D.Z.

At last Edward eases himself from a prone position by the door, yells "O.K. boys—let's go!". Edward is out, followed by the rest of us, and six trails of criss-crossing smoke make an artificial rainbow against the blue of the sky. We're all making for what WE think is the correct opening point, and forty-five seconds later we're all in the saddle making for that elusive cross in the sand. The marker panels signify 18 m.p.h. of wind so we're all set for crash landings . . . we're not disappointed!

But we all arrive in one piece and, having taken off our kit, we double to our team leader who leads us to where the Ruler is sitting. The Sheik is obviously very thrilled with the whole thing and shakes us all warmly by the hand. Soon we're all surrounded by members of

his entourage who are asking all the usual questions in broken English. Then it's time for His Highness to leave, and having shaken us all by the hand once again, he departs in the midst of a fleet of shiny Cadillacs.

This, however, is not the end, for later that morning the Commanding Officer is handed presentation boxes for the team and their helpers. In each is a splendid automatic gold watch with the Sheik's head on the face, superb mementoes and a magnificent climax to an unusual and interesting display.

So ended the first free fall descent on Bahrain Island and, we hope, not the last. For the lovers of such things we also hold the Bahrain national height record, previously held by 'C' Company, 3 Para., on a military drop from 800 feet three years ago!

We expect a Bahrain national team in the next world championships, complete with Crossbow rigs, Para-Commanders and 22 carat bone domes!

G. C. P. SHEA-SIMONDS.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Hope the Customs Boys weren't too difficult!



The team—left to right: Colin Blythe, Gus Martin, Charles Shea-Simmonds, Edward Gardener, Johnny Balls, Mac McIntyre.

# **For SAFETY'S sake**

**check your Safety Drill, Performance,  
Equipment and anything else which  
needs checking, not just ONCE but  
again and again . . .**

**THINK!—(it might hurt, but  
IT'S WORTH IT!)**

# The Origins of the B P A

DID you know that in 1951 the Chairman of the newly-formed Parachute Committee of the F.A.I. which met in Paris was British? The British Parachute Association has some time honoured roots which in these days of four figure membership we sometimes tend to forget. The Chairman in question was Dumbo Willans, who was placed third in the first World Championships of that year as part of an official Royal Aero Club team of two parachutists and a pilot.

Towards the end of 1955 a small group of jumpers operating at Denham decided to form the first British club. They took on their initial course of three pupils in April the following year, and jumped them at Fair-oaks in May. Called the British Parachute Club, it officially came into being at Fair-oaks on the 1st July, 1956.

By 1958 other clubs were operating at Kidlington, Plymouth and Thruxton, the Ministry listed 13 approved instructors, and a parachuting member sat on the Royal Aero Club aviation committee. A team of four was sent to the World Championships in Czechoslovakia.

The foundations of the BPA as we know it were really laid when the first-ever meeting of the Parachute Committee took place in February 1959. More clubs started at Stapleford and Nottingham, and one of the first Military clubs, the 21st Special Air Service Club was operating. By September there were 20 Ministry approved instructors. A team competed in the Adriatic Cup (selection problems were solved by the fact that only four of the "possibles" could raise their own fare), and a highly enjoyable if somewhat loosely organised National Championships were held in glorious Septem-

ber weather on the Isle of Wight. Competitors doubled as judges and measurers between rounds, and there were no arguments! At a spot landing parachute contest held at Coventry in connection with the National Air Races, the first prize was £100, put up by the worthy burghers of the town. Golden days indeed!

In 1960 team trials were held at Thruxton, and a team of four competed in the World Championships in Bulgaria.

Early in 1961 the British Parachute Association was formed from the existing Royal Aero Club Parachute Committee. Mike Reilly was the Chairman, Bernard Green the Secretary, and Stan Anstee the Treasurer. Membership totalled only 70 but included representatives from all clubs, including Perth in Scotland.

The plans for the British Championships in the BPA's first season were a good deal more ambitious than in previous years. Programmes were printed, special public transport arranged to Stapleford Aerodrome, a public address system installed, an American Army team invited, and Fyfe Robertson turned up in a deerstalker hat, with a posse of B.B.C. Television cameras. Unfortunately the weather didn't co-operate, and only one incomplete round was jumped. The next weekend the whole affair had to be transferred to Kidlington. There were no crowds, but the weather was wonderful and a successful spot landing contest was concluded. However, despite the fact that style had been included in the World Championships since '58, no event for this could be run due to a lack of suitable judges. Later that summer a BPA team won an International contest in Sweden.

Towards the end of 1961 plans were being made for a really ambitious Championships to be held the next year, backed by the "Daily Telegraph," and to send a team to the World Championships in the U.S.A. with full support of funds and equipment.

In January '62 the BPA Chairman, Mike Reilly was drowned while making a water drop. Col. Wilson was asked to assume the chairmanship, and Group Captain Caster, who had helped Sport Parachuting to develop during his years at the Ministry of Civil Aviation, took over the post of Secretary General.

This really marks the start of the Association in the

form in which we know it today. Goodwood that year was the first of the modern one week Championships, and the team sent to America for the World Championships was the first to have proper financial support.

Since then, the Association's membership under the guidance of our Chairman and Secretary General has grown tenfold. One day we shall no doubt enroll the 10,000th member. When that happens, let us not forget that little group in a windswept hanger on Denham airfield in the winter of 1955, who first decided that what parachutists needed was their own Association.

P.M.L.

---

# You Must Keep FIT...!

by Permission of The Daily Sketch.

Brunette Zuba Mohamed Aly, aged 22, today told a stunned Cairo judge and a packed courtroom:

"I love my husband 'a la folie'. I'm very much tied physically to him.

"When we make love it is marvellous . . . we become one happy soul and it is seventh heaven all the time through our deliciously endless sessions.

"I really do love this man as I never did before, but I want a divorce . . . I am not going back home with him."

Her thirty-year-old husband, Hassan Mohamed Aly, sat in the front row just behind her, petrified, his eyes fixedly gazing into emptiness.

On the screen of his memory passed in rapid succession beautiful scenes of his passionate love-making, with his gorgeous wife since they married five years ago; and he just could not take it.

Zuba explained to the court that she was asking for a divorce out of love for her man, "who is and will be the one and only" in her life.

She said theirs was a love marriage.

"It was delicious. We never had enough of each other . . . but apparently we abused it and one night last year Hassan fainted in the middle of a love session.

"I thought it was out of pleasure, but the incident

repeated itself several times during the next few days and he became so weak that he had to stay in bed.

"I called our doctor and he diagnosed dangerous heart attacks which could be fatal.

"The doctor ordered complete rest for Hassan and no physical effort at all for several months.

"But three days later Hassan, who is much bent to love-making, put the devil into my body and we started again.

"The result was that he again fainted over me. It was a stroke, a bad one.

"This time we stopped for some five weeks, but soon the devil took us again and we recommenced."

Zuba suddenly stopped speaking and fainted.

Judge Samir said he did not know what to do. He was shaken with emotion. His eyes filled with tears.

When Zuba recovered, she declared in tears: "I am not going to kill this man."

At that moment she was interrupted by her husband, who was standing with difficulty.

He shouted: "I'll never give her up. She'll stay my wife till the end of my life. . . I'm. . ." He did not finish.

He fell dead at the feet of his wife, who, fainting again, fell across her husband's body.

# Speaking Personally

## Some of your letters

Dear Sir,

Whilst stationed in Berlin recently, I applied to go to the German Army for a few weeks to learn the new technical words which had come into being since its formation a few years previously. As my choice I gave the German paratroops, and was informed that 313 Para. Bn. had accepted me. I arrived in Wildeshausen and was met by a Sergeant who had "adopted" me for my stay.

*I certainly learned what I went for, and in addition became the first British soldier to jump as a "stick number" with a German Para Bn. When I received the offer to jump, I fully expected the full treatment of tower descents, etc. However, nothing like this type of basic training was available, and I subsequently presented myself in the Bn. gymnasium at the most un-earthly times and was put through the usual falls until I wasn't sure where it would be easier to sit down, on my head or posterior ! But all seemed to go well and I was cleared for jumping. The Bundeswehr have the very good idea of obtaining Army Co-operation Helicopters for weekend drops, and indeed civilian parachute clubs are allowed to drop as well, a system which the civilian members I met said was the greatest help both financially and from the experience point of view.*

*So there I was, slightly more than apprehensive, number three in the second stick of eight on a freezing morning, gazing gloomily at the free and easy way everyone else was waiting, and hoping that my thoughts were not apparent. Eventually, packed like the proverbial sardines, we took off. There's only one way to clear a helicopter and that is to sit on the floor facing forward, legs outstretched, and when the bloke in front disappears from the door, push yourself forward, swing your legs out, grip the door jamb and wait for the dispatcher to slap you on the shoulder.*

*I gripped all right. So hard, in fact, that afterwards I found the mark across the palm of each glove and it's still there! I do know that everything went blank, and when the dispatcher smacked my shoulder, I went out like a bird (so I was told!). I religiously counted the four thousand and suddenly, there I was under a beautiful, beautiful canopy 1600 feet up, with the rigging lines twisted up. I pedalled away and out came the twists. The DZ had more bumps on it than a golfer's nightmare of bunkers, and I prayed fervently that somehow I would miss at least the worst of them.*

*All too quickly I had to get ready. Feet and knees together; arms fully extended and ready to pull down as soon as I hit. Coming in left, I thought. Good. Body slightly arched to the right—thump—I'm down. I slipped out of the harness and watched the others floating down. Not so good—one in the trees. Then it suddenly hit me with a jolt and I experienced what must be the most exhilarating feeling in the world. The knowledge that at forty I could do it after all. From that day on, of course, I joined the select set of incurables that can't leave it alone. I have been back frequently and thoroughly enjoy it, although I must admit that the butterflies still exist! Next year, however, I will do the full skydiver course. My wife gave up worrying a long time ago—a most important point for a jumper.*

*As a new chum, if anyone finds himself in Germany, please don't hesitate to call. The address is Flat 7, 27 In den Bärenkämpfen, Minden.*

SGT. R. G. F. RONALDSON.

THE EDITOR,  
SPORT PARACHUTIST.

19, ROMANY LANE,  
TILEHURST,  
READING, BERKS.

Dear Sir,

Now that the accepted technique for target work involves downwind landings, a number of injuries involving chipped teeth and split lips are occurring through jumpers cracking their faces on instrument panels. "Hit and burn" landings seem to be the order of the day, and bashed in faces are on the increase.

Unclipping one side of the reserve is not always possible when the last few hundred feet of the approach is involving constant use of the steering toggles (no third hand!) and above that height the altimeter is being used to calculate the run in. In any case a loose swinging reserve with a jutting panel would seem equally hazardous to one's person.

May I ask through your columns if any reader has evolved:—

- (a) A more protective instrument panel, or
- (b) A technique of getting the thing in a position where it won't do harm in a hard landing?

P. M. LANG.

Dear Editor,

*As an old hand at the jumping business—my first was in 1945 and I still enjoy it—I hope you will receive kindly my comments on the "mag."*

Any fool can criticise, and that is my qualification to suggest that the publication lacks a certain bite. It wants peppering up a bit. Surely some of the readers could recount the odd personal experience that would be of interest to others and at the same time provide a feature with some life? Many must have candled down to within three feet of the deck as I have on numerous occasions—these and similar yarns would add much to what in other respects is a fine effort.

Yours, etc.

"A FALL GUY."

Thank you for your comments—much appreciated. I'm not sure BPA members will admire your unsolocited true falls—nor am I convinced that Sport Parachutist is quite the medium for reading about people's "odd personal experiences"!

SPORT PARACHUTIST

SUTHERLAND,  
THE AVENUE,  
TADWORTH, SURREY.

TADWORTH 3105  
WORK: VANDYKE 2527

10.5.65.

Dear David,

*I hope the enclosed letter is of use to the magazine and not too late. They are not only my views expressed therein.*

*I would rather you did not use it if you have to alter it in any way. You will find it controversial, you may disagree with what is contained there but I do believe you should use it if you can.*

*I have also enclosed a copy of the letter received by some people a while ago.*

*I think that the "hot letter" angle of the "Skydiver" magazine is one of its great points, if it may be self critical.*

*However you always have the excuse that it arrived too late.*

Yours,  
John.

SUTHERLAND,  
THE AVENUE,  
TADWORTH, SURREY.  
10.5.1965.

Dear Sir,

*Some time ago many parachutists received an anonymous letter concerning the possible formation of a civilian parachute association. I was not at all in agreement with the WAY this was done and have no connection with it whatsoever. Nevertheless I am sure a lot of people were interested and a few B.P.A. committee members were not too surprised.*

*The B.P.A. does a great deal of work for parachuting as a whole but is rather going the wrong way in the opinion of many civilians.*

*The committee may comprise an equal number of both civilian and military members and the control and effect may appear to be 50/50 on paper. I believe this is not so.*

*At the 1964 Championships there were nearly fifty entrants. This year there are exactly half that number and only four or five of these are civilians.*

*As an example, the British Parachute Club team would cost, with entrance fees, £20 to enter. An individual in all events would find a total of £16. We don't have this sort of money. Also, enquiries at the B.P.A. office showed uncertainty as to whether money would be refunded if no jumping took place. How much were the entry fees for the A.P.A. championships?*

*At Blackbushe we have a Rapide and shortly a gravel*

pit and could hold competitions to satisfy civilians. The military have their own A.P.A. championships. This is not meant as jealous criticism but surely is a valid point. We have enough competition at present. When things are in order let's by all means get together and have fun, but, in the meantime straighten out the mess that is parachuting behind the expensive, experienced, one week National Championship.

There may be shouts from all round in defence of the efforts being done by the B.P.A. These cries may be selfish ones.

How about:—

1. An efficient Instructor's Training Scheme.
2. Stricter supervision of safety and training at all clubs.
3. Assistance and advice to the paraclubs up and down the country (whether B.P.A. affiliates or not).

With 5 fatalities in the last 12 months it would seem that all is not too calm on the safety front. (re. item 1.)

Why not spend more time on the weekend civilian fun jumpers' side of things. It was by and for these people that the Association was originally formed. Throw all the present effort and organisation in this direction until all is done that can be, THEN spend time and money on an elaborate Championship.

Remember that the Military have their own centres at Netheravon and Weston-on-the-Green plus lots of expensive P.C.'s and Lo Pos. There is also the A.P.A. to look after them.

The civilians don't want four more dead at the end of this year at the expense of a pretty team at the World or European Championships. Set the home organisation going safely before turning to other things.

In the meantime we can satisfy our own competition needs at our own clubs but we could do with more help from the B.P.A.

John Cole,  
B.P.A., B.P.C. Instructor, F.A.I.D. 168.

LLOYDS,  
E.C.3.  
12.5.65.

Dear John,

We held up the Presses especially for your letter to be printed! At last someone is showing some interest and using the magazine for what they, the members, should use it for.

My feeling is that much of what you say is valid, and I believe many of the Council would agree with you. But surely, the obvious reply is that the fault, if there be any, lies fairly and squarely at your own feet— and

of those members who agree with what you say.

The British Parachute Association is formed for one simple purpose only—the good of the sport. It can only advise, guide and recommend, has certain limited disciplinary powers as to the membership, but in no way presumes to be authoritative. It has no authority, and more's the pity, I think. It makes no pretensions to lay down the law, but rather sees itself in a teaching capacity.

The fact that the Service Element has a very active part in the B.P.A. is simply because they realize a good thing when they see one—do a lot of hard work on your behalf—and use it as they wish it to be used. In addition they have their own Associations, but they realize that for the good of the sport, there must be a Central Organisation. God knows that the opportunities for criticism, amendment and just plain discussion have been numerous enough during the years the Association has been formed—but the complete apathy on the part of many members has resulted in the position where you and your friends feel aggrieved over the points you have raised. Everything you say may be correct—but for Heaven's sake do something about it now. You haven't in the past. Get the whole thing thrashed out—demand to see the Council to discuss it all, and suddenly we will be getting somewhere. There must be plenty of talent amongst your friends—direct some of it into the B.P.A. I would suggest that as you are members, use the Association rather than start another, because it is established. It is there to work for you, so make it do it's job.

You must remember that 5 years ago, there were only 60 members, now there are over 1,000—probably 1,250. You will see that a tremendous amount of work has been done, and most of us (who do this work in our spare time) realise it is extremely difficult for the Association to cope without financial assistance—which we are seeking at the moment. "Times is 'ard," and most of your points have been under discussion for a long, long time.

Your remark about time and money wasted on the Championships is really void since a sub-committee do take work in their spare time and the Daily Telegraph pays for our Championships.

We know each other well enough not to be upset by the tone of our letters. Let's get some of the dissenters together, prevent a divorce, and get them to work. Reconciliation between two compatible elements who want the same things, but are finding it difficult to live together should not be too difficult in our case. We are therefore more fortunate than some! I find from bitter experience that there are many who criticise. and some who offer to help, but few do in practice.

Sincerely,  
David Pierson.





**Brian Dixon (top and bottom right) of the Daily Sketch with Pat Slattery (bottom left), Chief Instructor of the East Anglian Sky Diving Club, jumping at Stapleford Aerodrome. Pictures by DON WATERMAN**



# LIST OF BPA APPROVED PARACHUTE INSTRUCTORS

\*ADY, Miss P. M.  
 \*ANGELL, B.  
   BARRY, J.  
 \*BASNETT, J. T. (P)  
   BEAUMONT, J. P.  
 \*BURDETT, A.  
 \*CASHMORE, M.  
 \*CATT, W. R.  
 \*CHARLTON, A. F. (P)  
 \*CLARK, J.  
 \*CLARK-SUTTON, B. T.  
 \*COLE, A. J. N.  
 \*CRAWLEY, T.  
 \*DENLEY, P. (P)  
 \*DICKSON, T. G.  
 \*DON, W. J.  
 \*ETCHELL, R. C.  
 \*FLAMBERT, Miss H.  
   FRAMCOMBE, D. (P)  
 \*GARDENER, E. A. J., Captain  
   GRAHAM-WIGAN, J. A. F.  
 \*GREEN, B. A. N. (P)  
 \*GRIFFITHS, R.  
 \*HALL, W.  
 \*HOFFMAN, J. N. (P)  
 \*HOGG, J. E.  
   HUGHES, P. (P)  
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   JONES, B. A.  
   LANG, P. M. (P)  
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 \*VATNSDAL, S.  
 \*WALLACE, D.  
 \*WEST, M.  
   WILSON, R. D., Col., M.B.E. (P)  
 \*WRIGHT, Miss L.  
 (N.B.: Correct as at March 24th, 1965).

(Footnote: (P) = Member of the Panel of Examiners.  
               \* = Instructor has qualified or re-qualified  
                   under the new B.P.A. Standards.)

## Diary for 1965

28th May-7th June, 1965 Preliminary Rounds of the  
   B.P.A. National Championships at Netheravon.  
 19th-20th June, 1965 Finals of National Championships  
   at Aldershot.  
 19th June, 1965 Proposed B.P.A. Dance at Aldershot.  
 4th-11th July, 1965 Adriatic Cup. At Portoroz,  
   Yugoslavia.  
 15th-24th July, 1965 Scottish Championships at  
   Arbroath.  
 11th-21st August, 1965 International Sport Festival at  
   Crystal Palace, London.  
 Entry forms for both the B.P.A. National Cham-  
 pionships and the Scottish Championships will be  
 available from the B.P.A. Office. Entry forms for the  
 B.P.A. Championships will be sent out to applicants as  
 soon as all arrangements have been completed.

# B.P.A. DANCE

On Saturday, June 19th, B.P.A. is running a dance at the Queen's Hotel, Farnborough South. As this is during the Parachute Championship Finals at the Aldershot Show, we hope to see as many parachutists as possible.

There will be a buffet and several Spot prizes. Starting at 8 p.m., the bar will remain open till midnight. We cannot get an extension beyond this time.

Admission by ticket only—15/- each including buffet—obtainable from: —Mike O'Farrell, c/o B.P.A. (cheques payable to British Parachute Association), or

from the B.P.A. tent at the Aldershot Show. It would be appreciated if tickets were bought in advance, as we must let our caterers know our final figure in order to prepare the buffet.

The dance will be publicly advertised as it is hoped to raise some funds as well as being a social gathering for parachutists.

We will do our best not to refuse a parachutist who wants a ticket at the door, but we will hardly be able to sell to non-parachutists at so late a stage. Dress informal.

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# Parachute cutter at work

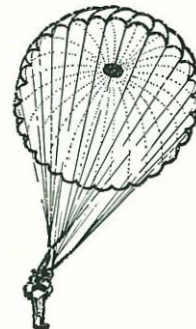


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