

NEWS



LETTER

March 2003

Greetings from WingLee

Where's the Newsletter ? It was fortunate to bump into Steve Engel at Pasir Gudang in Feb 2003, who was willing to set aside sometime to help SKA to piece this newsletter together. So finally, we have a soft copy of the newsletter ready for printing. This issue we received a Dear SKA letter about Pasir Gudang and an article on ripstop painting. So are you ready to read on?

What you get with this Newsletter

- Report from 2003 Pasir Gudang International Kite Festival
- Taking kites to hospital
- Invitations and events
- Painting Ripstop
- 2003 Kite Events Diary

Picture Report on Pasir Gudang 2003



Singapore tent at Pasir Gudang Kite Festival 2003



Look a Tom leaping into the air, but where's Jerry?



Robert Foong leading the SKA team



Have I seen her somewhere before?
Email Gadis

The months that went by....

8 Dec 2002

We had a kite flying session for families of SINDA at Pasir Ris Park in the afternoon.



SKA PINS

29 mm diameter
10 Pins for S\$15.00
Email Polly

24 Nov 2002



Kite workshop and sport Kite demo for MENSA members & family at Pasir Ris Park

3 Nov 2002 Clean & Green Week Carnival Kite Workshop



We had a wonderful time helping participants to construct their own green kite with the Singapore Environment Council logo on it.

Gadis, Yuwono, Wing & Poh Wah were present at the kite making workshop.

16 Feb 2003 SKA Kite Day



SKA member that is **never absent** during the weekend. Keep it up Mr Goh!



It rained cats and dogs in the entire morning till noon. Those who stayed overnight waiting to fly their kites had kept their spirits high waiting for an opportunity to fly. At noon the marathon kite gang had to call it off. The rest of the members trickle in much later. However, they were greeted with wet grounds and winds blowing at zero mph. Tan Poh Wah showed up with panels of the SKA merlion kite that is still under construction.

15 Feb 2003

Our members wanted to have a “makan” and “minum” at Pasir Ris Park Pit “D” the night before SKA Kite day so as to maximise flight time. The ultimate plan was to fly from sunset to sunset on the following day.

However, the group had to battle with the scattered shower instead. Nevertheless the makan as usual.



What's Shakib up to ?

TAKING KITES TO HOSPITAL

No, it's not about a 'kite hospital' where kites are repaired. We're talking about a real hospital -- National University Hospital (NUH).

They asked if SKA would give a workshop for children warded in the hospital. Due to pressure on other SKA members, Shakib undertook to handle this assignment.

Two workshops have been held -- in February and March and another is planned for April.

When Shakib visited the hospital for a recce it became clear we would be working with children of different age groups and in different stages of sickness, and that apart from group sessions, we would also be seeing children in their beds.

A workshop was considered too structured for our audience, so we decided to mix many things with the object of bringing laughter and cheer to the little ones.

A typical session works like this. First, we listen to sounds and rhythm . With drums and cymbals, the children start making music together, then we get into different beats, for example 2-2-4, or 5-2.

From 'big' sounds, we go to 'small' sounds, as we place a kompang over the children's ears and through the skin the children listen to a miniature music box playing.

Then we make more 'small' sounds, this time with the cheng-cheng (cymbals) which we place over the children's ears.

This is followed by the revelation that Shakib's favourite kite is the wau bulan, and, of course, we hear the busor (hummer), both small and large.

Now for the kite session. Who likes to see small kites? We now play with small 1.5cm kites flown on a human hair, we look at lots of other miniature kites, including the world's smallest kite instruction book. At the same time we look at other small things including little Japanese people and a beetle in a nut.

From the small to the big! We now unroll the tail of the Tai Chi kite and it runs the full length of the hospital garden and beyond! Then we unroll an odako (the giant edo Ta'mo) kite and we study the face on it and learn about its history. From 8 meters we switch to 10cm as we look at a miniature edo.

Then, depending on the audience, we have a quick kite 'workshop' -- we cut out a rokkaku from paper and marvel at the intricate flower-shaped design, then we make some small Michael Alves butterfly kites complete with long streaming tails and miniature spools. We try to fly these under the fans.

Still on flight, we go to other flying things -- model balsa-wood aircraft that the boys throw and soap bubbles for everyone else!

Did the children expect some magic? We now try to make the children disappear by giving them masks to hide their faces. Who is who? Not all the children feel happy about this, so we need to be careful!

Then some 'real' magic -- cutting rope and rejoining it, passing rope through someone's neck, a hat that takes on different shapes, a magic wand that turns into a snake, and more including hand and finger puppets.

What do children enjoy most? This is what Lim Wee Kuan, Child Life Specialist/Art Therapist, The Children's Medical Institute, NUH wrote on 25 March 2003:

Hi Shakib

Thank you for coming last Friday. It was quite a crowd that day and I think the parents and children enjoyed themselves tremendously. The magic tricks were a favourite across the ages, parents included. Would you be free to come again in April?

So now you know. Once, when we flew at Marina East and many members arrived by bicycle, we were going to call SKA, the Singapore Kite & Cycle Association. Now, since we are known for our tricks, should we be called the Singapore Kite & Magic Tricks Association?

Apart from the NUH sessions, Shakib is planning a kite day on the field we used to fly on at Tampines, opposite the masjid. This is to be a treat for members and friends of Kampung Senang, a self-help 'good earth' community project at Block 840 Tampines St 82 that has its own vegetable garden and acts as a distribution point for organic vegetables and fruit. Shakib attends talk and social gatherings at Kampung Senang. There was no need to introduce them to kites because their extensive void-deck meeting room has wau bulan hanging all over the walls.



Limited Stock
Available
SKA Tees @
S\$10.00
Asian "free"
size only.

Email Wing

COMING NEXT: Invitation to Singapore Dragon Boat Festival



On **31st May and 1st June 2003** the Singapore Kite Association have been invited to participate Singapore Dragon Boat Festival. Kiting activities will include dragon and phoenix kite demonstrations and families will be invited to compete in the "Best design family kite". The festival will be held on Marina Promenade and Marina Bay. The event is supported and sponsored by many associations and community bodies.

INVITATIONS

China Chengde International Kite Festival 24-25 April 2003

We have been invited to China Chengde International Kite Festival, hosted by the Chinese Kite Association in Chengde City, China. Located close to the capital, Beijing. Chengde is a very famous tourist resort. In the city there is the largest imperial garden of the Qing Dynasty which is known as the "Mountain Resort". Besides this, you will find the Imperial temple groups where there is the biggest wooden Buddha in the world. You can also enjoy the beautiful sight of the China Imperial hunting ground and scenery of Bashang grassland. The famous Mountain Resort is listed in World Cultural Heritage.

Contact person Wang Baosheng, Secretary General, Chinese Kite Association

Indonesia Kite Festival 2003 30 June 2003 – 30 July 2003

1 Palembang [South Sumatra]	Monday - Tuesday, 30 June - 1 July
2 Jakarta Kite Festival	Thursday - Saturday, 3 - 5 July
3 Pangandaran Kite Festival	Monday - Tuesday, 7 - 8 July
4 Cilacap Kite Festival	Wednesday - Thursday, 9 - 10 July
5 Yogyakarta Kite Festival	Saturday - Sunday, 12 - 13 July
6 Bali Kite Festival	Wednesday - Sunday, 16 - 20 July

During kite festival organiser will take care meals, accommodation and local transportation.[except No.6 we don't know yet. we will inform you soon]

Jakarta International Kite theme is "DOVE". The kite must be applique material with a minimal length 180 cm. Dove is the key word and kites may exhibit the true meaning of the word and we hope you can create something with it.

This is the biggest kite festival in Indonesia. We'll fly the kites from one city and move to other city. Each city has a unique character and different taste of food, exotic beaches with the traditional fisherman activity. Even if you fly on downtown, the amazing atmosphere will be kept.

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Invitation to Taipei International Kite Festival 2003
20-29 Sept 2003 (26-29 Sept 2003 for International participants)

Schedule

- Sep. 19 The Press Conference
- Sep. 20-21 Local Competition (Kite making/ Stunt Kite Ballet)
- Sep. 22-25 School Visits, Kite Demonstrations, Kite Seminar,
Indoor kite performance at the Taipei City Hall And Workshop
- Sep. 26 The Press Conference for the International Kite Festival /
Registration for International Participants
- Sep. 27-28 International Kite Flyers Demonstrations (Traditional, Creative kites /
Stunt kites Ballet/Surfing kites/diving kites/Indoor Kites/ Night Kites / Giant kites / Workshop
/ Cultural Seminar) / Continuing of the local competition
- Sep. 29 Sightseeing for International Participants. The organiser would offer the accommodation,
meals and the ground transportation during the festival.

More info contact Wing or visit their website <http://home.kimo.com.tw/twka2002>

Rocky Engels Writes.....



The Engels at Pasir Gudang 2003

Dear SKA

You could tell there was a kiting event coming up as the house was draped from the front door to the back door with ripstop nylon and lines all strung out and my husband's sewing machine was about to overheat. We were off to Pasir Gudang International Kite Festival in Johor. This is always a good event but it was going to be especially so for us as we hadn't seen our very good friends from SKA for nearly a full year.

So we piled a vast array of kites and bits and pieces into the car and headed down the East Coast of Malaysia. What a beautiful drive that was, so peaceful, hardly anyone else about and stunning scenery. We must have been far too relaxed as we missed our one and only turning in JB and spent an hour trying to get back on track. Then there they were, those beautiful kites high in the air guiding our way. I suggested that maybe we should go and check into the hotel but was met with an adamant rejection that it would waste good flying time. It was lovely to be back and once again the organization was second to none. We headed straight for the Singapore tent, eager to see who was there already. Mr. Ng, Mr. Tan and others were there bringing on much handshaking, greetings, smiles and lucky me, a hug from Mr. Ng.

We dashed off to fly our new 'baby', the Asian arch and that was just the beginning...By the end of the afternoon, the SKA tent was bursting at the seams and we were surrounded by many of our very good friends and fellow fliers from our Pasir Ris days. That evening was the official opening ceremony and dinner. SKA was so well represented that we did not all fit onto one table (sorry Gadis). Eugene did a splendid job as 'official photographer' for the event having a different lens for every shot!

By the time we arrived at the field on Saturday, everything was well under way. Once again, the Asian arch went up and I don't think my husband sat down once after that. There was always something to fly. As the heat of the day passed, the sky was filled with a myriad of colour and form and I could see many old favorites from Pasir Ris and knew that Mr. Ng, Mr. Tan, Mr. Robert, Mr. Peter and Gadis were all flying. Quietly, but always at it, Mr. Abu Bakar showing us a thing or two with stunt kites. So what about the illustrious SKA team? Yes, there they were looking great and when you hear how little good practice time they have managed in the zero wind conditions of Singapore, they were looking fantastic! Don't stop now team! It is always marvelous to meet up with fliers from all over the world who share one's enthusiasm, swap ideas, view the latest creations, pinch a few ideas for your own next project and feel very relieved that you are not the only one. As the sun went going down and most fliers were packing up, we were was still hard at it. Without Peter's help, as always, we would have been packing up by torchlight. As it was, we were the last to leave the field and kept everyone waiting (sorry Gadis again). To complete a perfect day, we met up later, piled into cars and headed off to town to quench the thirst with copious quantities of our favorite beverage at the illusive Lucky Restaurant. I say illusive as it took an entertaining sightseeing tour incorporating all the sights of

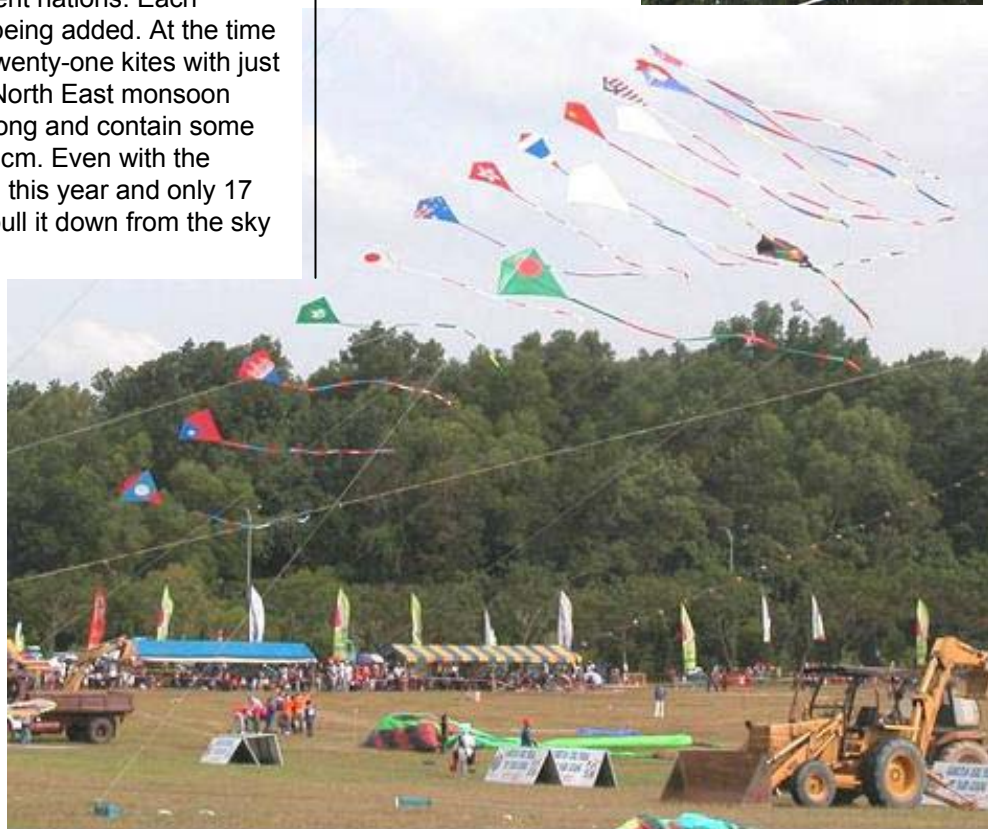
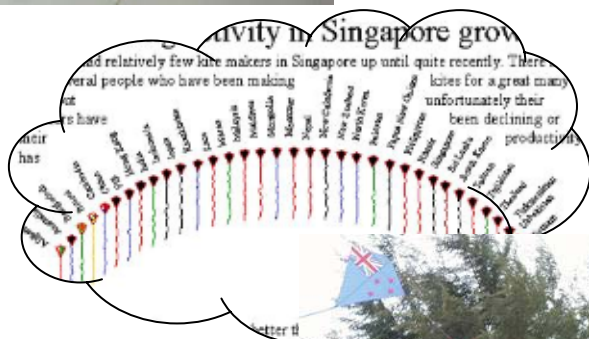
....cont

Pasir Gudang to find the place and an equally adventurous return. Still, thanks Gadis, drink was just great and the company better still. Sunday morning came bright with a fair breeze. Once at the field, the enthusiasm of the flyers took hold, became infectious and it was difficult not to join in. I'm not at all sure that any of us could keep up with the team effort from Japan as they all heaved on command to launch their massive edo, all dressed in matching uniform. Quite amazing. To complete the turnout, Mr. Wing and family arrived bringing with him as ever, loads of support. Before we knew it, it was time to take our leave and wish our fellow fliers a fond farewell with promises of seeing them again, hopefully before the next Pasir Gudang festival. On the way home we were all enthusiastic about what our future projects would include or rather what my husband was going to sew. Hadn't I seen him in a huddle with some SKA members talking stitch type, thread type, what haberdashery was the best while the girls sat sipping beer? Definitely a good thing this kite flying and what better proof than our very own Mr. Ng. Still flying and getting younger by the day

Rocky Engel

Presenting the arch kite

Do you recall the SKA Newsletter of May 2002 and the plans to build an arch of kites representing Asian countries? Well, the arch had its maiden flight in the Pasir Gudang International festival in February 2003 and showed seventeen different nations. Each month, a few more kites are being added. At the time of writing, the arch contains twenty-one kites with just fourteen still to add. By next North East monsoon season the kite will be 70 m long and contain some 35 kites each measuring 100 cm. Even with the gentle winds of Pasir Gudang this year and only 17 kites, it took three people to pull it down from the sky at the end of the day!



Painting Ripstop

Have you ever wondered how to paint onto ripstop so that the paint stays on, won't crack and light shines through? Well Mr. Mike Eason found a way and entered his advice onto the internet.

"Another kite painting technique that I first started testing and experimenting with in July of 1993 involves airbrush painting on white or colored nylon (Carrington) or polyester (Icarex) ripstop with clear, solvent acrylic lacquers, the type used for automotive finishes, colored with transparent dyes. It all started when I was helping a neighbor repaint his truck using these finishes. He was doing one of those metal flake and clearcoat finishes; you know, the kind where the finish looks like a two foot deep pool of colored glass. Usually an opaque base coat of a shade of grey or even white is applied first, then one or several layers of clear lacquer filled with reflective metal flakes, followed by several coats of clear lacquer colored with solvent based transparent dyes. Knowing that many ripstop fabrics were originally coated with acrylics to give them their finish and reduce porosity, the proverbial light came on. "Hey, this stuff will stick to ripstop, and, it's transparent!" Ripstop coatings now may be acrylic, polyester, polyurethane, polypropylene, or combinations of other modern polymers but all are compatible with solvent acrylics.

At that same time a few kitemakers were first using florist's spray colors on kites. The florist's sprays are used to color dried flowers and weeds in floral arrangements and can even be used to color fresh flora. But their drawback is that the colors used in the florist's sprays, while quite permanent on ripstop, are opaque pigments rather than transparent dyes.

Opaque pigments create color by how they reflect different wavelengths of light falling on them but, mostly, block any light passing through from behind. These early attempts looked great on the ground by reflected light, but the saturation of their colors was dulled in the sky when sunlight, coming from behind, was partially blocked by the opaque pigments. This will be apparent when using artist's acrylics on Tyvek also, since these are also colored mostly with opaque pigments. Transparent dyes, however, modify light passing through them by filtering out some wavelengths of light and almost totally passing other colors (wavelengths). As in pre-colored ripstop, the filtering takes place once for transmitted light, the light that comes from behind the kite, and twice for reflected light, the light reflected back off the surface. That's why a kite looks darker, with more saturated colors, in your sewing room than it does back lighted in the sky.

Before I get too far we should talk a little about airbrushing. An airbrush is nothing more than a miniature air powered spray gun. Some airbrushes can produce anywhere from a 2mm line to a broad fog effect. They are available in single and double action models with various interchangeable tips for different spread patterns and come in internal mix and external mix versions. Some brushes use siphon or pressure material feed, or both. They typically only need a small volume of air at low pressures so a large compressor is not necessary, although a good quality regulator with moisture and particle filters is very beneficial. You can even run an airbrush from a really pumped up spare tire and regulator, with a homemade hose adapter made from a used "Fix-A-Flat" can, for quite a while without even owning a compressor. If you've never used an airbrush before, start with a simple single action brush, available at a local hobby shop or art supply.

Badger (brand name) has one, a single action, siphon feed type with an air hose and material bottle that sells for less than \$80.00 (US). You can pay much more, of course. You should also be able to find a similar model at any Sears, Roebuck, and Co. store. I won't go into airbrush technique in detail here, but would suggest some practice first if you've never used one before. Practice with some inexpensive airbrush paints and paper, using the guides that always come with a new brush. An art supply or hobby shop will also be a good source of how-to books on airbrushing. Basically, all paint application effects are controlled with varying air pressure, dilution of the paint, volume of paint flow, distance from the surface, and speed of your brushing stroke. Hard and soft edges can be controlled using "friskets" or cutout masks on or at varying distances from the painted surface. Frisket films are available with a removable sticky back. And there are even special frisket knives with swiveling blades for cutting intricate patterns and curves in frisket film. But engineering drafting mylar, masking tape, paper, cardboard, and an exacto-knife are all good substitutes. The clear lacquer that I've used is PPG Industries, #DCA 468, "Duracryl" Hi-Performance Clear Acrylic Lacquer. A notice on the can stipulates that the product is intended for use by professional car refinishers only and is not intended for sale to the general public, but I had no problem purchasing a quart can for \$18.56 (\$24.13 List) at a local auto paint, body, and detail supply shop. The associated PPG dye pigments come in pint (16 oz.) or quart (32 oz.) bottles in a variety of primary colors. They are very expensive so it's best to talk your supplier

into, like I did, selling you small, four ounce quantities in your own containers. The dyes are so concentrated that four ounces of each primary will be sufficient to paint at least ten big kites. Normally they would custom mix your colors into the clear acrylic right in the store just like custom house paint mixes at a hardware store. I found that I could mix almost any color from the three additive color primaries; red, green, and blue. I last obtained four ounces each of PPG red #212 for \$19.05, green #217 for \$15.40, and blue #216 for \$14.48. That red would be about \$152.00 per quart, but you'll be measuring it by eye-dropper drops, so four ounces will go a long way. Find containers for your dyes that just hold the quantity you buy and have very tight fitting, screw-on lids. Store the containers upside down to minimize evaporation.

Later on, you may want to obtain some other dye colors that approximate the subtractive primaries; cyan, magenta, and yellow. I'm trying to keep this article as short as possible so I won't go into color theory here. But, if your interested, find one of the Eastman Kodak Co. publications that deal with color theory in a local photo supply or camera shop. Most encyclopedias that you can find at your library should also give enough understanding to get started also. Look up "color", "chromogenic", and "tricolor".

The instructions on the can of clear acrylic call for a dilution of 150-200%, with PPG solvents, for painting your family Lamborghini. That would be 1.5-2 parts thinner to 1 part DCA468 lacquer. The solvents are sold in different evaporation ratings for different shop temperatures in the auto painting industry and are very expensive. I've had perfectly fine results using plain old lacquer thinner from the hardware store. An airbrush, however, requires a much thinner mix to perform well. I have found that, using a Pasche' VL-B external mix double action airbrush, that dilutions of 300-400% of the out-of-the-can lacquer work well for air pressures from 5 to 15 psi (pounds per square inch). That would be 3-4 parts thinner to 1 part DCA468 lacquer. Normally, the lacquer is pigmented with dyes at a ratio of 1-3% of total volume. For soft shading on ripstop, where we are using fewer layers of lacquer, I found that a dye concentration of 5-10% was more suitable. More saturated colors can be achieved with dye concentrations, in the already thinned lacquer, of as much as 18% of the total volume of lacquer. Anything from the lightest of fogging effects to color more saturated and brilliant than the brightest commercial ripstop colors can be achieved with smooth gradations.

I first make up a thinned mix of clear acrylic and solvent that spays nicely in a two to 4 ounce glass airbrush jar with a tight fitting lid. If you don't use all of this in one session store it, tightly capped, upside down to prevent evaporation. Color mixes may be stored for a limited time this way also. If you don't store it upside down the very volatile solvents will escape through almost any lid seal very quickly making the mix unusable even a couple of weeks later.

Then I will use an eyedropper to make the final color mix. Count how many drops are contained in a full "eyedropper-full". A 10% pigmentation of a mix would then be one eyedropper-full of dye to nine eyedroppers of diluted acrylic lacquer, or one drop to nine drops mixed right into a material cup. A Material cup is a small, usually less than one ounce, open topped cup that plugs into the siphon feed opening on the airbrush. Some airbrushes can also use a two to four ounce bottle with siphon tube that fits into the same opening on the body of the brush. An 18% mix could be 18 drops of dye to 82 drops of lacquer. Or, if I know that a full eyedropper-full of lacquer is 20 drops, I could use 18 drops of color and four full eyedroppers plus 2 drops of lacquer. Divide all of these examples by two, three, or whatever for proportionately smaller total quantities. I would recommend testing your mix for the airbrush with several progressive dye concentrations on scrap white ripstop. Keep a record of the mix proportions written right on the test piece of ripstop with a waterproof felt marker. This will be very handy later as a reference for future color mixes.

This testing stage would also be an excellent time to experiment with different airbrush effects. A very low air pressure, say 3-7 psi, and a fairly heavy flow of material will produce a spattering effect. The material flow is usually controlled by unscrewing a knob at the rear of a single action brush or pulling the finger control further backward on a double action brush. The pressure is controlled at your regulator or compressor. Try spraying along the edge of a cardboard or heavy paper mask, held right on the white ripstop, with a light stroke to produce a hard edge. Then vary the distance from the brush to the surface to decrease the amount of lacquer reaching the surface and gradually decrease the intensity of color away from your edge. Also try producing a soft edge by holding your mask or frisket slightly away from the surface, letting some of the pigment to fog under the edge. To build up more intense, saturated, color it is usually better to

apply multiple light coats rather than one heavy application that would be more prone to running. I have found that it is far easier to obtain smooth, even fields or graduations of color on ripstop that is flat and unwrinkled, prior to sewing into, say, an appliqué' kite although I think that some method of stretching an already assembled kite skin could be used to flatten wrinkles and facilitate smooth airbrushing. I would caution anyone experimenting with these materials to thoroughly read the instructions and warnings on the containers. Make sure you use plenty of forced ventilation. The vapors are extremely flammable and volatile, and you should judiciously use protective vapor masks and gloves. The lacquer and solvents contain various toxic additives, plasticizers, resins, ketones, toluenes, acetone, and esters. Some of these are known to cause cancer and neurological damage as well as birth defects in situations of prolonged occupational exposure. Hey, we don't want any pickled, mutant kitefliers out there so be careful! I must admit here that I have not, as yet, actually built and colored a whole kite with this technique, except for airbrushed shading of flesh and hair colors in an "Uncle Sam" (pointing) appliqué design on an eighty square foot parafoil built by Terry Lee for Pierre' Langlois. It's that new!

Although, I have tested the permanence by washing several of my test pieces and a couple of smaller paintings several times in a machine with my regular laundry. Also, a piece left in the sun on my roof for almost a year, held down and partially covered by some thick plates of aluminum for comparison, have shown almost no deterioration of the original colors. The exposed ripstop itself started to become deteriorated and brittle, though, from the extended ultraviolet exposure.

I do have a kite designed, a ten foot Edo using a combination of acrylic lacquers on both white and colored fabrics and appliqué, but have yet to complete it. It will be a rendition of Sukaroku (S'-ker-ro-ku), a very well known Kabuki theater character, done in a traditional (except for the technique) pose and style. Some of you may even get a finished airbrushed kite in the air before I do. Boy, I've finished all the patterns, have friskets made, even have the bamboo "bones", as Japanese kitemakers call their spars, and all of the fabric is on hand. I better get to work!



Lookout for next Newsletter for feature on SKA most senior kite flyer, Mr Ng.

Kite Events Diary 2003

From	To	Event	Venue	Contact
Apr 19	Apr 23	20 th Weifang International Kite Festival	Weifang City, China	Mr Sun Xueming +86-536-8789101
Apr 24	Apr 25	China Chengde International Kite Festival	Chengde City, China	Wang Baosheng +86-10- 67147626
May 31	Jun 1	Singapore Dragon Boat Festival	Marina Bay	winglee@pacific.net.sg
Jun 30	Jul 1	Palembang	South Sumatera, Indonesia	le-gong@centrin.net.id
Jul 3	Jul 5	Jakarta Kite Festival	Indonesia	le-gong@centrin.net.id
Jul 7	Jul 8	Pangandaran Kite Festival	Indonesia	le-gong@centrin.net.id
Jul 9	Jul 10	Cilacap Kite Festival	Indonesia	le-gong@centrin.net.id
Jul 12	Jul 13	Yogyakarta Kite Festival	Indonesia	le-gong@centrin.net.id
Jul 16	Jul 20	Bali Kite Festival	Indonesia	le-gong@centrin.net.id
Sep 8	Sep 18	Marseille Kite Festival	Marseille, France	
Sep 20	Sep 29	Taipei International Kite Festival	Taipei, Taiwan	http://home.kimo.com.tw/twka2002/