

# NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

by Diana Cameron-Tough

This is the first of my new columns letting you know what various clubs, and individuals are doing, and also any helicopter gossip that might come my way. (The Editor said who better than me to write it!!) Also being Subscription Secretary (it's a hard life) I have been encouraged and amazed at the interest shown in this magazine around the world. We both love receiving your letters telling us what you are flying, and also your news and views. Keep them coming. Also don't forget the photographs. They will all be returned – eventually, if you send a stamped/addressed envelope.

**South Africa:** One of the most encouraging areas of response we have had is from the Republic of South Africa. Mr. John P. Immelman, General Manager of Redleys – the largest R/C outlet in the country (see page 52 for shop address etc.), sent us a report on the 'local scene'. He writes... Johannesburg, ethnically known as eGoli – the city of gold – is situated 600km (373 miles) from the nearest South African coastal resort, Durban, and 1500km (932 miles) from the well known port of Cape Town.

From the air it appears that Johannesburg reaches as far as Pretoria in the North, Roodepoort in the West, Springs in the East and Vereeniging in the South – a distance of 50km in any direction. The entire area is at an altitude of between 1500m and 1800m above sea level, with normal summer temperatures of 32° (90°F), humidity about 40% and no snow!

These conditions are not conducive to easy helicopter flying – the air is very thin, the power loss, compared to sea level, is about 25% and the high temperatures cause both further power losses and overheating. To compensate we use 10% nitro methane fuel, tuned pipes and the largest engines that can possibly be fitted to each model.

It is ironic that I should be writing this article since some 10 years ago

my father, Jack Immelman, pioneered R/C helicopter flying in South Africa using a Schlüter Cobra and DS-22 (remember them?) and the more primitive Du-Bro Whirlbird. Regrettably he was unable to overcome the 'underpower' problems and lost interest after months of sweat and tears.

It took another 5 years before a band of intrepid modellers, led by Dick du Plessis, decided to prove that the 'impossible' would not be difficult to overcome, but that miracles take a bit longer. Using the Graupner Bell 212 (not too successfully!) and the Kavan Bell Jet Ranger (more successfully!) they were able to prove that helicopters could rise above the dust; defying gravity, thin air, no oxygen and the fiery African sun.

The big breakthrough came with the introduction of the Kavan Alouette II and the Schlüter HeliBoy. At last a few 'chopper pilots' were able to fly reliably and reasonably accurately and the demand for helicopter demonstrations increased.

Then the interest waned. One or two enthusiasts continued to improve their flying, especially aerobatics, whilst the balance either continued to hover and land, hover and land, or their helicopters took up a new flying attitude at the back of the garage or in the attic.

Then in 1983 we had the good fortune to be assisted by Johannes Graupner for the services of one of the principal designers of the Helimax, Mr. Edgar Göke. He is held in very high regard in Germany and his 'Helicopter School' also trained enthusiasts from France, Iran, Kuwait, Austria and even South America. He has very elaborate training equipment, using dual Futaba controls, and microphone link between teacher and pupil and a hand-held simulator.

He estimates that a complete novice can hover solo within 20 hours (obviously some a lot less!) using the training helicopter. The benefits of

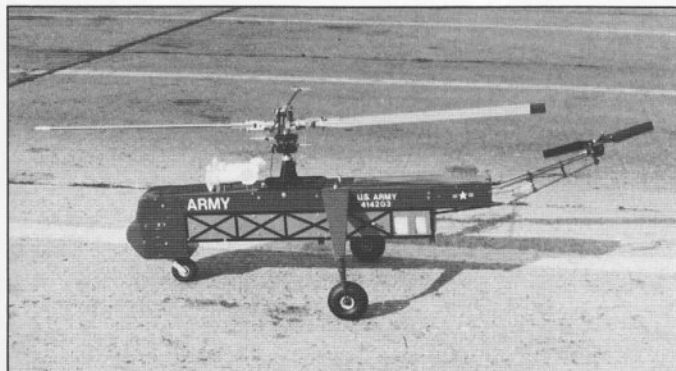
being able to offer organised tuition (for a fee!) to a newcomer who can go away knowing, at the very least, how to hover without even breaking a set of rotor blades – or worse – has put new life and interest in this aspect of R/C modelling.

Coincidentally there has been the introduction of both the Helimax 40 and the Helimax 60, and the Kalt range of helicopters. Most impressive is certainly the Kalt GS Baron, which has more than enough power at this altitude, and is ideal for the enthusiast. The Kalt Custom Baron is proving to be highly competitive for aerobatics and may soon supersede the dated Schlüter HeliBoy! Because of price, the Kalt Baron 20 is ideal for the beginner but our altitude necessitates the use of a 28 size engine – the price we pay for being close to the heavens! Recent tests have shown the Baron 20 to be a remarkably forgiving trainer and there has been a dramatic increase in the appearance of these babies at the helicopter clubs.

Nevertheless the interest is very new and there are only 4 active specialised helicopter clubs throughout South Africa. There are somewhere between 50 and 100 active pilots out of a total modelling fraternity (including R/C cars and boats) of some 5000 – and these from an economically active population of 8.6 million.

Our excellent weather and a strong affinity for outdoor physical sports, such as rugby, cricket and BMX, does not encourage hordes of potential R/Cers to queue up outside the clubhouse doors. But the R/C helicopter seems to catch the imagination of the public more than most other aspects of the hobby and maybe one day 'chopper flying' will be BIG!

**West Malaysia:** We also have a subscription from a Mr. Ng in Selangor, West Malaysia. I am sure that he is very much on his own out there, and must encounter considerable problems. Let us know how you are getting



Sam Newhouses partly completed Sikorsky CH-54A 'Sky Crane'. More details, when it is finished.



on, Mr. Ng.

**United States of America:** Crossing continents with the flick of a pen, we have heard from Sam Newhouse, in Jersey City, who has sent us some photographs of his latest project, the Sikorsky CH-54A 'Sky Crane' – remember his Sikorsky VS300 in the Autumn Issue? Again the mechanics are Kavan Allouette collective type, powered by an OS Max .45. He will be sending us an article and more photographs of the model when it is completed, along with photographs of the full size. It should be interesting.

I have included a photograph of Mr. James B. Phelps Jnr's. Kavan Jet Ranger (see page 46). He lives in Hodgenville, Kentucky, and impressed me greatly with his excellent paint work and also his beautifully taken photographs. Really pretty. He says that the model is several years old and has never flown – but does not say why! Perhaps we could inspire you to next time send us some photographs of it in flight, Mr. Phelps. A model like that deserves to take to the air.

**Germany:** Coming nearer home, we have also had encouraging response

from West Germany, Switzerland etc. This is greatly due to a very complimentary review of our magazine given by Mr. Heinz Ongsbieck, Editor of the *Modellflug International* Magazine. Thank you Mr. Ongsbieck.

**Sweden:** We have also heard from Mr. Jan Ola Forsberg, Director of Göt-Hobby store in Sweden. (See page 52 for shop address etc.) he tells us there is a rising interest in helicopters in Sweden, and their shop is now in its fifth year specialising in them. He sent us a picture of their Hughes 300 Show Flying Team, which has been flying for two years, on numerous occasions. They fly the gas powered Hughes 300Gs from KKK, which he says are fantastically reliable.

**England:** Back home to England, we have received some lovely photographs of members' helicopters from the South Coast Helicopter Club, taken by Maurice Meredith and the Secretary Richard Fletcher. There are 22 members who all fly scale helicopters (well done lads). The Club has only been formed about nine months, and they fly at Baiter Poole in Dorset. They have already given various demon-

strations for fetes, charity events etc. What a great way to help more people get in touch with such an interesting hobby.

One of the photographs is of a Schlüter Tow Cobra. This is a famous machine that so many people learnt to fly on, in the early days. Remember Walt Schoonard and his continuing adventures with one of these machines. It really is an historically memorable model.

For those of you that missed the Autumn Issue – (tut, tut, but don't worry a few back copies are still available) we told you about a new helicopter club starting up in Portsmouth called the 'Sharks'. Flying is on Wednesday and Sunday mornings, and anyone wishing to know more should ring Mike Daish, on Portsmouth (0705) 666638.

Please keep the news, photos etc. coming in, and don't forget to pass the word around about this Mag. The more people that read it, the better it will become, so I'm relying on you all. Happy Hovering.

Diana Cameron-Tough



*Maurice Meredith seen here flying his Kalt 222 at their picturesque flying site near Bournemouth. What a pretty place to fly.*



*The KKK Hughes 300 Show Flying Team from Sweden.*



*Mr. Dieter Schlüter 'Father of Helicopters' seen here at the AMA Nationals, with two models.*



*An attractive Aerospatiale flown by one of the members of the South Coast Helicopter Club – Mike Pape. Photograph by Maurice Meredith.*



*Competitors in the Danish Nationals. The winner of the Advanced Class is on the right – K. H. Nielsen. Claus O. Smidt who reported on the event in the Winter Issue, is in the centre.*



*A young Vago Nordigian with one of the original Schlüter Tow Cobras with the tricycle undercarriage – ideal for training. He doesn't care to say how long ago the photograph was taken!*