

Skylines

The official newsletter of the *San Diego Kite*

VOLUME 3

June 2001

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Virgil Dalton Founding Member

With the recent passing of Virgil Dalton the San Diego Kite Club lost one of its founding members. Virgil was also one of our most popular members. He was known for his kitemaking abilities, his sound advice on kiting and other matters, his good cheer, and his bad jokes. His daily absence at the kite field will be felt for a long time to come.

SDKC Officers 1999-2000

President	Neil Tuthill (562) 696- Neil7anca@aol.com	Equipment Manager	Mitch Anderson (858) 273
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		Founder	Dan Willan

"SKYLINES" is published bimonthly by the San Diego Kite Club. All articles related to the sport of kiting are encouraged.

All opinions expressed are solely those of the individual author and not necessarily those of the San Diego Kite Club.

Unless specifically marked "Not For Republication" all submissions are available to other kiting publications without compensation. The "SKYLINES" staff reserves the right to edit all material.

Deadline: 15th of odd numbered months for publication to following issue.

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San Diego, Ca 92167
USA

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The President's Message

The Kiting World has lost a friend with the passing of Virgil Dalton. The San Diego Kite Club lost one of our most highly regarded members. Virgil, your friendship and talents will be missed by all.

It is time once again for nominations for the coming elections in July. A nomination form is included. Think very hard, volunteer and nominate members in good standing for your Board of Directors. Ballots will be mailed out to members right after the June meeting and votes to be tallied at the July meeting.

The Port of San Diego is presenting kiting in their commuter terminal at the AIRPORT for the summer and they are looking to present Local San Diego talent and Kite Artistry. Locked

enclosed cases are available with large pieces to be hung from the ceiling for all passengers to view as they walk to and from the Planes. Be a part of the great idea, call Lesley A. Marples at 619.686 and she will help you set everything up. If she is not available get in touch with me and we will set things up. All items are fully insured and will not be handled by anyone except those installing the displays. This is a great opportunity to advertise our treat sport of Kiting.

The Club wishes to say thanks to all those that came out for the Memorial Services the month.

Neil Tuthill

Welcome To The Following New Members:

Carolyn, Ottmar, and Alex Herzog

Sally Miller

Glenn Rothstein

Curtis Oliver

Juan Guerra

KITE SCHEDULE FOR 2001

Events are subject to last minute changes.

For more information contact Joanne M'Clary (619) 223

- May 5 Belmont Shore Sport Kite Challenge**, Belmont Shores, Long Beach
- May 6 Free to Breathe Kite Festival, Huntington Beach, CA (714-536-36300)
- May 12 SDKC Meeting - Joint meeting Route 66 Kite Club, POTLUCK**
- May 27/28 San Ramon Wind Festival* - San Ramon, CA
- June 9 SDKC Meeting - Tecolote Shores**
- June 16 BASKL* - Martinez, CA
- July 7 Long Beach Sport Kite Classic** - Belmont Shores, Long Beach, CA
- July 14 SDKC Meeting - Tecolote Shores**
- July 28/29 Berkeley Kite Festival* - Berkeley Marina, Berkeley, CA
- August 11 SDKC Meeting - Tecolote Shores**
- Sept. 1 Golden Gage Challenge* (Begins 2002 Competition Season)
- Sept. 8 SDKC Meeting - Tecolote Shores**
- Sept. 15 BASKL* Awards

Do you have a small news article that we should know about? Let your fellow members know by sending it to us for the upcoming newsletter.

* These events are held in Northern California

For more information contact Brian Champie - BrianKitefart.com

** Southern California Events

For more information - www.scskl.com (909-734-2513)

Compiled by SDKC and ANCAL

Memories

by Kathy Aggers

His gnarled, knobby knuckled hands clap together along with a shout of encouragement. The kite tips and wobbles aloft. The youngster on the other end of the string flails and stumbles backwards, a look of sheer delight on his face as at last the kite has taken to the air.

His hatted head tilts back, an experienced eye on the stuttering movements of the kite. The old-timer hollers more words of encouragement into the breeze. The child regains control and stands firmly in one place. With a face swallowing grin the oldster waves and walks back to his camp chair. Adjusting his suspenders he plunks down, leaning back to watch as the kite slowly becomes less awkward in flight. "That's what it's all about," he says tilting his head in the direction of the field. "Not just competition, just pure flying 'cause it feels good. Don't get me wrong", he adds glancing over at me, "there is a time for that too, but most of all it's got to be fun." Weather worn and wrinkled, his eyes are bright and sparkle with pleasure as the boy on the field whoops in triumph as he executes a new trick. Suddenly the kite crashes. "I'll get it Virgil." Another boy trots out to untangle and put the kite right. Virgil waves at the crestfallen pilot. "Life is like that" he says tipping back in the chair, crossing his legs. "Ups and downs." The kite bounds into the air eager to dance again. He grunts as the kite cruises a bit too close for safety. He gestures the flyer to back up. "If you're lucky it's more ups than down."

He chuckles and reaches into a carry all and pulls out a brown paper bag. I grin. A coveted raffle item is in that bag. A windsock, not just any windsock, but a hand sewn 'Virgil' windsock. Since I had joined the club, the monthly raffles had been a source of joy and disappointment for my daughter and I. I had to get one of those sought after wind toys. Who truly knows why they became so popular. Perhaps it was because it was made by one of the oldest charter members of the San Diego Kite Club, or that he was one of the friendliest people on the kite field and that people loved him, that made them worth owning.

I did eventually become the proud owner of a 'Virgil' windsock. Not that day, but months later, a black, green, and yellow striped one. It hangs now in my memorial corner along with the photos and news article that eulogies my best friend who passed away from AIDS. Yes, Virgil has also passed from this life, after a brief battle with an ailing body.

I'll miss Virgil, but I have my memories and the windsock his gnarled knobby hands had sewn so patiently. Now when I see a newbie's kite floundering about on the ground or stuttering through the air, then finally smoothing out I'll hear Virgil's voice calling out encouragement, hands clapping and that, life is like that.



Virgil's 'How-To' Classes at Club Meetings were always well attended. His specialties were Spinsocks, Catherine's Wheels, and Pocket Sleds



Virgil and yet another Graduating Class

9 (or 10) Days In Japan

by Ron Despojado

When I first heard that I might get invited to Japan, I did not want to get my hopes up too high, because the key words were "might get invited." In December 2000 I received a Christmas card from Mr. Masaaki Modegi and the Japan Kiting Association talking about two festivals in Japan, and, more importantly, "the sponsor will pay for all expenses, including airfare". I read and reread that last statement several times before I convinced myself that I was actually invited to Japan. A trip to Japan I always considered to be "the crown jewel of all kiting invitations."



For A Moment Ron Thinks His Prayers Have Been Answered

Finally April 2001 arrived and I was on my way. The night before I left San Diego I stayed up all night in order to fall asleep on the plane. However, due to my excitement, I only slept maybe 20 minutes over the course of the 10 hour flight. I left on Thursday morning in San Diego and arrived on Friday afternoon. Japan is 16 hours ahead of us here, so when I arrived I felt like I had been up for 2 days, because I guess I had been. I arrived in Narita Tokyo airport greeted by two women holding up a sign

with my name on it. They informed me of my limo bus ride to the hotel, and handed me my tickets. Little did I know that all of my arrangements during the trip would be so very well taken care of. On my way to the hotel the limo bus picked up two other AKA members- all-around kiting ambassador Scott Skinner and award winning kite maker Kevin Shannon. At the hotel I met up with Team Upper Limit from New York (Billy Ng and Bob Hurd) and Bob's wife Debbie Hurd who is known as "The Queen of Quad." To round out the invited guests was Anna Rubin- a prize winning kite maker from Austria. Anna was the lone vegetarian in the group which led to interesting food arrangements.

I knew we were going to be on a hectic schedule over the next 9 days. Or was it 10 days? Initially I thought it was 10, but the time difference had fooled me. Okay, I guess 9 is okay. After one night in Tokyo we boarded a plane to Aomori for a small festival and other appearances. All of us guests except the Hurds were staying at Dr. Sato-san's house which also holds his dental practice. The Hurds were house guests at another hosts' house. We were given a reception by the Japan Kiting Association the first evening. The dining at the reception was something quite different, it was buffet style with a free-for-all attitude. Food was setup on several tables and dining consisted of grabbing a plate and standing around these tables all the while collecting food on your plate and eating. At no time did we actually sit and eat our plates of food, it was stand around and eat.

The next day was the Aomori festival. There was no formal event other than a quick introduction of the invited guests. While there I lent a hand in making some of the food. I donned a hapi coat and headband and was handed a wooden mallet. I swung



Have Mallet - Will Smash Food

the mallet into a hollowed out tree stump that had fresh steamed rice in it. In-between swings this elderly Japanese woman kept rotating the rice and adding a little water. I was making mochi, which is made from a rice paste and some sweet coatings. Eventually I was motioned to stop and the rice paste was taken away for the finishing touch. I actually had to work for food. The sky was filled with single line kites of which many had a humming ribbon on their backside. These kites were about 10' feet tall so the humming actually sounded like thunder in the sky. That evening we visited a castle which once belonged to the local emperor. The castle was surrounded by a moat and several acres surrounding the castle had their cherry blossom trees in full bloom. These trees had blossoms of small petals that are just a whisper of pink to them.

At one time these blossom trees were the setting of meditation and deep thought. Today people visit and sit to meditate how much beer they should drink and have deep thoughts of what the next beer drinking game should be. On the way home we stopped at a roadside ramen stand. It was a micro-mini van with a trailer behind it that doubled as the counter. The back of the van

was open and the lady inside could be seen slinging noodles, seaweed, spices, and broth into large bowls. It was a treat for our eyes as well as our stomachs, a lot like watching a pizza chef tossing pizza dough in the air- it was part of the experience.

The following day was a free fly where we were taken to a kite field and treated to a picnic from the JKA. Included in our lunch was corn in a shrink-wrapped package. On the way there we were taken to a small temple which was a homage to children that have died. It was a very solemn and quiet setting.

Every morning I woke up and said "so.. what are we doing today- on the plane- off the plane... kites or no kites... on the bus then off the bus?" On May 1st we were scheduled to do demonstrations at two elementary schools. At the first there was an assembly with all the school kids. We each greeted them with a salutation from our native language and they in turn tried to repeat it. Scott gave them "howdy!" Anna said "guten tag". Billy said "whats uuup!" So I said to them "wuss happ-a-niiing!" All the kids wore these reversible hats that were red on one side and white on the other. We gave them a quiz and they had to turn their hats to the right answer- red was "A" and white was "B". After they turn their hats to the right side, we revealed the answer and the ones that were right were exuberant! They jumped up and down and pumped their fists. The incorrect ones had to sit down and they noticeably were sulking. It was so darling how much they were honest with their answers and their enthusiasm when the correct answer was given. We even play rock-paper-scissors as a group and again the winners were ecstatic and the losers sat down sadly & crossed their arms. The second school we visited the kids did a small presentation about Fuji apples in broken English followed by a small parade in their

auditorium. We then went outside and flew our kites for them. Billy, Debbie, Bob, and myself flew as a team. Then Upper Limit flew their award winning ballet. After that they formed small groups and we had to play games with them. I had to bounce a basketball under my legs while singing a Japanese song, then I had to jump rope. After that the whole school led us in a dance in large circle while singing a Japanese folk song. All the kids asked for our autographs so I came prepared- I had trading cards done in Japanese for this trip.



Ron has a never ending supply of Trading Cards

On May 2nd we fly to Tokyo for the night. The next morning we were onto another plane for Kanizawa and the Uchinada World Kite Festival. We arrived and check into a ryokan which is a traditional Japanese style hotel. One thing we were told is the bathing facilities were down the hall and communal within our gender. In it there were two low showerheads meant to be used while seated. In front of the shower was a mirror to shave and shampoo. In the same room there was a hot tub, which is open to all that wish to relax in, up to three people. Billy, Bob, and myself needed to decide whether we would use this as a traditional Japanese bath or western style where only one would use it at a time. After looking at how relatively small the

facilities were, we quickly decided we would use them one at a time. There was a lock on the door but I doubt the Japanese ever use it. Okay, I pondered... I use to workout at the gym and use those showers and jacuzzi, but this is different. The question was "who would you rather have see you naked? A complete stranger whom you've never met or a close friend whom you'll see again and again?" Some of us are too shy I guess. Joining us in Uchinada was Mr. Yoshizuma-san. Yoshi-san was the kite builder that visited the Skryja's when he was in San Diego and taught Jim how to make the small kites, who in turn taught many of us SDKC members one night.

That night again we were given a reception in the big Town Hall. And again, the unconventional buffet style was in force. We were brought onstage and introduced to the crowd. During the evening we were individually interviewed for Japanese television, the translation and questions were a bit rough but a smile and good positive attitude will get you through it. As the night progressed I was starting to have that bad feeling- that scratchy throat and body ache. All the travel and jet lag exposed me to some



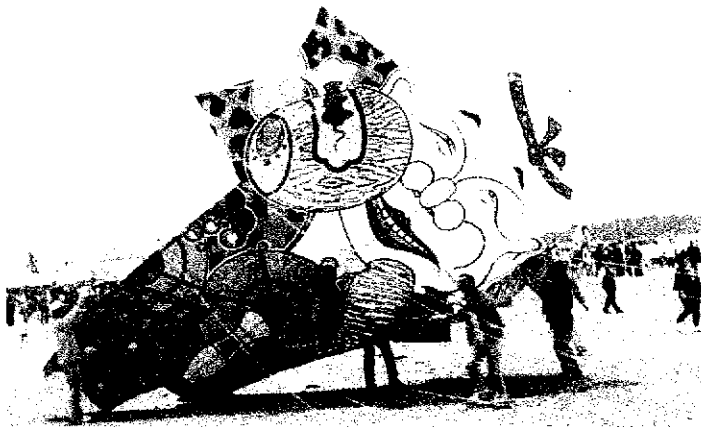
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sort of flu bug. Wouldn't you know it- the day before the big festival and I start to feel ill.



The day finally arrived. Officially it is called The Uchinada World kite Festival. It was a spectacle. In the main arena there were perhaps hundreds of traditional kites being flown, some as tall as maybe 10 meters. There were armies of people holding onto the lines all the while not seeing one tangle. Off to the side were the sportkite demonstrations. Other than maybe the AKA conventions, I have never seen as many spectators watching sportkites. They were having the finals of their sportkite competitions while Debbie, Billy, Bob, and myself were interspersed to do demonstrations. We all flew individually, as well as a team of four, and as Upper Limit. In the mix of sportkiters one of them came up to me and said "do you remember me?" I certainly did- it was Akira Suzuki who used to fly out here on the west coast. Akira and I used to battle head to head regularly for quadline's top spot a few years back. In addition to the trophies handed out, the competitors were also awarded a case of Asahi beer. Think about how much more participation we would have if we have a major beer sponsor at our events.

The sportkites were but only about 1/8 of the entire festival. At one point there was a mass ascension of Hasimoto bee kites. It sounded

just like a swarm of angry bees in the sky. It was something that words could not describe- beautiful handmade kites everywhere. There were trains and trains of kites, one train had over 80 kites in it, it was a train of soldiers, horses and warriors. Soon it was over. I thought the festival was like a wedding where it is planned for many months, then the day arrives, and soon it is over except for the photographs. Yes, the big festival had finished but our trip had not.

That evening we were given a dinner by the organizers of the Uchinada festival. But I needed very badly some rest and while resting Billy Ng informed me that they were waiting for me at the dining hall. I was the last to arrive in front of a group of maybe 40 seated people and received applause as I entered the room. Dinner: more raw fish, more beer, more ramen. After dinner I dreaded what I was warned of: they wheeled out the karaoke machine. One by one guests were giving it a try. So... when in Rome do as the Romans. I selected a Beatles song and got up and did karaoke for the first time in my life.

The next day we were scheduled to fly back to Tokyo. Before we got to the airport we did a little shopping. We stopped at a paper store to get genuine Japanese washi (rice) paper. The kite makers in the group found a tremendous assortment of papers. All week long we had also been looking for hapi coats but never had the chance to find the right stores. Today would be no different, no hapi coats. Back to Tokyo we flew, knowing this would be our last night in Japan and we would soon fly home the following day.

When we arrived in Tokyo we were scheduled to eat dinner at Mr. Modegi's restaurant, which also housed the World Kite Museum. We had a quick tour of the

museum, which housed a lot of traditional kites, as well as a few modern sportkites. Upon entering the banquet hall a Japanese lady surprised me by saying "I know you" and proceeded to show me photographs of me at a kite festival, but I had no idea from where and when. Then an elderly Japanese gentleman



Ron, Seiko, and the Hapi Coat

also said "I know you!!" and I realized it was Seiko Ishiyama, one of Japan's master kite builders. Seiko had visited San Diego on New Year's Day a few years back and this was where the photo's were from. Then I had an even bigger surprise- Seiko handed me a hapi coat which he signed on the inside, then he handed me a string tie with a tie clip in the shape of a famous historical kite. And finally he handed me a cardboard box that he said contained a kite. So, I got MY hapi coat! Later I found the box did not contain a kite, but several hand-painted, hand crafted traditional kites in different sizes that Seiko had made. This almost made me forget I had the flu. Then dinner- more raw fish, more beer, more rice, more ramen, more...STEAK! But unfortunately I had no appetite. This was our last gathering and we were all a bit sad to see it all end. The 9 or 10 days seemed to have zipped by.

This trip definitely surpassed the expectations I had. Every plane trip, baggage check-in, bus

ride, hotel check-in, meal, and tour was meticulously taken care of. On the days I had the flu I even had my baggage carried for me. Mr. Modegi-san was the ultimate host. This was a man that always had a smile and chuckle, a very charismatic gentleman that knew how to treat his guests.

As for my ride back to the US, again I could not sleep on the plane and the flu made it unbearable. I did not eat anything on the plane, I knew it was going to be a long time before I ate any sushi again-which I typically love. Ron Reich once told me the best part of any trip is coming home. This is so true, the trip was long enough at either 9 or 10 days, but the memories will last many many years.



The Last Sushi



The Ever Shy Ron Speaks To A Group

Nominations Sought For 2001-02 Club officers

In May and June we will be taking nominations for all offices. We hope to have a ballot ready to print in the June newsletter. The actual election will take place in July as usual, but this will give members who can't come to the July meeting a chance to vote.

Names will be put into nomination for specific offices. We will have a ballot box available at the meetings, or you can send in your nominations anonymously. You may nominate yourself, of course. No one will be forced to run if they don't wish to.

I think a lot of people shy away from holding an office because they think they don't have time or it will be too much work. That is why we are listing the offices here along with a brief description. You should find something here that will mesh with your talents (or someone you know). Please get involved and support your club.



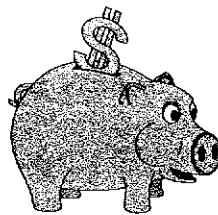
President: Basically, the coordinator of coordinators. The President sets the agenda and presides over club and board meetings, is the main spokesperson for the club, writes a nifty "Presidents Message" for the newsletter.

Vice President: Assists the president and fills in for the president when he/she is unavailable. May write a nifty "Vice President's Message" for the newsletter.



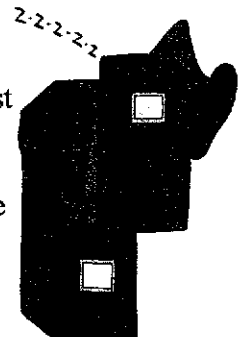
Treasurer: Keeps financial records of income and expenses, pays bills (phone hotline, storage, newsletter printing and mailing, food costs, etc.), maintains advertising accounts for newsletter, sends out invoices, makes bank deposits, obtains seller's permits and files state sales tax forms when necessary, prepares monthly financial reports for board meeting and bimonthly statements for newsletter.

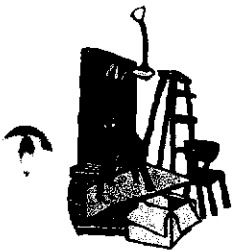
Secretary: Takes the minutes of the monthly board meeting, takes care of any correspondence with other clubs, the AKA, and businesses. Usually updates the general meeting information hotline and responds to inquiries made by individuals interested in the club.



Events Coordinator: Helps make schedule for regular club meetings and plan food sales, suggests and coordinates special events such as seminars, workshops, special guests, competitions, fund raising activities, fun and games. Ideally this officer would work with a committee or team to implement these activities.

Membership Chairman: Maintains accurate, up-to-date list of members and dues status, maintains mailing list including paid members, honorary members, club exchanges and kite businesses (a computer with database program is needed), prints out labels for newsletter mailings, arranges for membership table to be set up and manned at certain events.





Equipment Manager: Stores or arranges for storage of club equipment (kites, sound system, tables, food service items), makes sure needed equipment is brought to meeting or event, arranges for repair or replacement of broken or depleted items.



Public Relations Coordinator: Club liaison with media, work with events coordinator in publicizing club events, promoting goodwill in the community, and helping with community based programs, such as schools needing members to help kids build kites.

Archivist: Keeps all the junk. No, just kidding. Collects and maintains all kite and club-related materials (newsletters, magazines, videos, letters, records, minutes of board meetings).



Board Members: Attend board meetings, play an active role in planning and implementing ideas for club activities.



PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM (OR A COPY OF THIS FORM) AND BRING IT TO THE JUNE MEETING OR SEND IT TO:

SAN DIEGO KITE CLUB, P.O. BOX 7977, SAN DIEGO, CA 92167

SAN DIEGO KITE CLUB NOMINATION OF OFFICERS 2001-02

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1. _____
2. _____

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

1. _____
2. _____

ARCHIVIST

1. _____
2. _____

VICE PRESIDENT

1. _____
2. _____

EVENTS COORDINATOR

1. _____
2. _____

BOARD MEMBER

1. _____
2. _____

SECRETARY

1. _____
2. _____

PUBLIC RELATIONS COORD.

1. _____
2. _____

TREASURER

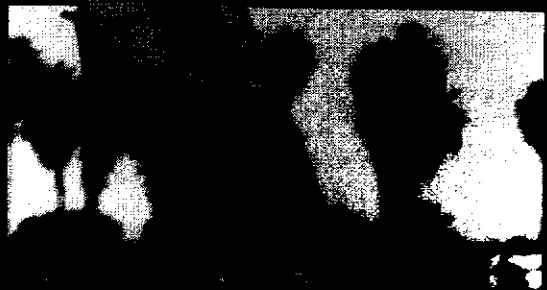
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