

# Around our Groups

- Abingdon *Meets most Mondays at The Flowing Well, Sunningwell Road, Sunningwell, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX13 6RB from 8:30pm*
- Andover *Meets every Tuesday The Anton Arms, Salisbury Road, Andover SP10 2JN from 8:30pm*
- Didcot *Meets every Thursday at The Fleur-De-Lys, 30 Main Road, East Hagbourne, Didcot, Oxon. OX11 9LN from 8:00pm*
- Fareham *Meets every Tuesday at The Fareham, 54 Trinity Street, Fareham, Hants. PO16 7SA from 8:30pm*
- Oxford *Meets every Tuesday at The Original Swan, Oxford Road, Cowley, Oxford OX4 2LF from 8:30pm*
- Reading *Meets every Thursday at The Warwick, 77 Kings Road, Reading RG1 3DD at 8:30pm*
- Slough, Windsor and Eton *Meets every Thursday at The College Arms, 55 High Street, Eton, Windsor SL4 6BL from 9:00pm*
- Southampton *Meets every Monday (venue to be advised) from 8:30pm Contact Charlotte on 07762 738855 or email Adrian Barnard for further details*
- Soton Friends *Meets every Wednesday at Bar Risa, 2-4 High Street, Southampton SO14 2DH from 8:30pm*
- South Bucks *Meets every Wednesday at T.J O'Reillys, 61 Marlow Bottom Road, Marlow, Buckinghamshire SL7 3NA from 8:30pm*
- Thatcham *Meets every Wednesday at The Red House, Andover Road, Highclere, Newbury, Berks. RG20 9PU from 8:45pm*

*No group near you? If you would like to start a new group in your town please feel free to contact any member of the area committee who will be very willing to help.*



## Flying South



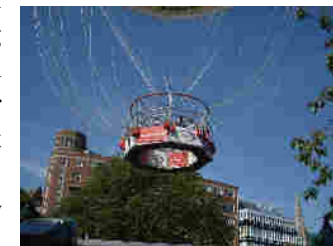
August 2003

### Bournemouth

On a bright and sunny Saturday 21st June some members of Didcot 18 plus had high hopes of completing a long held ambition of riding on the tethered balloon from the



Lower Gardens in central Bournemouth to around 500 feet above the town. Hopes rose as we approached the town and could see the balloon flying. However by the time we got to the site there was a temporary closedown due to high winds. After spending some time in the town we noticed the balloon was flying again and duly paid up and joined the queue. After just over an hour we were at the departure gate just



waiting for the balloon to descend when the flights were again cancelled. Since we had to make our way to the beach barbecue we took the full refund and hope to try again sometime soon.

*Story & Photos Steve Crothers*

### Sandcastle Competition

Two teams entered the official (free) competition. Southampton/Didcot and Andover/Thatcham. Andover's Crocodile became a fish, then a bird with a tail! Southampton's castle was plainly that throughout and ultimately won. Later, Bradford turned up as did another Thatcham team and constructed a monastery on a moated mountain and a car respectively. Had either team entered ahead of judging both would have been in with a very good chance of winning. Due to a camera accident only this photo is available at the time of printing.



*Story Adrian Barnard Photo Steve Crothers*



Southern Area of the National Federation of 18 Plus Groups of Great Britain. Editor, Steve Crothers, 8 Coromandel, Abingdon, Oxfordshire. OX14 5QG; [stephen.crothers@ntlworld.com](mailto:stephen.crothers@ntlworld.com)

# Sandbanks Beach Barbecue



Food sunshine and a good day out drew over 30 members to the south coast for the annual beach barbecue on the 21st June. The event, ably managed by Leo Glover, got off to a worrying start when there was concern as to whether the coals would ever get lit, but soon enough a healthy blaze was underway.



After having eaten our way through a veritable feast of sausages, burgers and chicken, along with the cheese slices and assorted sauces we had a degree of entertainment by way of a very impressive lightening storm which appeared to totally surround us as we stood on the beach.

There was, as

so often on these occasions, a brief shower; really large raindrops that left an interesting pattern in the sand, and we held a competition to see how many people can you get under an umbrella. People had brought footballs and frisbies and gaming broke out as others just watched.

Holding the event at midsummer worked very well as it was still light enough to see without the aid of torches on the way back to the cars. Looking forward to next years outing already.



*Photos and Story: Steve Crothers*



*National Paintball  
14th September 2003  
Hotshots Newbury  
Deposit £10.50 by 6 Sep, £36.95 balance due on  
the day*

*Southern Area Rounders  
21st September 2003  
South Bucks*



*National Greek Week  
25th September - 2nd October  
Zakynthos £309*



*Next Issue of Flying South  
1st October 2003  
Articles to editor please*



nvttech.com



*Reading Evening Treasure Hunt  
18th October 2003*

*Other events Booking Now*

*November  
7-10 WASH Searles Holiday Park, Hunstanton  
28-1 Nov Centre Parcs Elveden*

*January 2004  
10-17 Skiing Bulgaria*

## Coming Soon



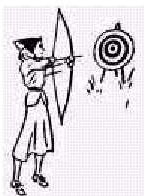
*Southern Area Petanque  
16th August 2003  
Porchester*

*Wireless Waves around Bletchley  
plus Battle of Britain flypast  
17th August 2003  
<http://www.bletchleypark.org.uk/>*



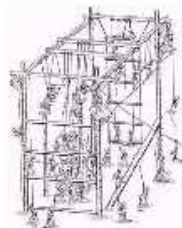
*Maidenhead Windsor Riverboat Trip  
Saturday 23rd August 2003  
from Maidenhead Promenade at 11am £9*

*Water Sports Plus  
22-25 August 2003  
Rutland Water Sports Centre*



*Multi-Activity Weekend  
29th - 31st August 2003  
Cambridgeshire, £48.50 before 29 Jun,  
£53.50 before 27 Jul, £63.50 before  
17 Aug*

*Taking Control - the training weekend  
6th - 7th September 2003  
Stoke-on-Trent £45*



## Riverboat Shuffle

Friday 18th July dawned bright and hot for Fareham's annual Riverboat Shuffle/boozeup, a trundle around the Solent on a converted ferry. A good turnout of around 13 people for an already packed boat ensured a heady evening.

Meet 7.30pm on the Gosport side was the strict instruction for rendezvous, so I killed a couple of hours in Wetherspoons next to my place of work before sauntering down to the terminal. (Not worth going home after work for me!).

A while later we all met up and trooped onto the boat, bagging a table in the already sweltering disco. The queue at the bar was four deep within minutes of everyone boarding! Billed as a 'Madness' evening, the DJ spun a nostalgic selection of 80's discs to keep everyone on their feet. Of course 'Oops Up Side Your Head' was played, complete with sitty down dance, as is mandatory at all 18+ events. More fun and games then ensued as the combination of sweltering temperatures, alcohol, the motion of the boat and lack of windows made some passengers feel slightly worse for wear. In the event many people congregated on the top deck, which offered a better view and was considerably cooler than below decks.

The boat started off by cruising up past the naval vessels lining Portsmouth Harbour, enabling already merry partygoers to wave at non-plussed matelots on duty on deck. A genteel u turn then took place, and we chugged out to the Solent towards the Isle of Wight in a zig zag pattern, passing the Napoleonic Forts therein. On the dot at 9pm the chicken and chips dinners were doled out from the miniature galley, which proved a break from the dancing.

All continued until about 11.45pm, when we staggered onto dry land and wended our weary way home. An excellent evening for all concerned, and roll on next year..

Adrian Partington Fareham 18+

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## Coming Soon



*Don't miss Slough Windsor and Eton's Riverboat trip from Maidenhead to Windsor, meeting 11am, Saturday 23rd August on Maidenhead Promenade. A 90 minute trip to Windsor, over 3 hours in Windsor, returning on the 15:45 boat to be back in Maidenhead for 17:15. Only £9!*



# Abingdon Water Fight

Once again the brave men and women of Southern Area, and some visitors got together in the precincts of Albert Park in Abingdon for their annual water fight. Since Albert Park has rather scant facilities all the water has to be brought in by the members and so recycling bins were raided to provide an ample supply of water. A substantial presence of supersoakers in many and various colours was to be seen, one member arrived with a very small water pistol, but was soon tooled up in a more appropriate manner. A safe area was set aside where spectators could sit and watch and the more active could return to reload.



Water cannons were loaded and the fight was underway. Most of the time the fight was just a general melee with no particular target. From time to time however someone would be selected to be the centre of attention and all cannons would be pointed one way, though this never lasted very long. Soon everyone was completely saturated but since the weather was so good they soon dried out - but not for long. This year, as last, people began to tire before the end of the water supply, so after sitting around for a chat for some time there we started to compare the various merits of the supersoakers by seeing how far they could reach up the column of the monument.

Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves this year, although the turnout was lower than it had been previously - possibly due to competing events in other areas. As usual the natives of Abingdon looked on bemused at these adults behaving in such a way - isn't eighteen plus great.



Story Stephen Crothers  
Photos Janice Crothers

# National Treasure Hunt

As I was the only Southern Area Member who turned up to the National Treasure Hunt, I thought that I would write a few words about it. The event was held on 28th June 2003, and I joined with a couple of members from Midlands area to form a team. There were about 16 teams and the teams varied in sizes from two to about six. We set of all at different teams and had to travel to various underground stations to get the clues to take us to a certain park. We managed to get certain clues but used a mobile phone for other clues. When we managed to find out what park we were supposed to be going to, we split up and two of us went to the park to try and find answer to the clues. We met up in at the end and arrived back of little late, so lost some points though that. It would have been nice to see more Southern Area members there, particularly as we are on the border of where it took place, and people had travelled down from the Northern Area. I would like to thank Ian Crawshaw for running the event and look forward to taking part in next year's event – hopefully with more Southern Area members taking part.

Story: Susan Jardine

## Competition

Guess who is in the photographs, entries by mail (electronic or otherwise) to the editor by 1st October, winner will receive a bottle of wine.



## Your Area Committee



**Chairman:** Tina Bunyan, 21 White Leys Close, DIDCOT, Oxon.  
OX11 7LP (m) 07760 448637, (h) 01235 810361  
tina.bunyan@btopenworld.com



**Administrator:** Susan Jardine, 80 Baker Road, Abingdon, Oxon.  
OX14 5LJ (h) 01235 539291  
sejard@yahoo.co.uk



**Treasurer:** Adrian Barnard, 21 White Leys Close, DIDCOT, Oxon.  
OX11 7LP (m) 07929 717381, (h) 01235 810361, (w) 01235  
464672. abarnard@jet.uk, adrian.barnard1@btinternet.com



**Publicity:** Paul West, 8 Saxon Court, Kingsway Gardens, Andover,  
Hants. SP10 4BU (h) 01264 394233 (m) 07932 832046  
email: paul@paulsflat.fsnet.co.uk



**Magazine:** Steve Crothers, 8 Coromandel, Abingdon, Oxon.  
OX14 5QG (h) 01235 203068 (m) 07799 044463  
stephen.crothers@ntlworld.com



**Assistant:** Leo Glover 10 Edgehill Close Basingstoke RG22 5AB  
(m) 07787 156465  
Email: leo.glover@btopenworld.com



*Vacancies exist for Activities, Development and Assistant posts,  
please speak to any committee member if you feel you can help*

## Cadbury World



The minibus, hired 3 months ahead was cancelled on only six hours notice because the company had forgotten about their insurance! Fortunately a company called TVR came up with the goods, after a ring round marathon. The minibus was picked up Friday and early Saturday fired up to run round the 16 pick ups. A number of plussers were photographed asleep, not the driver you'll be happy to hear! A reason

given was that 'Flight of the Valkaryie' was too quiet! evidently we have some heavy metal junkies out there Gary! To liven things up many renditions of 'Yogi' were tunefully recalled by an enthusiastic few. We were ably navigated and owe thanks to our forward recce unit Susan, informing us junction 2 M42 was now open easing our journey. Everybody assembled at Cadbury World apart from some from Banbury who had got lost, they appeared just in time as the ticket holders were disappearing through the door, 30 seconds later and they would have been on a two hour wait and repay.



The group was just too big (36) to hold together and we inevitably got separated out through the factory into our own little knots. Most groups met Leo though as he repeatedly circled round the freebie chocolate dish out points as a new visitee! The tour has improved a lot in the past five years, since last I attended. Steve bought a purple recorder for the journey home and had to be drowned out with 'Yogi' again, before the instrument was separated into its component parts for ease of storage (use your imagination here, it fitted better!)



The pub on the way back forgot to mention their car park is a pay and display, cars only. After the traffic jam getting there we couldn't all fit in and broke up to others including an Indian restaurant. Mobiles are a wonderful invention aren't they, when they're turned on, and in signal at any rate. We all got back to the bus within 10 minutes past the ticket time and departed.

You got home late? The driver got in at 04:05 Sunday Next trip Coronation Street. I'm told, hey I just work here!

*Story Adrian Barnard Photos Stephen Crothers*



# Pendon Museum

## Indoor Model Village and Railways

On Sunday 29th June, we had an enjoyable walk, 3 miles along paths beside fields of corn from Didcot to Long Wittenham. Lunch at The Plough was accompanied by live Morris Men music and a one-eyed cat, dead asleep on a table.

At Pendon Museum they have recaptured in detail and colourful miniature, scenes showing the beauty of the English countryside, as it was around 1930, also a large selection of trains, accurately represented. Pendon is created entirely by volunteer modellers. Models and exhibits have been under construction for over 40 years and work still continues today.

In the first exhibition gallery were a wide selection of photographs, portraying life during the Pendon period of the 20's/30's. Then the famous Madder Valley Railway, a layout built solely by the late John Ahern, in the late 1930's. It is an historical relic of the early days of scenic railway modelling, mainly fictitious, some based on real buildings and pioneered the idea of scenic craftsmanship, for until then no-one had set a model railway in a fully, developed landscape. It is preserved as a permanent display as tribute to the modeller's art.

Next, a separate exhibit, capturing the excitement of railways of this era, a stationary set and an imaginary Great Western branch line, from South Devon to Cornwall. The Dartmoor scene, shows a cavalcade of trains moving across Brunel Viaduct, is fully operational with several different sequences of trains, with full commentary from a member of staff.



After the railway show we thought that was all but were pleasantly surprised to find an upstairs as well. The Vale of White Horse landscape, a model of the countryside set in the 1930's is still under construction by volunteers. You can already see the village of Pendon Parva, Wiltshire and Berkshire canal and the Great Western railway from Pendon Parva to the West country and the midlands.

Most of the buildings are fully detailed internally, a feature which can only be appreciated when the museum lights are dimmed and the buildings lit from within. After looking at this superb model, there were a few displays of trains in cabinets and also some showing how things were made, like grass and trees. We then went down to their gift shop. A most enjoyable day, which I thought I would not enjoy, but I did very much and encourage you to go there too.

*Photos and Story - Tina Bunyan*

# Wyvern Gliding Club

I haven't been a member of 18+ for very long, only a few months, but things just seem to be getting better and better. We went to Wyvern Gliding Club near Andover and three of us had turns in a glider with an instructor, and everyone had an excellent day out. We had to wait a while for the instructors to arrive, but once they had things soon got under way. There were several gliders on the runway field as well as the one we used since it was a military air base.

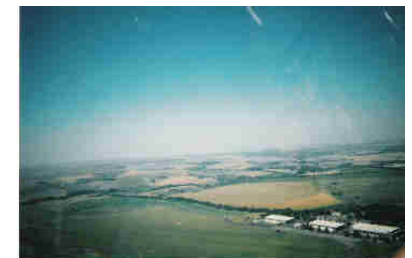


The trainee pilots all had to let us have a go first. After we were shown how to use a parachute and what to do in case of an emergency I was the first up. I felt excited and apprehensive both at the same time. My instructor told me what all the control dials meant, but I couldn't concentrate on all that, then we were on our way. Getting airborne was like going on a roller-coaster, lifting us up in the air very steeply and rapidly. Then whistling noises seared around us and my ears wouldn't



stop popping. I took a disposable camera with me and looked below us as all the land grew smaller and smaller the higher we climbed. I took photos as best as I could while we were buffeted around. I couldn't see the rest of my group, only the now tiny air base. The farming fields and the trees were the most beautiful things, and just like people say it did all look like a patchwork quilt.

We were up for about five minutes or so, but time literally flew having fun. Going back down was very sharp and swift, and landing was very quick and bumpy and I braced myself as we hit the ground. Later I had a second go, and we were up for quite a time longer. The instructor guided us into a 'thermal', which was a tight upward spiral of air so that we would climb even higher than we had the first time around. We went spinning round and round very quickly, to the right and to the left, and it wasn't long before I felt air sick. I told the instructor how I felt and we came back down very soon, everyone said that I looked as white as a sheet when I stepped out of the glider. It was a very hot scorching summer's day, and I hope to go there again when it is cooler. A wonderful experience, especially since I'd never left the ground before. Thank you 18+.



*Photos and Story Simon Long*