

ROMAN CANDLE 84.



The Journal of the Bearly Made It Skydive Squad. The International Brother and Sisterhood of Parachuting Fauna and the U.K. Ted Devils. As ever, still Banging on about the best bit of Kiting, wallowing in mindless drivel, being Politically incorrect and getting up more than a few noses, do we care? Nope.

Natural selection

Natural selection ? possibly, but nevertheless a truly SADTHOUGHT when you realise that the MERRYTHOUGHT Teddy Bear Co is no more.....

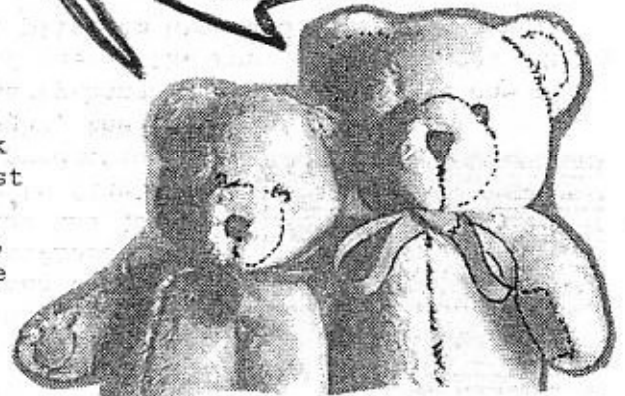
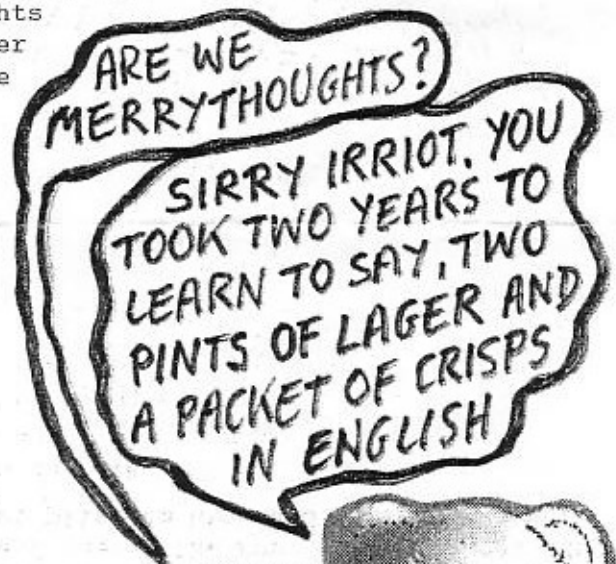
Founded some seventysix years ago in Coalbrookdale the Merrythought Toy company made a vast range of soft toys but in particular they specialised in high quality Teddy Bears which sold all around the world, all proudly bearing the imprint of Merrythought, Ironbridge, Shropshire, made in England.

Over the years Merrythoughts have been something of a collectors item and some of the earlier ones command high prices at auction, and dare we say it, most are a bit too posh to face the rough and tumble of Parachuting from kites. Needless to say there are quite a few of these posh bears stuffing the jolly old rags. So, you may ask, what caused the firm to finally hit the buffers? Ah, just the usual factors High production costs, Low volume compared to the far eastern onslaught, the usual things. Lets face it who wants to pay £30 for a Merrythought when you can get one at the local filling station for a couple of quid and theres the rub, its all about supply and demand. Hand made in England? who cares, just pile 'em high and sell 'em cheap.

Reputed to be the last Teddy Bear factory in the U.K. to produce a large volume of product Merrythoughts are just the latest in a long and seemingly never ending line of British firms who have bitten the dust in the face of cut throat competition. The factory is empty, 50 loyal workers are down the road to the dole office, so what happens now? Well, unless there is a rescue plan on the go, which in todays business climate is highly unlikely, except for the hiving off of the Brand name, thats it.

As it happens the Teddy Bear Shop and museum, run by the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust next door to the factory has a large stock of Merrythought Bears and it is hoped that it will trade for the foreseeable future, however the stock of genuine Merrythoughts will eventually dry up and they will become just another "HEY, DO YOU REMEMBER THEM?" item.

We have been informed that Deans of Rag Book fame still produce Teddy Bears in Wales, they must be the oldest maker by far, but it is sad when you think of Chad Valley, Farnells, Wendy Boston, Chiltern, HG Stone, Pedigree Soft Toys and all the other makers of Teddy Bears who are long gone but not really forgotten.



Where the wild things are

WELL, IF THEY AINT WILD AT THE MOMENT, THEY PRETTY SOON WILL BE.

Would you Adam and Eve it Teddy Bears and tennis rackets must fly in cargo class. It seems that Teds in particular have become the latest casualties in tightened security at Britains airports.

The new rules, imposed after the alleged attempts to blow up transatlantic aircraft recently has dramatically changed the rules governing what you can and what you cannot take into the cabin with you, though how large stuffed toys such as Teds can be any more or less dangerous when in the cabin or hold is not clear. Still its not only Teds in the firing line. Tennis rackets, fishing rods , stereos festive bottles of plonk ans spirits are also reckoned to be beyond the pale. Wait for it, it gets better, large bottles of perfume and bubble bath are also on the banned list, and if you really do want the security people to go Doolally, try getting abourd with a box of good Christmas crackers.



In your own words

S**T, I'M GONNA DIE INSTANTLY SPRINGS TO MIND WITH OTHER CHOICE INVECTIVE PHRASES

As you plunge towards earth at about 100mph with both your mainand emergency canopies only partially deployed, from about 15,000ft.

Michael Holmes did not die, he and the authorities are still trying to work out why. He was pretty banged up with a broken ankle an a punctured lung, plus numerous cuts and bruises after landing in a blackberry bush so thick that the fire brigade had to cut him free before the paramedics could get to him. Michael says he does'nt remember much apart from screaming S**T I'm gonna die and other choice phrases, until he saw a fireman. Chute experts think the tangled main and reserve canopies slowed michael's descent to about 90-100mph, but at that speed survival is a miracle. honorary BMISS membership? no way Pedro it was a flapper.

Funnily enough at about the same time as the Blackberry bush. it was reported that a Royal Marine on exercise at Studland Bay in Dorset suffered a partial deployment, which resulted in him falling some 4,000ft into the oggin. Again a survival, in a somewhat banged up condition. what was that about hitting water at speed is like hitting concrete?

One final question

WE KNOW THAT HUMES ARE A VERY WEIRD LOT, BUT WOULD ONE AND A WOMAN AT THAT STOOP TO MURDER BY PARACHHUTE SABOTAGE? SHE SAYS NO, BUT THE BELGIAN PROSECUTER SAYS YO!

Tragic Els van Doren freefell from 13,000ft holding the hand of the woman who it is alleged sabotaged her chute and the hand of their lover Marcel Simons. At an estimated 9,000ft on deployment, poor Els had a failure of the main and it was later found out that her reservewas bound up with strips of cloth, preventing deployment.

When the chute pack was examined, it was found that the ripcord had beencut. Who did it was the question and why. The Belgian public prosecutor thinks he has the answer for the third person in this mystery, one Els Clottemanns suddenly tried to commit suicide. Police had discovered that Marcel was having an affair with both women. All three were members of the Zwartberg Parchute Club near Ghent, and although Marcel tried to keep each woman ignorant of the other as you do, Clottemanns foundout and decided to do the ultimate something about it.

After a two month investigation Clottemanns was charged with murder and is at present awaiting trial in Hasselt prison weird or what?

If that was'nt weird enough, van Doren actually filmed her fatal fall with a helmetcam.

Once bitten...

24/3

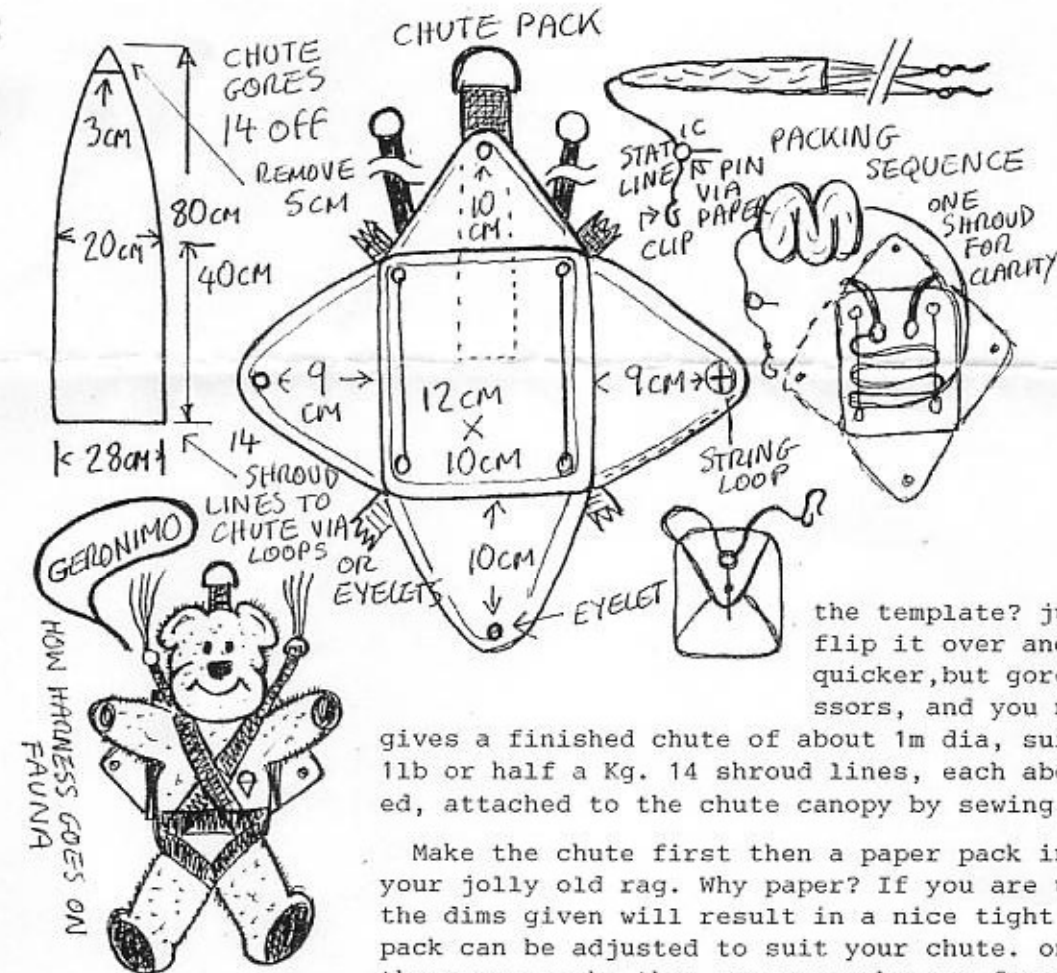
THOSE R.C. READERS WHO AS OF YET HAVE'NT GOTTEN INTO THE PARABOMBING OF FAUNA OF A SOFT CUDDLY TOY PERSUASION MULARKY, SHOULD BE AWARE THAT ONCE BITTEN, THEY WILL BE HOOKED FOR LIFE, WHICH IS BETTER THAN BEING PO-FACED FOR LIFE...PARACHUTING EASY O.K.

So, you've aquired a Teddy Bear by fair means or foul and the next thing you need is a Parachute and the assorted bits and pieces that go with it. The info here will give you a start. The best material to make the chute from is unproofed or loomstate Rip-stop, or failing that the lightest material you can find.

Remember there is no "correct" way to do this, whatever works for you is correct.

A template for the chute gores can be made from card, the curve being obtained by P/glass rod or even Mk 1. eyeball. How to equalise both sides of

the template? just make a half template flip it over and viola. Hot cutting is quicker, but gores can be cut with scissors, and you need 14 of these which



gives a finished chute of about 1m dia, suitable for a Ted of ab-11b or half a Kg. 14 shroud lines, each about 1m30cm will be needed, attached to the chute canopy by sewing, tape loops or eyelets.

Make the chute first then a paper pack into which you can stuff your jolly old rag. Why paper? If you are using unproofed ripstop the dims given will result in a nice tight pack. If not, a paper pack can be adjusted to suit your chute. once you're happy with the paper pack, then you can make one from whatever you fancy.

Three flaps of the pack have eyelets, whilst the fourth has a loop of say 100lb line sewn to it, which having been fed through the three eyelets, can via the static line pin be used to secure the closure of the pack. If you like, the cen- of the pack can be stiffened with a piece of wash up liquid bottle or whatever you have.

You could even put four eyelets in the pack stiffener and thread a bit of elastic through to secure the shroud lines, but this is not 100% essential. The Teds harness is made from what have you. folded ripstop works well. The Ted needs a suspension strap or tape, should be long enough to just come above his bonce. He also needs a couple of shoulder risers to attach the shroud lines to, also about head height, see sketch. A static line is also required, about 2 gore lengths, with a pack pin to secure pack and a clip to secure static line to kite line or dropper strongpoint(yes you will end up with one)

Packing chute looks complicated, but its not. Lay out chute with static line inside. Roughly fold to one gore shape, concertina and hold tightly. Concertina shrouds, whack the lot into the pack and with the other hand close the flaps, firkle the line loop thru the eylets and secure with static line pin. A couple of goes at this and you'll do it in yer Kip and the other half will quit saying was all that swearing necessary.

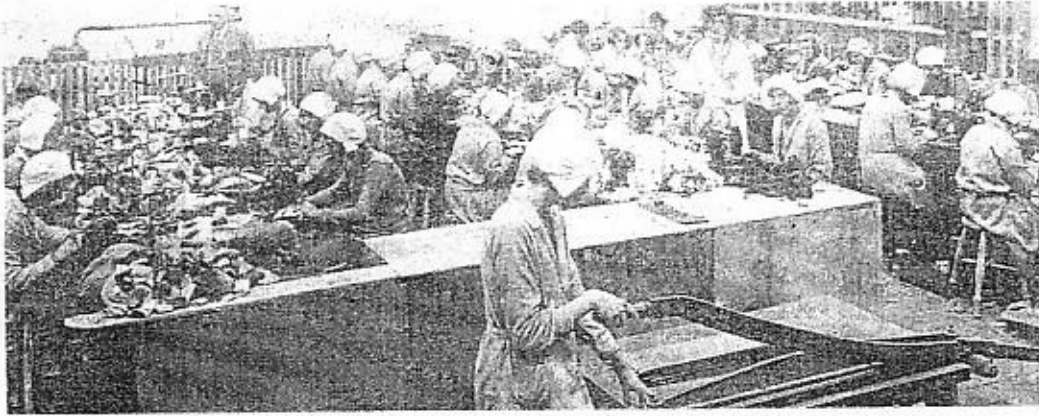
Loads a scope here for suck it and see, thats only half the fun. A pipecleaner is the easiest way to attach a bear to the Kiteline. Fix one end securely to the Kiteline a few feet down from the Kite. the free end goes thru the suspension strap and is loo- sly looped overline(experiment) Attach static line above secured end of pipecleaner. the delay in the pipecleaner letting go should enable you to long launch the Bear.

Remember, the idea is to have fun and if at first you dont succeed, do try again.

SADTHOUGHT

84/4

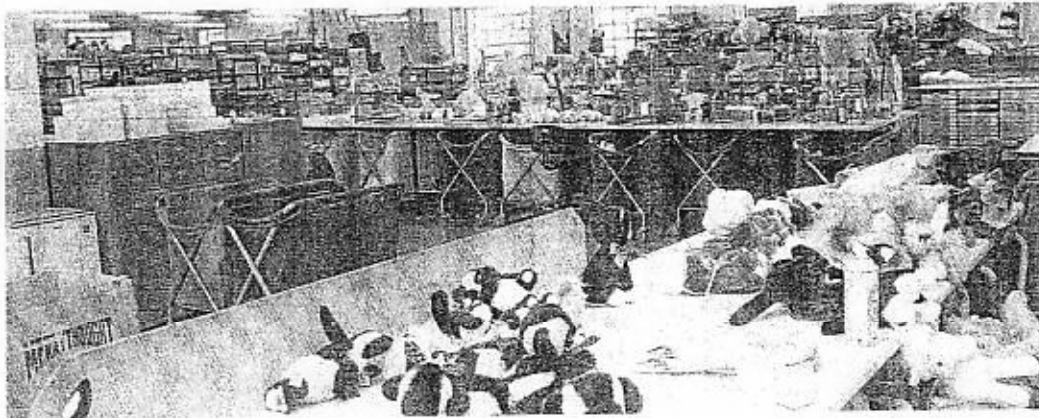
OR SADPICS PERHAPS... THEN, FULL SPEED AHEAD



ON THE TEDDY AND SOFT TOY PRODUCTION LINE....

NOW, ITS ALL QUIET ON THE MERRYTHOUGHT FRONT.

What a difference 76 years makes. Top Pic is sometime in the 1930's full order books, full complement of busy workers churning out hundreds of Teds and other soft toys. bottom Pic, Yes it really is the end of the line 2006. Nothing worse than seeing a little factory all quiet and lifeless.



It would have to be something in the miracle line if a rescue was to be mounted. no doubt the Merrythought name will survive, that must be worth a few bob, but given the current state of affairs in our Banana Republic.....

Desperate lives

YOU COULD HAVE ALMOST GARANTEED THIS WOULD HAPPEN, PERHAPS WE SHOULD BE ASKING "WHAT TOOK THEM SO LONG ?"

A couple of naughty BASE jumpers tricked their way into the new Wembley Stadium using fake ID's. The loonies on this nighttime jaunt intended to scale the 450ft landmark arch and jump from that, however they werethwarted,so they did the next best craziest thing and headed for the highest part of the main stand, and after lots of mugging to the obligatory video camera, they jumped off and landed safely on the pitch, where another video camera filmed them parodying the famous Kenneth Wostenholme commentary at the 1966 World Cup, "theres people on the pitch, they think its all over, it is now" The intrepid or perhaps daft duo were nabbed by the Plods who gave them a caution for using items in connection with a fraud, the hookey ID cards.

You could yawn and say so what,nothing new under the sun, but heres the intresting bit. the roof of the main stand is only 100ft high, yet these two nuts happily launched themselves off and got their chutesto deploy from that height. either they were bloody lucky or maybe BASE jumper canopy deployment has gorn meteoric.

Would you Adam and Eve it?



ITS FINALLY HAPPENED... THE BORING OLD FART IS NOW AN OFFICIAL BORING OLD FART..ALL TOGETHER,TELL US SUMFIN WE DID'NTKNOW.....

The BMISS HQ mob convened an extrodinary meeting at BOF towers to discuss the situation, Item 1 on the agenda, do we now refer to him as a GOG, A Geriatric old Git. Item2. or perhaps a BOB, a Boring old Barsteward. Item3, keep on referring to him as a, or the BOF, its more his style. A quick show of paws went for item 3, Yippee, its still the BORING OLD FART.

So as ever its the BOF at the Teddytorial, 48. Laurel Lane, West Drayton, UB7. 7TY in what will forever be ENGLAND no matter what the Traitors have planned.