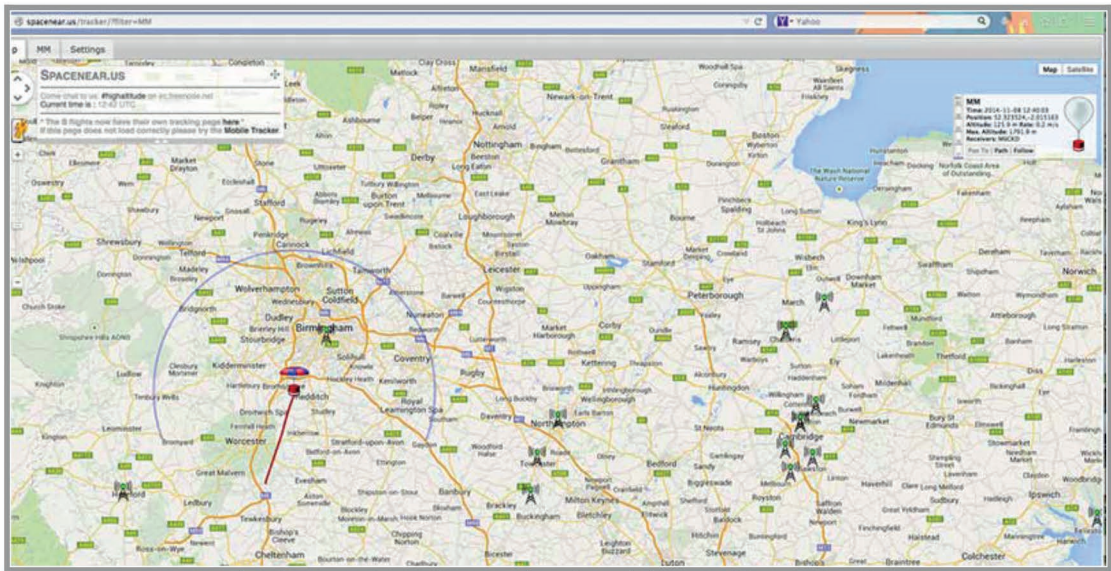


# HIGH ALTITUDE BALLOON FLIGHT - Saturday 8th November



Map showing on Left - Balloon track and on Right - Tracking Stations in spe

This was the first time Mark M6CKD had launched the balloon and it took place in the west of the country near Tewkesbury just after 11:40am.



Inflating

Although the previous day's forecast had indicated favourable winds which would have carried the balloon NE to the Lincolnshire coast, somewhere near Skegness, it turned out that on the day the projected path was NNE and the wind would take the balloon somewhere W of Sheffield. Nevertheless, the balloon was sent up and, as predicted, set off in a NNE direction.



Release

Unfortunately, the flight was not to be a long one. The balloon leaked hydrogen, which is a common problem, and after attaining an altitude of just 1.7km the descent began, terminating in a tree near Redditch at around 12:30.



The Reflector and Electronics Case

The balloon and associated equipment were successfully retrieved from the tree but not without some damage to the radar reflector which could not be repaired on the spot.

Since the primary purpose of the flight was to compare the balloon's GPS data with that from a ground based sensor for comparative analysis, further attempts that day were pointless and those who zoomed in on the spacenear.us map would have observed that the balloon (with transmitter still active and trackable) and its minders very sensibly retired to the nearest hostelry.

The map above shows the route taken by the balloon, the image being a screen capture taken from the website spacenear.us after the descent was complete.

On the rhs of the map can be seen the several stations around Cambridge which were poised to receive data from the balloon and, using the application DL-FLDigi, decode the RTTY and return the data via the internet to help update the tracking.



Descent - into a tree

However, the balloon failed to gain sufficient altitude to bring those receivers within range of the balloon transmitter so little meaningful decoding could be carried out.

Club members who participated in this and are shown on the map:

Ian 2EODDI Chatteris  
Colin G8TMV Sawston  
David G0LRD Fowlmere  
Dave G6KWA Haslingfield



UTC v. Altitude in meters