

December 2024 Newsletter

Please send any contributions, letters and comments to editor@glosterstrut.co.uk either directly or via the Contact Us web page.

Wishing all our Strut Members and families a very Happy Christmas and Blue Skies for 2025!



Chairmans Chat

I have to say, I don't remember a year passing so quickly as 2024 has done! Is it just me, or are we all feeling that way? Maybe it's a getting older thing, but it sure feels it was gone in a flash. Not one to be looking to the past, 2025 will offer up many opportunities for us all I'm sure, get making those plans!

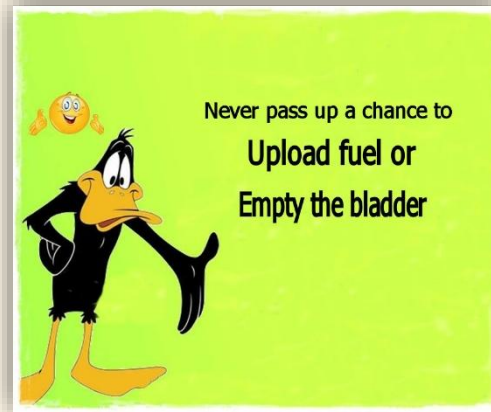
During a recent committee meeting of the Strut, we were discussing a variety of ways to elevate the profile of our activities, get the Strut name out there to a wider audience, especially being able to welcome a few new members from the younger generation by offering up some model building / flying at our BBQ events when we hold our ever popular evenings at Croft Farm airstrip. Free burgers and hot dogs will be the order of the day! Add in a few chuck gliders and build a model of your own should do the trick, so gather up the family and come along to these events if possible, more details will be published as we get nearer the time.

Back in 2023 the Strut was invited to participate in the Cheltenham Children's Day, a well organised day, held in the Imperial Gardens, it was devoted to a variety of games which proved to be a fun time for all concerned: model aircraft, bolt together plane tasks, colouring in pictures, it was a big success, so we hope to repeat that one with a team from the Strut organising the day with the local council. We would also like to extend invitations out to our local Air Cadets too, they, of course, already have an interest in all things aviation and an evening enjoying a Croft Farm experience has to be an attractive offer. As a Strut, we need to expand our horizons.

Wrap up, stay warm, happy and healthy – Merry Christmas to one and all.

Best – Mike

The Wit & Wisdom of Aviation



Helicopter pilots are different from airplane pilots. Airplane pilots are open, clear-eyed, buoyant extroverts. Helicopter pilots are brooders, introspective anticipators of trouble. They know if something bad has not happened, it is about to.

Qantas Engineering Reports

Alleged reports filed by Qantas Airline Pilots and the Engineering Responses - A short series.

Pilot: Test flight OK, except auto-land very rough.

Engineer: Auto-land not installed on this aircraft.

The last meeting

Phil Hall introduced us to what I believe is an entirely new aircraft concept: a combination of a canard configuration machine integrated with a quadcopter – **the Skyfly Technologies “AXE”**

The airframe sits normally for conventional take-offs and landings, but with the rotors fixed at 45 degrees to conventional vertical position, for vertical take-off the nose of the aircraft pitches up to 45 degrees so that the rotors are now horizontal, giving maximum thrust for vertical take-off. 2 combined motors on each pylon projecting from the tips of each of the fore and aft wings. Dr Bill Brooks, a long-established aeronautical engineer

and all round great bloke, is responsible for the design and led the early trials using radio-controlled models, the largest of which was 1/3 full size.

The lift rotors-cum-propellers are driven by pairs of 35 kw motors, the power for which comes from 16 Lithium-ion battery packs, currently mounted just ahead and behind of the central 2 place cockpit.

Rotor-borne flight control is achieved through electronic wizardry of the type used for the typical 4 rotor drones, for wing-borne flight a conventional-looking stick and rudder pedals are used.



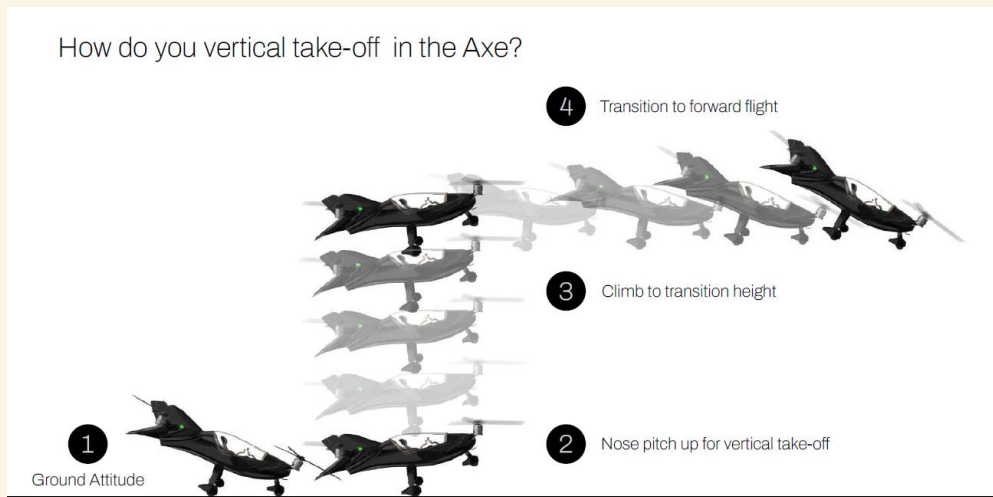
You won't be surprised to hear that much of Phil's talk was taken up with discussion of the bureaucratic obstacles the company has had to face, although Phil generously called the CAA 'partners' in the endeavour. He did, however, explain that the company found themselves negotiating with no less than 4 separate CAA divisions: Policy, Licensing, Airworthiness, and Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems, each of which seemed to operate in its own watertight compartment. One Catch 22 is that the aircraft cannot be fully tested because no rules for such machines exist!

The Company has, however, been allowed to fly tethered flights and hover taxiing, operating under e-conditions, where 'e' stands for experimental.

The current 2 seat manned version fits into an 8 metre square and has an empty weight of 246 kgs, and a MAUW of 690kg. The intended envelope, with a vertical take-off and landing, is to achieve a max speed of 100 mph (87knots) with an endurance of 1 hour.

The videos Phil showed demonstrated that the 1/3 sized model is capable of conventional flight with an exceptionally short take off run, and that the full sized 2-seater can currently air taxi with 'conventional-flight' testing to follow in the coming months.

Our thanks to Phil for a most interesting, enjoyable and mind-expanding Strut talk. We wish him and his AXE team every success.



In the News



For anyone who might be interested, there is an overnight trip to France planned, hopefully in December. Fiona and Angus, who regularly travel there, will give plenty of help to first timers. Let Fiona know soon! (fiona@fionam.com). (fiona@fionam.com).

We will be organising a skittles evening. All welcome, especially good quality male players as every year since records began, the ladies team have thrashed the men's team! Rumour of underhanded dealings, score fixing and men-knobbling cannot, of course, be substantiated.

Christmas Quiz

You will need to view the video on-line to join in!

Please send you answers to editor@glosterstrut.co.uk marking it Christmas Quiz. The winner will receive a bottle of finest wine at the Christmas meeting.

Closing Date for entries is Monday 9th December 2024

Please note that the video is speeded up for brevity - I did not land it or taxi that fast!

1. Name the aircraft in the opening scene.
2. Name the titles of the two pieces of music that play.
3. Bonus points for the artist on each.
4. Name the airfields featured in the video (five in all, three of them are photos and three of them are video – one of the photos also features in a video) Point for each.
5. What is the aircraft that the video is taken from.
6. Where is the estuary at 4 minutes.
7. Where is the mountain range at 4:15.
8. What are the small group of white rocks at 5:30 better known as.
9. What is the name of the tower and location that is seen at 5:45.
10. What is the name of the 'runway' at 5:50.

Hoses and the Permit Revalidation Process

This article, taken from the Devon Strut's newsletter, is reproduced by kind permission of their editor and the author, Trevor Reed to whom we are indebted and most grateful.

Inspector Matters Don't Ignore Warnings and Yet More on Revalidation.

This month I am talking about our reaction to warnings and a bit more on the ever-changing Permit revalidation process. Warnings I enjoyed my time at the Strut fly-in at Branscombe in September and while I was present, I received several comments from flyers on Inspector Matters. I welcome your comments (it shows some of you read this) so please keep them coming.

You will, of course, remember that I waffled on about hoses, this topic instigating most of the comments. A couple of owners told me that they had experienced a failure of a fuel hose without apparent warning. However, my cross examination of them elicited the admission that they had in fact earlier noticed a surface weep from the outer layer of one of the fuel hoses within the engine bay. BUT they had ignored the matter until, in each case, they had discovered a fuel puddle on the hangar floor on a subsequent visit to the aircraft hoping to fly!

So why am I telling you this story? Well, it is just to indicate the folly of ignoring little warnings that can easily develop into serious faults. And it is not just with hoses. That new note you notice from the engine in the cruise can indicate an impending problem with the exhaust system. Similarly, we would be unwise to disregard a flickering oil pressure reading before shutdown after flight. Just like a chest pain can be warning of a heart

attack, oil pressure fluctuations may be an indication of potential engine failure in flight. And it is not just the instruments that we should respect; use your other senses. An unusual sound, a vibration or even an odd smell should not be ignored. Just like the chest pains, these indications could save your life. You have been warned, so act!

Revalidation TL 2.00 The fine tuning of the new Permit to Fly revalidation process continues apace; it is difficult to keep up! LAA Technical Leaflet TL2.00, guidance notes for revalidation, has been updated to Issue 4, dated 6 Oct 23. LAA HQ seem to be following the accepted practice of highlighting the changes within documents by adding vertical lines in the left margin of the amended paragraph. Issue 4 now runs to 17 pages, including two appendices, and it has change indicators on 7 of them, showing that it is a significant review of the document. To be current you should read it for yourselves, but make sure, and this applies to all LAA documents, that you download the latest versions. I have underlined this as I have been caught out using earlier versions of forms from links that have not be updated. This is a weakness of the new LAA website and needs addressing asap.

While I have your attention (perhaps only for a few minutes more), I will take this opportunity of highlighting a few of the significant changes to TL 2.00. Appendix 1 contains notes on the Airworthiness Review Report (ARR-1). Although this form tends to be completed by your inspector (after all he has to put his signature on it!), he needs a lot of information to satisfy all the boxes. So, I suggest that you liaise with your inspector in good time to furnish him with the necessary data.

Appendix 1 also makes clear the need for a maintenance schedule for all Permit aircraft administered by LAA. While this is mandatory, Section 3 gives the owner and inspector several options. I suggest, yet again, that a good relationship with you inspector is vital.

LAA HQ has heaped more and more responsibility on the inspectors, passing the ultimate responsibility to a willing band. So, please help us as much as you can.

And finally..... Under the heading "Bringing Permits forward" in the News section (page 7) of the October issue of Light Aviation, I found a couple of snippets of good news in Jon Viner's column. The first explained how to bring forward your revalidation date, should you so wish, and how to receive a pro-rata refund. And the second confirming that "there is no longer a requirement for the annual maintenance activity to coincide with the ARR". This means that we can carry out the annual at a convenient time and revalidate the permit later. This, along with the changes to the air test requirements, makes the whole process more flexible. Well done, HQ Engineering. That's all for this month.

Cheers for now.

Downloads from the CAA and others

The Safety Directive from the CAA regarding the use of active carbon monoxide detectors comes into effect from 1 January 2025. Have a look at <https://www.caa.co.uk/publication/download/23096> (Safety Sense Leaflet 34) for more information.

For anyone who is thinking of flying to Barton Airfield (in particular) or has flown there in the past, probably knows about the Manchester Low Level Route. Recently, the CAA has announced that it will be replaced from 20 February 2025 by a Class G airspace Restricted Area.

Check out <https://www.caa.co.uk/commercial-industry/airspace/airspace-change/airspace-classification/airspace-classification-amendment-manchester-low-level-route/>

The intention is to increase safety navigating this narrow corridor by making it slightly higher and slightly wider. The maximum height is raised to 1500 feet (AMSL) (from 1300 feet) and widening by 0.65 Nautical Miles (from 4 Nautical Miles) along the Eastern (Manchester) side. Pilots will still need to do their homework on frequencies to use, squawks and so on of course.

Sky Demon, which of course everyone uses, has sent out its annual newsletter describing updates that have taken place over the last year or so. Prime amongst them are improvements to the mapping and a fun tool called 'Heat Map'. This can be used by individuals to see what their flying habits are. Briefly, the idea is that your flight logs are analysed and a map drawn showing where you fly. In my case, the 'hottest' spot is Gloucester Airport, not surprisingly, with tentacles stretching out to the West (Brecons), the South (Goodwood, Lee on Solent) and the Midlands area. Not really any surprises, but fun to look at.

AI seems to be the buzz phrase of the decade at the moment. Even the CAA are getting involved. If you are seriously bored, take a look at their Strategy Documents (<https://www.caa.co.uk/AI>) but don't expect to learn anything!

Gloucestershire Airport have recently released an Airport Advice Notice concerning Helicopter Procedures. If you think this affects you, check out AAN 24-1184 for more information.

Sales and Wants

Take a look at the Sales and Wants page of the website and grab yourself a bargain.

<http://glosterstrut.co.uk/sales.php>

The next meeting

The December 10th Strut meeting, 7.30pm start at The Victory Club is our Christmas meeting. Wine and Mince Pies will be served. A small charge of £2.50 per person will be levied to cover the costs, please bring the correct change.

David Joyce will be our speaker, the theme being his "Highs and Lows" brush with aviation. As a touring pilot of some note, David will have some interesting experiences to tell us about.

The quiz answers will also be given and the winners bottle of wine presented. What's not to get excited about?