

November 2024 Newsletter

The new revised Gloster Strut Newsletter

This month sees a new beginning with the Newsletter. After sterling work at the helm, John Cooper has decided to step down as Editor. I am sure you would all join me in thanking John for his excellent production work during his tenure. The new format will be online only and for a time, reminders will be emailed to all members but the hope is that checking the website will become a regular part of your lives. Not only will the newsletter change each month, but also the Sales and Wants page will be updated to reflect the latest items for sale or wanted. Other pages will be updated as needed, with new ones added as required. Remember, it's your Strut, your Website and your Newsletter so feel free to contribute, comment and suggest improvements or additions.

For those of you who are reading this using a smart phone or other similar small screen device, please be aware that the newsletter content will overflow the bottom of the screen. In order to keep reading, place your finger on the newsletter itself and scroll using that.

Best regards, Mick (Editor)

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

Chairmans Chat

It's always a little shock to the system when we turn the clocks back an hour, at least it is for me and it takes a couple of weeks to adjust and synchronise into the old routine again, but I'm not complaining as I enjoy the change of the seasons for a variety of reasons. Time to look back over 2024 of course, some good, some bad, some sad, but the big wheel keeps on turning and we are looking forward and already making plans for next year, get a few dates in the diary.

At this point, the activities of our Strut come up for discussion as we always try to deliver a full and interesting programme throughout the year, so suggestions from members always welcome of course and your input is greatly appreciated. Suggestions for speakers, stories for the newsletter and updates on your latest project, it all makes our world go round, so send it in for our monthly news.

The LAA held their AGM at Old Warden airfield (Shuttleworth Collection) in mid-October and a few of us made the trip up the A1 to attend. An excellent meeting with discussions

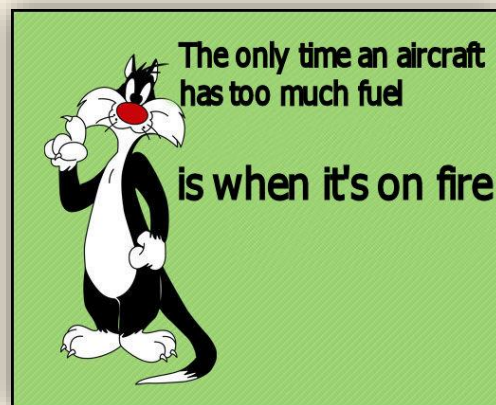
spreading across many topics, one of which was the unanimous appreciation of the LAA team and volunteers who made the LAA Rally such a success. Returning to Leicester after a gap of some forty odd years, it felt like getting back to the "good old days". Well organised and having a wide choice of food / catering outlets it made for a weekend to remember. Warm and sunny weather conditions added the bonus of course!

Another very relevant point for discussion was the ever increasing need to attract new members to the Association and Struts, our average age of members gradually rising year on year, so it is a reminder to all of us to be a bit more proactive in spreading the word to our younger generations. If ever we needed an injection of "healthy" hobbies for our kids, it's now! Your committee will be initiating a few ideas for 2025 in that direction.

Stay warm and don't forget to feed the birds!

Best – Mike

The Wit & Wisdom of Aviation



Qantas Engineering Reports

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

Pilot: Left inside main tyre almost needs replacement

Engineer: Almost replaced left inside main tyre

The last meeting

Tim Houlihan gave us a most interesting and enjoyable account of a recent flight that he and his son, in company with a fellow Europa owner and the latter's wife, had made to Venice. The story was well illustrated with slides of the route flown, airfields visited and the weather and stunning scenery encountered along the way.



Europa in Formation



Landing near Venice



European Skies

The first leg was to Dover via Popham where Tim and son Anthony were joined by a second Europa whose crew asked for the short crossing from Dover as opposed to Tim's more usual direct route. Their first night stop was at Macon, near Geneva. The party spent the next day and night in Macon before pressing on to Albenga for a night stop in Alissio. From Alissio they progressed to Venice, staying overnight at Venice Lido airfield.



The Planned Route

The next day took them on to Verona and another night stop before starting their return journey. From Verona they flew up to Bourg en Bresse, another night stop. Then it was Le Touquet via Sezanne. After a further night in Le Touquet it was time to brave the Channel crossing again.

In short, it was a major undertaking and Tim is to be admired and congratulated on leading such an expedition.

In the News



Remembrance Sunday

Gloucestershire Airport for Sale

Fancy buying yourself an airport? Unless you have just come out of hibernation, you can't have failed to notice that Gloucestershire (nee Staverton) Airport is for sale. The current owners: Gloucester and Cheltenham Councils (they own 50% each) have put the airport on the market. There is plenty of speculation regarding its future and it not the intention of this forum to comment one way or the other, save to say that we all hope it continues to be a working profitable airport for many years to come. Just £25 million is the asking price. Our Chairman will be having a whip round at the next meeting - bring your wallets!

For more information, check out <https://flyer.co.uk/gloucestershire-airport-for-sale>

A Grand day out

Climbing Cliffe Hill

Which has what to do with aviation? Fine question.

My two great outdoor loves are flying and climbing hills and mountains. Imagine my joy when I discovered there are quite a few hills within walking or cycling range of airfields. That, of course, may come as no surprise to many of you, but these are no ordinary hills and mountains, they are Marilyn's! Without boring you too much, a Marilyn is a hill or mountain of any height, but must have at least 150m of prominence. There are, in fact 334 of these in England and Wales and my ambition is to climb them all. It's a work in progress but to date I have climbed just over 200.

I've wanted to visit Shoreham for a while, having never been there, and whilst looking at its location I realised that Cliffe Hill, a Marilyn of just 164m was reasonably close. A plan was devised; fly down to Shoreham, cycle into Brighton (8 miles), catch the train from Brighton to Lewes, then cycle as close to the summit of the hill as I could and walk the rest.

Shoreham airfield has an offer of a reduced landing fee if one arrives before 10:30am and uplifts at least 20 litres of fuel. Flying a Europa which has a 65 litre tank I am often frustrated by 'free landing' offers that require 50+ litres to be uplifted. I am not brave enough to enter a circuit with 10 litres of fuel remaining! At least, not intentionally.

I arrived early at Gloucester, prepped the plane and was taxiing out to Alpha Two by 09:05. It was a glorious day for flying. My route took me over Swindon, by which time I'd gained a Basic service from Brize Norton. They kept me until around Newbury where I changed to Farnborough, already able to see the coast. Over Petersfield I changed again, this time to Shoreham Approach to listen in for runway and other information. As I got within about 10 miles I called them up. 'Can you confirm you have information papa' came the reply. 'No I can't' I replied. I hadn't realised they had an ATIS and expected me to use it. I quickly dialled in the frequency but got no response. Maybe I had the wrong frequency, try again, ATC confirmed it was the correct frequency but still nothing. I called them again, explaining the situation, by now I'd put the plane into an orbit otherwise I would have been overhead. Finally they gave me the details I needed: Runway, direction and expected approach - left hand downwind for runway 02, the tarmac runway.

The approach is wonderful, downwind and out over the water to turn Base, then onto Final. I was desperate to make a good landing to dispel any thoughts they might have that they were dealing with a muppet and sure enough, after one hour and ten minutes, I made

a smooth gentle landing. I was ordered to taxi to the end, then follow taxiway Kilo to parking. That in itself is a journey but eventually I parked.

Having reached my bladder limit I was keen to use the Gentlemen's convenience, but could I get into the building? All doors were locked and the cafe was the other side of a fence. I wandered around to no avail and finally gave up, vaulted the fence and went in through the cafe. A waitress scolded me but I told her I had no choice and speed was of the essence!

Having dealt with the pressing matter I sought someone out who suggested I leave by the main entrance, turn right and find the gate which would give me access to the apron. Duly done, it emerges to the right of the 'C' building as you would face it from the apron. Good to know.

I lifted my Brompton out, unfolded it, packed my saddlebag and set off for Brighton. It is a lovely ride along the seafront and I enjoyed it immensely. Arriving at Brighton station I had a 15 minute wait for the train, which took a further 15 minutes or so to Lewes. I'd discovered that I could cycle up to the golf course which I did, although the road is extremely steep, and I arrived breathless at the top. Locking my bike to a post, I set off for the summit. It is a very pleasant walk following a public footpath that cuts through the golf course, so wits about me for flying golf balls I made my way up to the trig point. It is well worth it, with excellent views.

The return journey was a reverse of that and lunch was had at a seafront cafe in Brighton before the final ride back to the airfield where coffee and a gingerbread man were irresistible.

Shoreham hadn't finished with me yet. I needed fuel anyway, but especially for the cheap deal so contacted the tower who instructed me to taxi to the pumps. Fuel uplifted I was told that was that and all was good.

I jumped back in, got taxi permission and set off, this time to runway 20, but along the same long taxiway I'd arrived on. As I declared 'Ready for Departure' I was told that I needed to settle my fuel bill first! Protestations that I'd been told it was sorted was to no avail so I taxied along the runway, off at the far end and back to parking. Into the payment building I, of course, enquired as to the problem, having been told all was good. Apparently 'all was good' is Sussex speak for 'now you can go and pay for it all', not as I assumed meant I could leave and would be invoiced or pay on line.

Finally off for real, my return journey took me a scenic route over Selsey Bill, the Isle of Wight, followed by the Solent, where of course, my engine noise changed, as all engines do when they are over water! Swanage followed, and avoiding both the danger zones on the coast to the port side and the Bournemouth CTA to the starboard, I navigated through the gap, over Corfe Castle and then more or less due North all the way back to Gloucester.

There was a haze to the late afternoon sky. I began to worry that I might have overstayed my welcome and I'd have cloud issues to deal with, but it all came to nothing and by Compton Abbas it had cleared completely and I had a fine flight back to Gloucester, landing one hour and fifteen minutes after take-off.

Two excellent flights, one Marilyn and a couple of bicycle rides, all in October sunshine. Now that's what I call a fine day out.

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 Nov 12th Strut meeting, 7.30pm start at The Victory Club has Phil Hall as our speaker with his latest project, a design for the future, electric powered two seater with vertical take-off capability, an exciting design! Try not to miss this one.