

August 2025 Newsletter

Welcome to The Gloster Strut Newsletter. We hope you enjoy reading it. Please send any contributions, letters and comments to editor@glosterstrut.co.uk directly.

Photo of the Month

The Harvard 4 G-BJST, Wacky Wabbit. Picture taken from a Chipmunk over the Cotswold Water Park 2 May.



Chairmans Chat

No doubt the majority of LAA members are aware of the BIG "O" in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, USA this week (21–27th July). It has been a must visit in most pilot's plans as a not to miss event. We have had several speakers over the years who have given a Strut talk detailing the range of attractions and all the fun of the fair, to say it's a busy week is an understatement!!!

A lesser known Fly-In is held annually during the preceding week at Brodhead, WI, some 100 miles south of Oshkosh, run by the local CHAPTER 431, it attracts Pietenpols and Hatz aircraft from across the USA. Having spent the last few years building my own Piet, I had been encouraged to make the trip by fellow builders, I was not disappointed! Brodhead also houses the Kelch Museum, a fine collection of early American biplanes, mostly powered by big radial engines, Travel Airs / Fleets / Stearmans, all beautifully restored of course. Vintage vehicles and motorcycles complemented the aviation list. The volunteers running the museum were most welcoming and enthusiastic to give us the tour. I was particularly impressed by the efforts they made to encourage their younger visitors to get involved, the "Rocket Range" proved a popular attraction.

Keith was one of the Travel Air "Barnstormer" pilots, based in Chino, from what I understood, he was in the business of selling rides and we were invited to fly out to another fly in that evening with another five aircraft, I had no idea of this event or what it

entailed. "Go get strapped in Mike, we'll be off in five minutes". All six aircraft rumbled into life and taxied out to line up facing east, power on and we were off! All line astern we flew a short cross country and landed in a huge hay field, Model T Fords lined up the edge of the area, we had landed into an Amish community. The family had walked down from the farmhouse to greet us, three generations, ladies dressed in their traditional long robes and the father in his tall straw hat, we were transported back in time, the old aircraft, model T's and the Amish people making the scene. I will not forget it!!

The Brodhead Chapter had pulled out all the stops to deliver a very enjoyable week, thanks guys!! We enjoyed every minute, met a lot of new friends and learnt a lot from the experts.

Our next Strut event will be on August 12th at Croft Farm / start 6pm. A diversion from our usual BBQ as a "bring your own picnic" is planned, I am planning for an aircraft / show and tell to entertain the crowd of course. I am on holiday in Holland with the family on the date, so enjoy.

Happy Landings - Mike

The last meeting



We had 2 good turn outs for the last meeting:

Between 5 and 6 pm we entertained a group of youngsters who thoroughly enjoyed flying some chuck gliders provided by Mike Waldron and Arthur Mason – enjoyed almost as much as they enjoyed Mike's hamburgers and jelly!

From 6 onwards we had a good turn-out of Strut members plus a couple of guests, one of whom –

Jeffrey Worth – is our latest new member. Welcome Jeff.

Both groups were delighted to see 4 interesting visiting aircraft: the Macaskills' Jabiru; 2 Pietenpols and a Currie Wot.

Mike Waldron once again worked his magic at the BBQ machine and had also whipped up a magnificent Eton Mess for dessert.

The weather was kind and we enjoyed a perfect Strut evening, ending with a stream take off and a singleton flypast. In short, a great time was had by one and all.

The Wit & Wisdom of Aviation

Qantas Engineering Reports

Alleged reports filed by Qantas Airline Pilots and the Engineering Responses.

Pilot: Number 3 engine missing.

Engineer: Engine found on right wing after brief search.



Quote of the Month

Single seater aeroplanes were invented as a way of only terrifying one person at a time.

The Hunt for a Thunder Chicken – by Noel Baker

In 1957, just turned 19, I flew to Canada – where I ‘adventured’ for 7 years. Along the way I had a relationship with a university student and met her father, Bob Mullin, on one occasion.

I remember him as not a happy man and was told he lived in the shadow of an unfortunate flying experience - for which he felt responsible.

Subsequently I used the internet to track down what had occurred, and discovered his role in one of the most concentrated searches for an aircraft lost in Northern Canada, The event was known as ‘Operation Chimo’.

On August 25th 1953, Mullin, an ex-R.C.A.F. pilot with over 4,000 hours flying experience, 500 of them on float planes, was asked to fly a Noorduyn Norseman from Roberval, 148 miles north of Quebec City, to Chimo, also in Quebec Province; a flight of 600 miles over the vast expanse of rock, forests, marshy ground and lakes that make up most of Quebec Province, an area 7 times the size of Britain.

The Norseman, manufactured by Noorduyn Aviation Ltd., Montreal, Canada, was a 10-place, single-engine utility transport. First flown in 1935. The Norseman, affectionately known as the ‘Thunder Chicken’, was designed for rugged Canadian bush country operations; it could be equipped with wheels, floats or skis.



After service testing 762 Norseman were produced for the American Air Force before the war ended. Noorduynd produced the last Norseman in late 1959. It was in a United States Airforce Norseman that Glen Miller was lost over the English Channel in 1944.

After delivering his payload of freight and 5 passengers to Fort Chimo, situated on Ungava Bay, Mullin was to return to Roberval the following day.

As Canada required in the 1950s, Mullin was accompanied by Mechanic Richard Everitt. The Norseman, a plane I was used to seeing when in Northern Canada, was a reliable work horse, effectively a flying 'Transit'. Fully fuelled the Norseman could stay aloft for almost six hours. On this leg of the trip Mullin expected to complete the northward flight in three hours.

The flight progressed well as Mullin flew North, unfolding maps, adjusting gyrocompasses and broadcasting regular position reports. After landing at an uninhabited lake to hand-pump fuel from a pre-positioned cache he set out for Fort Chimo.

That evening, in Chimo, a Consolidated Catalina pilot asked Mullin to take five passengers back to Roberval.

In the morning, the Norseman lifted off and turned south. Initially the flight was without incident.

Soon, Mullin related, "We were encountering higher velocity winds and appeared to be making less progress. Nevertheless, as far as the fuel consumption was concerned, I was satisfied in my own mind that Nitchequon could be reached." Mullin pressed on.

However the strong winds forced the Norseman to drift from its intended heading. Flying at low altitude through turbulence kept Mullin busy, especially in the unstable, non-autopilot - equipped machine, his hands dancing between fuel tank selectors. The fabric-covered fuselage and headsets couldn't suppress the constant engine noise, and the stench of overfilled airsickness bags made the air uncomfortable.

With just 600-800ft ground clearance, Mullin concentrated on contacting Nitchequon's radio while Everitt took the controls. Unable to pinpoint their location, he finally admitted they were lost. To conserve fuel, Mullin chose to land on a lake and assess the situation.

Finding a suitable spot he disembarked the crew and passengers to stretch their legs on the conifer-covered shore.

They had been airborne for more than four hours. Apart from the passenger travelling to seek medical attention, they were all in good health.

Somewhat relieved, Mullin and Everitt knew Mont Laurier aircraft often traversed the same route to Fort Chimo. Their only option was to wait for help at what they facetiously named 'Chateau Aurora'.

Look out for Part 2 in the September issue.

Dates for your diary

03/08/2025 Lundy Fly In

Lundy Sunday Fly In. PPR required

29/08/2025 LAA Rally

Leicester. 29-31st. Slots bookable.

Downloads from the CAA and others

Insight

The May edition of AIRPROX INSIGHT looks at an Airprox between a Robinson R44 helicopter and a Beech 33 just outside the Biggin Hill ATZ. The article discusses the importance of contingency ('what-if') planning before flight, including planning tracks to give enough room to manoeuvre should another aircraft be encountered in close proximity. It also discusses the impact that weather can have on the plan, offers advice on communications considerations when transiting close to an ATZ or controlled airspace, and provides practical clarification on the 'overtaking rule'.

<https://www.airproxboard.org.uk/media/rrrndzpt/may-2025.pdf>

CAA Stuff

Cost Sharing - Changes Coming into Force 1 October

Amendments to the Air Operations Regulations (Regulation No 965/2012), have now been made via Statutory Instrument. This confirms the previously announced changes to Cost Sharing rules which will come into force on the 1 of October.

Details of changes can be found here:

<https://www.caa.co.uk/general-aviation/aircraft-ownership-and-maintenance/cost-sharing-flights/>

Additional guidance will be issued on this webpage Cost sharing flights | UK Civil Aviation Authority, closer to the coming into force date.

Light Aircraft Pilot Licence (A) licences no longer being issued after 1st October 2025

As part of the Licensing and Training Simplification Project, UK CAA will no longer be issuing LAPL(A) after 1st October 2025.

Students currently training for the LAPL(A) will have until the 16th September to submit their application for licence issue, in order to guarantee having their LAPL(A) issued prior to the deadline.

Any applications received after this date will not be guaranteed to have a UK LAPL(A) issued. Students who have trained for the LAPL(A) and have their licence issued after 1st October 2025, will be issued with an NPPL(A).

Further information can be found here:

<https://www.caa.co.uk/general-aviation/pilot-licences/aeroplanes/light-aircraft-pilot-licence-for-aeroplanes/>

New combined licence document for Flight Crew licence holders

Following the completion of Phase 2 of the Licensing and Training Simplification project, the UK CAA are now offering a new combined licence.

The new combined licence allows both Part-21 and Non Part-21 aircraft ratings to be endorsed onto a single licence document.

Due to system constraints, this new combined licence is NOT available for customers who use our e-Licensing platform.

More information can be found here:

<https://www.caa.co.uk/general-aviation/pilot-licences/combined-licences/>

New Safety Sense Leaflet on Pilot Health and Performance

We have released a new Safety Sense Leaflet containing guidance on Pilot Health and Performance, including the considerations pilots must make before flight. This leaflet includes guidance on the health risks associated with flying and how to stay healthy as a pilot.

https://www.caa.co.uk/our-work/publications/documents/content/safety-sense-leaflet-24/?mc_cid=76d5f86bdb&mc_eid=99deeb3b8b

CHIRP Air Transport FEEDBACK Edition 155

In CHIRP Air Transport FEEDBACK (<https://chirp.co.uk/aviation/safety-resources/air-transport/>) edition 155 we begin with editorials on safety culture, and engineering training. We feature an article on lessons learned about aviation the hard way, and a first for ATFB, an article on airport security and how it can adversely impact crews before flight. We have confidential reports on a rushed landing, fatigue in engineering, what happened when a crew member reported in not fit to fly, flight crew refuelling operations and more.

Gloucestershire Airport

The press release from Gloucestershire Airport:

Horizon Aero Group Ltd have been named as the company set to take Gloucestershire Airport to new heights and lead it into an exciting new chapter, unlocking opportunities for growth and investment. The company is a joint venture between Vayu Aviation Services Ltd (UK) and Vensa Infrastructure Ltd (India).

The type of service you can expect from Gloucester

Do you know what service you will receive at Gloucester?

Basic Service	Procedural Service
A Basic Service is an ATS provided for the purpose of giving advice and information useful for the safe and efficient conduct of flights. This may include weather information, changes of serviceability of facilities, conditions at aerodromes, general airspace activity information, and any other information likely to affect safety. The avoidance of other traffic is solely the pilot's responsibility. Basic Service relies on the pilot avoiding other traffic, unaided by ATCOs. It is essential that a pilot receiving this ATS remains alert to the fact that, unlike a Traffic Service and a Deconfliction Service, the provider of a Basic Service is not required to monitor the flight.	A Procedural Service is an ATS where, in addition to the provisions of a Basic Service, the controller provides restrictions, instructions, and approach clearances, which if complied with, shall achieve deconfliction minima against other aircraft participating in the Procedural Service. Pilots in receipt of a Procedural Service should be aware of the high likelihood of encountering conflicting traffic without warnings being provided by ATC. Pilots flying in the vicinity of aerodromes, ATS routes, or navigational aids where it is known that a Procedural Service is provided, are strongly encouraged to attempt to establish RTF contact with the notified ATS provider.

You will NOT receive a radar service



Return to normality (almost) - from Jason Ivey, Managing Director

Dear Partners and Stakeholders

I am pleased to share the positive news that Gloucestershire Airport has now returned to normal operational oversight following the formal lifting of both "On Notice" and "Special Attention" measures by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

This marks the successful conclusion of an extensive period of regulatory oversight that began in July 2023, following a CAA audit of our Air Traffic Control (ATC) services. The audit identified several critical areas for improvement relating to equipment, procedures, and management processes. In response, we acted decisively with a detailed and robust corrective action plan that has since been recognised and endorsed by the CAA.

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our teams, the support of our board, and the invaluable collaboration with both internal and external partners, we have delivered:

- A complete upgrade of ATC equipment and infrastructure (due for completion at the end of this year)
- A restructuring of senior management
- A thorough review and overhaul of operational and change management procedures
- A strengthened recruitment and training program to build long-term resilience

This collective effort has not only returned the airport to compliance but positioned us for a more efficient and sustainable future.

As our partners and stakeholders, we recognise that this journey has required trust, patience, and continued collaboration — and we thank you sincerely for all of the above. Your support has been instrumental in helping us reach this important milestone.

While we are pleased to be operating once again under standard oversight, we also want to acknowledge that the journey is not yet complete. Traffic calming measures remain in place as we continue to manage operational demand carefully and safely. These measures are being regularly reviewed, and we are actively working to enhance capacity, improve systems, and strengthen our service delivery across all areas.

Operationally, this return to standard oversight means our focus can now shift fully to continuous improvement, service delivery, and the completion of our wider infrastructure upgrades due by the end of 2025. Importantly, it also supports our position as we enter the final stages of due diligence for the sale of the airport — a key step in our long-term strategy for growth and development.

We look forward to continuing to work closely with you, and to building an even stronger future for Gloucestershire Airport.



Mick Peakmans' Europa holding up the Spitfire and Hurricane, waiting to go to RIAT

My Europa adventures

It was another brave plan, fly down to Shoreham, and via train, bicycle and foot I would climb the remaining two Marilyn Hills on the South Downs Way; Wilmington Hill (214m) and Ditchling Beacon (248m).

Shoreham, otherwise known as Brighton City Airport, is the oldest licensed airport in the UK with the first flights taking place as early as 1910 and is also the oldest purpose-built commercial airport in the world. Walking into the main reception area, it certainly feels old. It is, however, a joy to fly to.

I left Gloucester at 9:15am keen to get to Shoreham before 10:30 to take advantage of their £12 off deal. Arrive before 10:30 and uplift 20 litres of fuel is the requirement. I managed both with ease. I often feel frustrated at airfields that offer free landing with 50 litres of fuel as my aircrafts fuel tank is just 65 litres, so would be pretty close to the limits.

It was a smooth flight, using a very quiet Brize Radar, then switching to a slightly busier Farnborough before dialling in Shoreham with about 25 miles to run. A standard overhead join onto 02 was nice, flying out over the sea onto final. The huge runway made landing a breeze even though I floated a little further than expected it wasn't a problem as the taxiway was at the end of the runway. I was guided to parking via the fuel pumps by a very helpful ATC

Parked up, I got my bike out and secured the plane, adding my home-made rudder lock (a piece of pipe lagging), and stick inhibitor (safety belt around the stick), then put the cover on as the inside of the Europa can reach furnace levels if left in the sun. That done, I cycled to the railway station in around 15 minutes and via Brighton, arrived at Berwick

station just over an hour later. Another 15 minutes later I parked my bike in Wilmington village, swapped saddlebag for rucksac and headed off up the obvious hill in front of me.



No sooner had I left the car park than I was greeted by the sight of a huge chalk man drawn on the hillside by some early settlers. The path up was obvious and very steep eventually relenting onto the summit ridge. It was just a few minutes up to the trig point which was on the right of the fence heading up. It is important to go

through one of the two gates, otherwise a barbed wire fence needs to be negotiated.

I spent just a few minutes there as I didn't want to miss my train, since the next one was another hour later and would ruin any chances of success.

Descent was fast and I was back at the bike just 40 minutes after leaving. Another 15 minutes and I was back at the station with 25 minutes to spare.

From there, another two trains bought me to Plumpton where the big ride began. It was 9km to the summit of Ditchling Beacon, and after a few kilometres of undulating roads, I began the big climb up to the beacon. Finally at the top I pulled in to the NT car park and padlocked my bike to a fence. It was just five minutes' walk to the summit!



Once back at the car park, I took advantage of the ice cream seller and enjoyed the view for a while. I also noticed that Ditchling Beacon had a flying connection, having been given to the National Trust by Sir Stephen Demetriadi on memory of his flying office son who had been killed during World War 2 at the far too young age of 21.

Off again, this time mostly downhill all the way into Brighton and the railway station, arriving with just 10 minutes to spare. I caught the 15:58 back to Shoreham and cycled the 15 minutes or so to the airfield. As usual for this part of the world, it seems, the wind had picked up and of course it was a head wind. Most likely, I thought to myself, I'll be taking off on runway 20 which is fine by me, heading out to sea before turning along the coast towards Worthing.

I had time for a coffee and spent it checking my return route. I figured I'd use Farnborough Radar as far as I could, then go directly Gloucester as Brize Radar would be closed by the time I got into their range at around 18:00.

Shoreham provided a first class basic service, warning me of several other aircraft in my vicinity, until I was around ten miles from the airport when I said my 'goodbyes' and changed frequencies to Farnborough who I stayed with until Hungerford. Gloucester wasn't quite in range, I could hear a few pilots calling in but not the ATC replies and in fact it was not until 15 miles away that I could pick up the ATIS.

There was quite a head wind on the way back, but I got a left-base join onto 27 and touched down at the appointed hour of 18:30, then taxied back to my parking at Weston Aviation. An excellent day out, the weather had been very kind, the trains all ran on time and my cycling and walking estimates were spot on.

Back at home, the CFO was just putting the final touches to dinner. My contribution was to open a bottle of lager and collapse onto the sofa.

The next meeting

The August Strut meeting will be held on Tuesday 12th August at Croft Farm, Defford. It will be the final outdoor meeting of the year before we head back to the Victory Club.

For the final event, it will be a 'bring your own' picnic. Weather permitting, we hope to have some interesting aircraft arriving and a speaker. No need to book of course so if you want to come, turn up around 6:00pm, but be sure to bring tables and chairs, food and drink or whatever you need. We can promise you an interesting and entertaining evening.