

January 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.

Wishing all our Strut Members and families a very Happy New Year for 2025!

Photo of the Month

Taken by our very own Reverend Noel Baker, the Nighthawk 117 at RIAT 1977 from the Chaplins POV.



Chairmans Chat

I'll start off by wishing you all a very happy and healthy New Year and hope that you have already started out activating the well-meant list of the New Year resolutions. I should imagine this is the busiest time of the year to buy all those bits of kit to help you lose weight and get into shape. Exercise bikes, rowing machines and new diets being top of the list, all well-meant at the time of course, but difficult to stick to the new regime, it's hard work!! I can imagine EBAY ads in February, FOR SALE - Little used exercise bike, one careful owner, low milage.

Big congrats to those who get results though!!

I have a solution for you however, a life changing decision that will set you off in a different direction, should you wish to do so of course! Why not make 2025 the year you build a simple aeroplane of your own, maybe you have had it in the back of your mind for a few years having built model aircraft as a kid, just scale it up a bit, the build techniques are the very much the same as the old Keil Kraft kit which were so popular in the day, in many ways the process is easier in that the parts are bigger. The skills required not being beyond the capacity of your average DIY enthusiast, basic tools for sawing wood parts, sanding and drilling don't require a heavy financial injection either.

A wealth of information is readily available to help you along the way, this arrives in the form of a series of "how to" books and magazine articles, I suggest the Tony Bingelis series is a great starting point.

Simple explanations and well-illustrated diagrams keep you on the straight and narrow, of course you gain confidence as you progress.

Our Gloster Strut has a wealth of experts willing to share their knowledge, gained from years of experience, they are well placed to help you along the way.

You may consider that the task of building an aeroplane to be a monumental task, but so much better than sitting in the pub scratching your backside. It is a very rewarding experience to admire your handiwork at the end of your workshop session, "well done me" kind of feeling. Make some sawdust my friend, you will love it!!

All the best for 2025 – Mike

The Wit & Wisdom of Aviation



Never fly the 'A' model of anything.

Qantas Engineering Reports

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

Pilot: *Something loose in cockpit.*

Engineer: *Something tightened in cockpit.*

The last meeting

The Highs and Lows of my Love Affair with Aviation by Dr David Joyce

Like so many LAA members, David's love affair began when as a boy he found himself living close to an airfield, in his case Rougham, the base of a squadron of US Army Air Force B-17 Flying Fortresses. Aeromodelling naturally followed and he thought himself destined for a career in aviation until human nature stepped in in the form of starched-aproned nurses with warm hearts and smiling faces, and he was led astray into the world of medicine. But the aviation bug had embedded itself somewhere in his psyche and he later took up gliding and power flying. On retirement he set about building a Europa – a three year task - leading to many flying adventures.



G-XSDJ has seen a wide variety of scenery, from the rugged coasts of Ireland to the chilly wastes of the Arctic Circle, the heat of a Spanish summer and the balm of Venice and the Canaries. It has also taken David to the gloom of the former East Germany and the delights of the Black Sea. A full listing of its many ports of call would make this an extra-large newsletter but there's more to tell.



David had grand plans to fly his lovely machine all the way to Australia but when his son Patrick developed Motor Neurone Disease this plan had to be abandoned. Instead,

encouraged by Patrick, he flew the length of Norway to the North Cape and together they completed 2 Dawn-to-Dusk challenges. The first involved photographing every lighthouse around the coast of Ireland. The second was to fly over every island in British waters shown on the 1/2Mil chart (119 since you ask), a flight of 1704 nautical miles – the equivalent of a transatlantic flight – for which in 2010 they jointly won The Royal Aero Club’s Norton-Griffiths Challenge Trophy.

David completed a third on his own when he photographed each of Wellington’s battlefields. Flying over Spain the air temperatures were so high that he risked heat stroke as well as engine overheating.



David’s gripping story had many more adventures. Suffice to say he gave us a fascinating evening for which many thanks.

In the News



Christmas Quiz Answers

Congratulations to the winner; Martin Pamphilon who scored 14 out of 16 points.

1. Name the aircraft in the opening scene.

Robin DR400

2/3. Name the titles of the two pieces of music that play / Bonus points for the artist on each.

This Flight Tonight by Nazareth and Fly too High by Janis Ian

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.

Gloucestershire, Caernarfon, Dunkeswell, Priors Farm, Sandown

5. What is the aircraft that the video is taken from.

Eurostar EV97

6. Where is the estuary at 4 minutes.

Barmouth

7. Where is the mountain range at 4:15.

Black Mountains

8. What are the small group of white rocks at 5:30 better known as.

The Needles (Isle of Wight)

9. What is the name of the tower and location that is seen at 5:45.

Spinnaker Tower, Portsmouth

10. What is the name of the 'runway' at 5:50.

Santa Pod Drag Strip

Bungees and paperwork

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 by Trevor Reed Pilot Maintenance Part 3 – Bungees and paperwork.

Hello folks, the next item on the list in LAA TL2.05 is, “Replacement of elastic shock absorber cord units”, often referred to as bungees. There is not a lot to say about these items, except that they will nip your fingers in a big way if you are not careful! I am also taking the opportunity of adding a few notes this month on how you should document your work after its successful completion.

Bungees TL 2.05 allows replacement of bungees where special tools are not required. I take this to include both the pre-made shock cord rings and the long lengths of shock cord that are wound several times and then secured. Taking the rings off If you own a Cub

or similar American aircraft, you will certainly be familiar with shock rings. These are the cotton covered rings that are made up from multiple rubber filaments that bounce you back in the air when you make a less than perfect touch down. You can of course blame it on that bump near the threshold of 27, but you can't fool me!

Often hidden away inside a canvas covering or an aluminium fairing, these pesky items are out of sight and often out of mind. However, they should appear on your TMS (we all have one now, don't we?) and need inspecting at permit time, and possibly replacing. Take off the fairing and have a good look at the rings. Check that the outer fabric is intact, free from contamination and there are no flat spots indicating broken strands. Any signs of either means that you will have to take the old ring off and fit new.

Before you start, remember that when the aircraft is sitting on the ground, the rings are supporting its mass and will be under considerable tension, holding the telescopic parts of the undercarriage closed. Start by jacking up the aircraft. You will remember that we covered this in an earlier IM. Although it is not normally necessary to take off the wheels, sometimes it gives you better access and makes the task easier. The bungee strut is held in place by bolts at each end. Remove these in turn, making sure that you support the wheel at the same time.

Place the strut on your bench (a workmate is ideal) and have a good look at the arrangement of the rings. Take a photo as an aide memoire. Using a tyre lever or similar tool, take off the rings, individually if you have multiples. It is possible to cut off the rings with a hacksaw or Stanley knife but be careful as there will be energy stored up in the ring and the last strands may break without warning. With the rings off, clean up the strut checking that the sections slide easily within each other. Check the stops and examine any safety wires for broken strands. That's the easy bit done.

Now it is time to fit the new rings. Check that you have bought the right parts either by the aircraft manufacturer's part number or by the code stamped on the original rings. Do not fit weaker or stronger rings just because you think the change might make your landings easier! To fit other than the rings specified constitutes a modification and you know what that means! The process to fit the rings is straightforward. Just stretch the ring and slide it over the lugs on the undercarriage strut. However, achieving this can be fraught. The difficult part is stretching the ring enough to get it on. Sometimes superhuman strength will do it. Sometimes a bit of help from a tyre lever will make the difference between success and failure. But sometimes it is just too stubborn and refuses to give in. If this is the case, admit defeat and call your inspector. He may have come across the problem before and can offer a solution that makes it look easy. Good luck!

Paperwork (Don't skip this part)

We all know that the job is not done until the paperwork is completed. Pilot Maintenance is no exception. To benefit from the concessions allowed by TL2.05, you, as the owner

and pilot of the aircraft, must record the work done and sign for it. In most cases a simple logbook entry is sufficient. Just describe in the appropriate logbook exactly what you have done in chronological order including any relevant specifics. For example, for an oil change, enter the make, specification and quantity of the oil used. For a sparking plug service include removal, cleaning, gapping, testing and refitting as appropriate. Include any relevant manuals that you have followed. Finally, in the right-hand column sign your name followed by your pilot's licence number (not your LAA membership number) and the date the work was completed.

If you carry out more than one task from the list, I suggest that for clarity you use a separate line for each task. Should you find it necessary, you may of course raise a work sheet to cover the work. However, in this case, you must sign and date the worksheet, add your pilot's licence number, give the worksheet a unique reference and file it with your aircraft documents. You must also make an entry in your logbook, referring to the worksheet with your signature, pilot's licence number and date.

Climbing the Isle of Wights highest point

In my time I have climbed some pretty big mountains in some far off countries but have never, to my knowledge, scaled the highest point on the Isle of Wight. If you remember from a couple of months ago, I described my trip to Shoreham to climb a local Marilyn hill. I might have said at the time, that these Marilyns are dotted all over the country and some, rather obligingly are within cycling distance of airports, thereby allowing me to indulge in all of my passions in a single day: flying, cycling and mountaineering.

So it is with the Isle of Wight. There are, in fact, two such hills, Brighstone Down (214m) and St Boniface Down (242m), the latter of which is the highest point on the island and the target of my expedition.

Sandown airfield is the closest to Boniface and quite an easy jaunt down through 'Basic Service' areas provided by Brize, Farnborough and finally Solent. The latter being a listening only service. As I flew around the Southampton CTA, using Butser Hill as a Visual Reference point (and another Marilyn, well worth climbing), Portsmouth came into view. It is necessary to avoid the HIRTA and ensure you are well above the bird Sanctuary near Hayling Island. The sanctuary is easy enough, it only reaches 500 feet, but the HIRTA is up to 6,600 feet. Due South from Butser gives it a wide berth and soon the Spinnaker Tower comes into view.



It's about the tower where I changed frequencies to Sandown and as I crossed the Solent, attempted to make contact. Sandown is laid-back to say the least, no PPR is required and it is 50-50 whether they will answer the radio call. Today, silence! It is also rumoured that they levy a fifty pound fine for anyone wearing a hi-viz jacket! I've never put it to the test!

Making blind calls as I approached, I overflew the airfield and established runway 23 as being optimal with the wind direction and so joined the circuit on downwind for a Right Hand approach. As I performed my checks for landing, the radio burst into life with another pilot asking which runway was being used. I replied that I was about to turn Base for 23. Thanking me, I saw an aircraft to my right making its way to a wide crosswind turning.



Sandown runway is somewhat undulating but I made a reasonable touchdown and allowed the plane to coast right up to the parking area.

It was a glorious day and I was soon cycling along the coast road towards my destination. At the base of the hill, I padlocked my bike to the inside of a fence and headed up the hill on foot. It is a steep climb initially, but soon relents to a very pleasant walk. It is not actually possible to stand on the true summit as some rather inconsiderate organisation built a radar station on the summit which is surrounded by a large fence. As far as I know,

it was the Ventnor Radar Station, dating back to 1938-9 when Britain had a spot of bother for a few years. The radar station closed many years ago, but there are still active radio masts and it is impossible to gain access unless some kind-hearted soul happens to be there. Today, there was no-one about. I chose to stand as close as I could to what seemed to be the summit and claim that. It is quite a wide plateau which doesn't vary much in height anyway.



I took a scenic route back to my bike, and with excellent views along the coast it was well worth the effort. Once back at the bike, I headed off back towards the airport, dropping down to the Sandown beach area where I soon found a fish and chip shop to celebrate my success. This proved unwise as, once I left the chip shop, I realised I had quite a climb back up to the main road and the airfield, not much fun pedalling uphill on a full stomach!



The road back to the airfield is fairly uninteresting and I was glad to be back, taking advantage of the catering facilities there for a leisurely coffee in the sunshine before packing my bike away.

My favourite return is out past the Needles, over Corfe, avoiding the danger area to the West and the Bournemouth CTA to the East, then Northbound past Compton Abbas, Badminton and Kemble to Gloucester.

A fine day out, excellent flight down and back, another Marilyn bagged and lunch on the beach. If only I could get a paid job doing this!

Downloads from the CAA and others

RAF Brize Norton advise that the hours of their Lower Airspace Radar Service (LARS) will change to the following:

From 6th January 2025, BZN LARS will operate Monday – Friday, 0900 – 1700 (local) only.

The Airspace and Safety Initiative release periodic infringement reports. Take a look <https://airspacesafety.com/infringement-occurrences> for the latest concerning an incident at White Waltham.

The November edition of [INSIGHT](#) looks at an Airprox involving a Cessna 172 and a Grumman AA-5 in the vicinity of Tilbury.

To maintain high standards of flight safety within the London and London City Control Zones (the London CTRs), the CAA intends to change the weather minima applicable to Special Visual Flight Rules operations. Further information here. <https://www.caa.co.uk/our-work/publications/documents/content/cap3066/>

If you don't know what CHIRP is, or you do and want to find out more about what their role is, take a look <https://chirp.co.uk/aviation/safety-resources/general-aviation/>, it might help with your current flying practises.

The Aviation Safety (Amendment) Regulations 2024 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2024/1290/made>) have been published. These Amendments address changes to the Flight Operations regulations for All Weather Operations and Fuel/Energy Management Schemes. Associated amendments have also been made to the Aircrew and Aerodromes regulations.

Ever wondered what an MOR is?

Well, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AWTXI97CSqg> is a short video from the CAA explaining all.

Sales and Wants

Take a look at the Sales and Wants page (<http://www.glosterstrut.co.uk/sales.php>) of the website and grab yourself a bargain. Don't forget, this is a free service to any of our members.

Simply contact the editor (editor@glosterstrut.co.uk) with a photo and some words and the magic will happen. It would greatly help if the editor is updated when the item is sold or withdrawn so we can keep the page fresh and up to date.

If you've got a spare half million quid and no idea what to do with it, check out this video, you might just be tempted! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VKF0WnQzMyQ>

The next meeting

The January 14th Strut meeting at The Victory Club, (Lypiat Rd, Cheltenham GL50 2SY) is AGM time again, our chairman promises to keep it as short as possible. Last year was 4 mins and 30 seconds. Some said it dragged on a bit!

It will also be a celebration of the Strut's birthday, so cake and bubbles will be on sale as usual, please bring your £2.50.

In lieu of a speaker, we will be showing a film documentary of the greatest aircraft retrieval ever undertaken. "Glacier Girl" runs for +/- 30 minutes, so that will round the evening off nicely. We hope to see you there.

Don't forget that our skittles evening is on Friday 17th January at the Victory Club starting at 7:30pm. If you want to attend, let Mike Waldron (chair@glosterstrut.co.uk) know as soon as you can.