

October 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

Isaacs Fury Leaving Croft Farm



Chairmans Chat

Walking into a large department store yesterday, I was confronted with a large pile of Christmas decorations!!, what!!, already. No doubt there are some people who plan a long way ahead, but with another three months left on the year, it came as a bit of a shock.

However, it is about this time of the year that we can look back over the Strut activities, make some changes perhaps or just try to double up on our most successful events. You, the members are our sounding board and we are always happy to receive your views as to future events.

The Strut will be ending the year with more than 100 members, so we must be doing something right! Thanks go to Mick Peakman for all his efforts in producing our monthly newsletter, but I would like to encourage all of you to contribute your stories, safety tips or just a photo or two, it gives Mick a supply of material to draw on when producing the monthly news. Fair to say the health of any Strut rises and falls with the energy of the membership and their input, so let's have a word or two from you.

Looking forward to our October 14th meeting, Alex Norman will be giving an illustrated talk about his book CAPTAIN DE HAVILLAND'S MOTH 'one of the best books in aviation for quite some time' according to PILOT mag and 'A wonderfully affecting, highly entertaining...account of a legendary aircraft, and the colourful and courageous men and women who flew her'. according to John Nichol, author of TORNADO DOWN and SPITFIRE etc.

I hope to see you at The Victory Club – doors open 7pm.

– Mike

The last meeting

BRODHEAD

Brodhead airport is just 116 miles south of Oshkosh Wisconsin and is the venue for an annual gathering for Pietenpol Air Campers and their owners, and Hatz biplanes and theirs. It's also the home of the Kelch museum which has a collection of classic-era biplanes, each one of which is in immaculate condition. It also includes some old-timer cars and aero engines.

As most of you know, our Chairman Mike Waldron has been whittling his own Pietenpol for several years and I'm happy to report that it is just a smidgin short of completion; indeed, the next step is to transfer it from Mike's workshop, which doubles as his living room, to a hangar for final assembly and engine runs, prior to first flight.

Designer, American Bernie Pietenpol, intended it to be straightforward to build and although the type first flew in 1928 it remains popular with the homebuilder even today. Originally, it was intended that it should be powered by a 40hp engine from a model A



Ford and many were indeed built with this heavy motor but subsequently, lighter engines have been used. The constant chord monoplane parasol wing of 29 feet span made construction quicker than the usual bi-plane, and having 2 seats added to its appeal. No LAA Rally is complete without 2 or 3.

You won't be surprised to hear that Mike has been itching to get to the Brodhead annual

fly-in, and this year he and fellow Strut member, Gerry Nash, took flights from Heathrow to Jamesville, via Chicago and hired a car for the final leg so that they could take part in the festivities. Who should be there at the same time but Tim Badham (Strut member and ace photographer) and Nigel Hitchman. The latter flies into so many of our summer events that he's as near as you can get to being a Strut member without paying any dues!

It transpired that it was also the occasion for a gathering of TravelAir machines and Mike hitched a ride in one to join the fun. It seems that a local Amish community turned up to see what it was all about. For those of you unfamiliar with them, the Amish are religious groups who reject modern ways to live a simple life, so they're definitely not part of any aviation scene but that didn't stop them from being interested.

Back at Brodhead Mike and Gerry enjoyed a couple of outstanding BBQs in true American style i.e. huge portions and delicious. They plan to go again. Anyone else interested in joining the fun?

Many thanks Mike for an interesting account, great photos and a most enjoyable evening.

The Wit & Wisdom of Aviation

Qantas Engineering Reports

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

Pilot: Aircraft handles funny.

Engineer: Aircraft warned to straighten up, fly right, and be serious.



Quote of the Month

Icarus could have lived if he'd picked a cloudy day.

Hunt for a Thunder Chicken – The final part

The Norseman still had fuel left in the tanks and, by propping the machine at various angles, Mullin and Everitt managed to idle its engine to charge the battery so they could send SOS transmissions when the Northern Lights didn't hamper the signals. They transmitted blind for ten days until the engine and battery expired. The party anchored the now 'dead' aeroplane away from the shoreline to make it more visible from the air.

Unknown to them, operation Chimo was under way and search assets began appearing near Chateau Aurora. A south-bound Lancaster approached at low altitude and Mullin discharged a flare. The aircraft turned away and returned close by a second time - but missed both the Norseman and the white tent.

Other types droned overhead, but the opportunities to catch attention were missed.

On one occasion, a machine was seen heading in the direction of the stranded group - who used a smoke bomb. Passing behind a hill at speed and into cloud, the aircraft wasn't seen again. With frustration growing and the fear they had been declared forever lost - or dead, in the forlorn men hope of finding help and sending rescuers back to Chateau Aurora, four of the group started making their way in the direction they believed Nitchequon might sit, however, they were much further from the town than originally believed.

Then - a Lancaster captain reported: On about the third circuit around Lake Emmanuel, at approximately 09:40hrs, a puff of smoke over a hill was sighted by Corporal Forestall. One survivor was sighted tending the fire and another three were about 100 yards further on in a clear spot on a hillside. All survivors were waving, and one had a shirt or cloth on the end of a six-foot pole.

Ordering his crew to drop food containers, the pilot radioed a Catalina searching an area less than an hour away. Eventually the crew of the RCAF Catalina spotted the anchored silhouette of the lost Norseman.

Six RCAF personnel walked into the bush to assist the survivors while the others remained on the beach to prepare soup and steak. They stayed overnight.

Following the news of survivors, in the early hours of the next day, another Catalina flew to the same lake. Following a chat with the pilot of the first plane, they took off to commence a standard search pattern in the probable direction taken by those walking.

Eventually they spotted the men on a beach. Ordered by loudspeakers to stay in place, Mullin and the three other men did as they were told and busied themselves by opening a parachuted food container while the pilot of the Catalina selected a nearby lake where, to the relief of the four men, the flying boat soon landed.

After a rest they embarked the remaining four men, and the crew refreshed, the Catalina was soon climbing through 5,000ft to avoid turbulence as it headed for Bagotville.

Before they landed back at base, Maritime Air Command headquarters formally closed Operation Chimo. It was October 3rd, 39 days after the Norseman had become stranded. During the three searches a fleet of 44 RCAF, USAF, and civil aircraft flew more than 900 hours searching for the errant 'Thunder Chicken'. Nowadays electronic aids would have transformed the story, and survivors rescued by Helicopter.

AIRFRAME ASSETTS EMPLOYED

RCAF aircraft: 23 Lancasters, 3 Catalinas, 6 Dakotas

USAF aircraft: Gruman Albatros, Douglas Skymaster, DC3

Civilian: 2 Norseman, 2 Beaver, 2 Catalinas, 2 Dakotas, B17

Editors Note:

Wow! I'm sure, like me, you enjoyed that story. Next time you see Noel, be sure and thank him for sharing it with us all. I'm sure other Strut members must have some stories to share. Please feel free to contribute, however long or short your story might be, we'd love to read it.

Dates for your diary

October 4th

Duxford: WM Flying Finale airshow

PPR required

October 4th

Oxford Kidlington: Air Britain AGM

October 4-5th

Compton Abbas: Autumn Vintage Fly in

PPR required

October 5th

Old Warden: Shuttleworth Air Race day airshow

PPR required

October 15th

Yeovilton: FAAM and Navy Wings Tour

October 19th

Whittlebury: LAA AGM



Downloads from the CAA and others

LAA Stuff

Our well known Air to Ground Radio Operator's course (ROCC), held at Popham and run by Chris Thompson, has TWO spaces left for the 20 & 21 September. The cost for this course is £310 for members and £330 for non-members (plus an additional £48 after the course for your ROCC certificate). More information can be found [here](#). Please let me know SOONEST if you would be interested in filling a spot.

The below courses are also available to book:

AIRCRAFT CARPENTRY WORKSHOP

Our Tutor Alan James, covers everything the prospective aircraft builder needs to know. This includes quality and specification of approved timber, plywood, adhesives and how to use them, marking out, cutting, drilling, laminating, shaping, sanding, scarfing and finishing. As an LAA Inspector, he can also guide you through the paperwork process for repairs and modifications.

The cost is £206 for members and £226 for non-members and this hands-on workshop is held in our Training Centre at LAA H/Q at Turweston from 9.00am to 5.00pm.

This course will be held at the LAA H/Q on Tuesday 7 October 2025 from 9.00am to 5.00pm.

WORKING WITH ALUMINIUM WORKSHOP

This popular hands-on workshop guides delegates through the build process of a Vans toolbox (which you keep!) and is designed to teach you a range of useful skills. All tooling needed will be provided by the LAA. Tutor Gary Smith looks forward to passing on his wide set of skills to you.

Date: Saturday 18th October 2025 from 9.00am to 5.00pm at LAA H/Q at Turweston

Cost is £255 for members and £275 for non-members

Mark Castle-Smith's popular hands-on courses now have new upcoming dates! These courses combine hands-on training in the LAA Training Centre and presented tuition in the Meeting Room at our H/Q at Turweston. Feedback on these workshops is always positive and spaces on the courses will be taken quickly!

PERMIT AIRCRAFT ELECTRICS - Basic course

Dates: Saturday 8 November 2025 OR Saturday 7 February 2026 from 9.00am to 5.00pm

Cost is £216 for members and £236 for non-members

PERMIT AIRCRAFT ELECTRICS - Advanced course

Date: Sunday 9 November 2025 OR Sunday 10 February 2026 from 9.00am to 5.00pm

Cost is £216 for members and £236 for non-members

AN INTRODUCTION TO PERMIT AIRCRAFT AVIONICS

Date: Sunday 7 December 2025 from 9.00am to 5.00pm

Cost is £216 for members and £236 for non-members

Please watch this space for upcoming dates for all our other workshops!

To book any of the above or if you have any queries, please call Cheryl Routledge on 01280 846786 or cheryl.routledge@laa.uk.com. We can only confirm your place upon payment.

CAA Stuff

New Frequency Monitoring Code for Teesside Airport

Teesside Radar is introducing its Frequency Monitoring Code (FMC) effective 4 September 2025 at AIRAC 09/2025. Details of the FMC (7047/118.855 MHz) can be found in the UK AIP EGNV AD 2.22 Sec 5. The FMC is a unique code which shows a radar equipped Air Traffic Control Unit (ATCU) that you are monitoring a specific frequency (Listening Watch). This provides controllers the ability to contact pilots quickly to resolve or prevent unintended airspace infringements. To utilise the FMC, pilots should select the correct radio frequency prior displaying the code.

Take part in the next Met Office Aviation User Forum (MOAUF) on the 22 October 2025

The Met Office Aviation User Forum takes place on Monday 22 October 2025 at the Met Office, Exeter.

Your participation can help shape the management and delivery of future MET provision, the forum is open to all users of our Aviation services, but spaces are limited. To guarantee your place register here ASAP:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/2025-met-office-aviation-user-forum-tickets-1408268421759?aff=oddttdtcreator>

Topics will include our forthcoming planned initiatives such as a QVA API, the science developments we are working towards, an opportunity to view our new aviation weather briefing tool and a 3 month outlook brief for winter.

CAA publishes Advanced Air Mobility: eVTOL Delivery Model

The CAA has set an ambition: by end-2028 to have in place the regulatory frameworks and operational systems that allow initial commercial passenger eVTOL flights in the UK. The eVTOL Delivery Model (<https://www.caa.co.uk/our-work/publications/documents/content/cap3169/>) sets out how the CAA will deliver this ambition in practice, promoting the safe integration of eVTOL operations alongside existing aviation. It includes a summary of our objectives and delivery principles, our delivery roadmap and our emerging policy positions across different regulatory frameworks.

Handling a trim runaway event

Following recent accident reports published by the Air Accidents Investigation Branch, pilots of aircraft equipped with electric trim are reminded of the current CAA Safety Guidance on handling a trim runaway event available on our website: <https://www.caa.co.uk/general-aviation/safety-topics/trim-runaways/>

Further guidance related to autopilots and trim runaways will be published in 2026 by the General Aviation Unit.

Gloucestershire Airport

Aircraft Movements

We have previously discussed aircraft movement totals since the introduction of the Traffic Management spreadsheet in mid-February. This AAN is intended to give you an update about these totals and also to demonstrate a correlation between trends in UK wide Air Transport Movements (ATMs) and trends in total movements at the Airport.

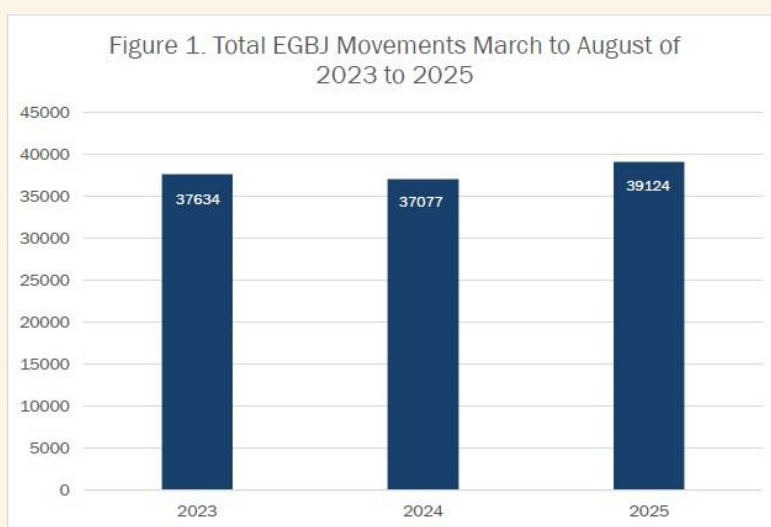


Figure 1

Figure 1 shows the Total Airport ATMs for the months March to August for 2023, 2024 and 2025. March to August has been chosen as the spreadsheet was introduced in mid-February. As you can see this 5-month period has seen an increase in movements compared to the last two years. I am very pleased to advise that whilst this period has been busier, we have had no Airprox events within the ATZ. Thank you to everyone that has helped create this safer environment whilst increasing movement totals.

Figure 2 compares Total ATMs outside of London against Total EGBJ Movements (the trends are virtually identical when including London Airport Movements) for the years 2014 to 2024. The left vertical axis shows total non-London ATMs and the right vertical axis shows EGBJ movement totals. There seems to be a correlation between national ATMs and local movement totals.

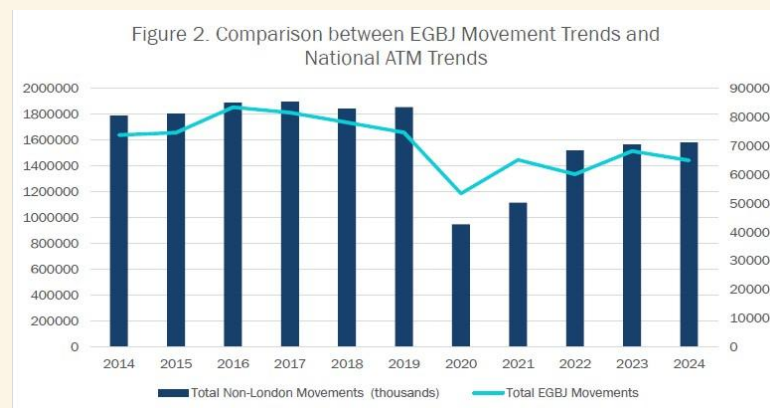


Figure 2

Obviously, this may be a coincidence but that is unlikely. It is more likely that total movement figures for Gloucestershire Airport are directly correlated to national ATM trends. I look forward to discussing this with you further but, in the meantime, thank you for your continued support and happy flying!

Best regards, Chris Brian

P.S. All stats have been drawn from UK airport data | UK Civil Aviation Authority apart from the EGBJ figures for July and August of 2025 which have been submitted to the CAA but have not yet been published.

Land After Procedure

We recently experienced a situation in which a light aircraft was given a “land after” on runway 09 by ATC. All the required criteria (see below) were met for the issuance of the land after instruction. The preceding aircraft was told to keep their speed up whilst vacating. The following aircraft touched down and the pilot then made the decision to depart again whilst the preceding aircraft was still on the runway.

Following this event please see below a reminder of the criteria needed for a “land after”. This extract is from UKAIP, GEN 3.3, 3.9.3. Please note well that when issued with a land after the responsibility for ensuring adequate separation rests with the pilot of the second aircraft.

Please also note that if you are asked to keep your speed up whilst vacating the runway or to “expedite” vacation by ATC then you must comply with this instruction or inform ATC if you cannot.

Please also consider going around sooner if positioned too close to a preceding aircraft on final or ensuring that you have planned your flight to have adequate spacing to allow safe landing for both aircraft.

UKAIP extract:

3.9.3 Land After Procedure

3.9.3.1 Normally, only one aircraft is permitted to land or take-off on the runway-in-use at any one time. However, when the traffic sequence is two successive landing aircraft, the second one may be allowed to land before the first one has vacated the runway-in-use, providing:

- a. the runway is long enough, and there is no evidence to indicate that braking may be adversely affected.
- b. it is during daylight hours.
- c. the first landing aircraft is not required to backtrack to vacate the runway.
- d. the second aircraft will be able to see the first aircraft clearly and continuously until it has vacated the runway.
- e. the second aircraft has been warned. ATC will provide this warning by issuing the pilot of the second aircraft with permission to land using the phraseology "... land after the (first aircraft type) ..." instead of issuing a landing clearance.
- f. responsibility for ensuring adequate separation between the two aircraft rests with the pilot of the second aircraft.

An example of the RTF exchange is as follows:

ATC: "(Call sign) runway (designator), land after the (first aircraft type), surface wind (direction and speed)".

Pilot: "Runway (designator), land after the (first aircraft type), (Call sign)".

(Editor: Step one when taking over a new business – unload the MD)

From Soma Pemmireddy CEO – Horizon Aero Group Ltd

Dear Colleagues and Partners,

Following Jason's announcement of his decision to step down as Managing Director, I would like to take a moment to express our gratitude for his dedicated leadership and commitment to Gloucestershire Airport. Over recent months, Jason has navigated significant challenges with professionalism and integrity throughout the ongoing sale process. His hard work and engagement have been invaluable, and it has been a privilege to work alongside him. We wish him every success in the next chapter, particularly as he embraces the joy of becoming a grandparent.

Jason has kindly agreed to remain in post until the end of January 2026, ensuring continuity and allowing for a smooth handover. During this transition period, Horizon Aero

Group will work closely with him to maintain stability and uphold the high standards you have all worked so hard to achieve.

As you know, Horizon Aero Group has been named the preferred bidder in the process concerning Gloucestershire Airport. While the transaction remains subject to due diligence and final terms, this represents a significant milestone and reflects our strong belief in the airport's long-term potential as a vital regional asset.

Our commitment is clear:

- To modernise and enhance the airport's infrastructure and aviation capabilities
- To drive inclusive economic growth through job creation, local investment, and aviation training pathways
- To prioritise sustainability in alignment with the UK's Net Zero ambitions
- To ensure transparency and community engagement at every stage

We are committed to securing Gloucestershire Airport's future as a thriving aviation facility and to working in partnership with colleagues, business partners, and the local community to deliver sustainable, inclusive growth. Horizon Aero Group also reaffirms its dedication to preserving the airport's proud heritage, ensuring it remains a vibrant hub for general aviation, business aviation, and flight training.

Looking ahead, we look forward to meeting with employees and our valued partners once the legal formalities are complete. For now, it is very much business as usual as we prepare to build the next chapter together.

The next meeting

The October Strut meeting will be held on Tuesday 14th at the Victory Club (Lypiat Rd, Cheltenham GL50 2SY) in Cheltenham. As Mike mentioned, the speaker will be Alex Norman, talking about his new book: Captain De Havillands' Moth.