

*East of Scotland Strut of the Light Aircraft Association
February 2023 Newsletter*



Chairman's bit

Hi all, the meeting on Monday night features a talk by Skyrora on their rocket production and I am sure it will be most interesting, (see next page).

This is likely to be well attended so I would ask any non-Strut members to contact me by email if they wish to attend. I will then confirm if there is space. The room will only hold around 30 people at most and we don't want to have to turn people away.
justin@systemwise.co.uk

The weather should be improving from now. It is time to make sure that your aircraft is ready to go when Spring appears.

I visited Iain Govan in the Western who is recovering very slowly. He sends his regards to all and I told him we were all wishing him an early recovery

Note our AGM is being held at the March meeting.

Fly safe, Justin

The AGM

To be held at the Harrow on Monday 6th March. As always we welcome a turnaround of Committee members so please feel free to put yourself forward.

Co-ordinator's bit

The year has started wet windy and cold. with a few good days to entice the fliers up.

The meeting on Monday 6th is at the Harrow and will see a presentation by Skyrora on their Scottish designed and based satellite launching systems.

March is our AGM so make a diary date to come.

Hope you have all recovered from the Christmas and New Year festivities and we get a good summer.

Iain

Cover photo

Photo taken at Skyrora's recent launch in Iceland. There is some serious cutting edge engineering going on in our own backyard and Derek Harris will tell us all about it on Monday.



The next meeting is on...

**Monday 6th February
at the Harrow Hotel
Eskbank Road, Dalkeith
at 8.00pm**

**Rockets!
See next page**



About the Light Aircraft Association:
www.laa.uk.com

With a history extending over 70 years, the UK Light Aircraft Association promotes safe and economical operation of sports and recreational aircraft. Representing the aviation interests of around 8,000 recreational pilots, amateur-builders and enthusiast members, the LAA oversees the operation of more than 2,500 light aircraft and the build of another 1,700, whilst providing sector-leading consultation and advocacy in aviation-related regulatory matters both in UK and Europe.

**This newsletter can also be viewed on
the Strut website:**
eos-strut.org

Monday's meeting, a Presentation by Skyrora

8.00pm, Monday 6th February at the Harrow Hotel, 2 Eskbank Road, Dalkeith EH22 1HF

I was surprised to learn how strong Scotland's Space industry is. It's worth £3 billion and growing and more small satellites are built here than anywhere else in the world, (outside the USA).

Scotland is also home to five of the UK's seven spaceport sites currently in development, partly because of a helpful latitude for launching, leading scientific universities nearby, and cutting edge entrepreneurial companies like Skyrora.

Skyrora are an Edinburgh based company with a factory in Cumbernauld where they are building a range of rockets for this exciting new industry and I am delighted that Derek Harris is coming to give us a Presentation on their advanced technology. <https://www.skyrora.com/>

Our meetings are always open but as this promises to be well attended check the numbers with Justin Kennedy beforehand if you are not a Strut member. justin@systemwise.co.uk



More about rockets

I had a quick browse on the internet regarding spacecraft and, of course, Skyrora. There are several video interviews with our guest Derek Harris and they help to get us up to speed with what this company is doing. Here is one, but there are others.

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=derek+harris+skyrora&view=detail&mid=AF26C588198437E316BCAF26C588198437E316BC&FORM=VRDGAR>

I was interested to see that one of Skyrora's interests is the capture of satellites in space and returning them safely to Earth. One project will be to reclaim Britain's pioneering satellite Prospero so that it can be preserved in a museum. By coincidence John Whitfield sent in the following item about Prospero which I guess came from Wikipedia.

*Prospero's tape recorders stopped working in 1973.^[12] As was noted in an episode of the BBC television series *Coast*, radio transmissions from *Prospero* could still be heard on 137.560 MHz in 2004,^[13] though the signals used in the episode would actually come from an Orbcomm satellite, rather than *Prospero* (as the later Orbcomm used the same 137.560 MHz frequency since *Prospero* was considered no longer active). *Prospero* had officially been deactivated in 1996, when the UK's Defence Research Establishment decommissioned their satellite tracking station at Lasham, Hampshire but the satellite had been turned on in past years on its anniversary. It is in a low Earth orbit and is not expected to decay until about 2070, almost 100 years after its launch.^[6]*

*In September 2011 a team at University College London's Mullard Space Science Laboratory announced plans to re-establish communications with *Prospero*, in time for the satellite's 40th anniversary.^[3] As of September 2012, not much progress had been made in establishing contact with the satellite due to time constraints.^[14] At perigee, *Prospero* can be seen through binoculars at magnitude +6 overhead, steady.*

*A plan to retrieve *Prospero* and return it to Earth for a museum display is currently being developed by Skyrora and other UK companies. More details were expected to be released by 28 October 2021, the satellite's 50th anniversary.^[15]*

John adds, 'As a matter of history, today not many people remember this

The UK successfully launched the 'Prospero' satellite into orbit in October 1971. This was aboard the well tested British 'Black Arrow' rocket. It was launched from the RAAF Woomera Rocket Range in Australia.

The 'Prospero' satellite was functional for many years and Prospero is still in orbit (2023)'.

Digging into the Newsletter archives I found these photos of a later British bywater, the Nova Starchaser, spotted by John Cooper at the Alamagordo, New Mexico, Museum of Space



A short, pleasant flight

Taken by John Whitfield after leaving East Fortune last week.
(One more overleaf)





Who was first to fly?

From John Whitfield comes this link to an Australian programme that discusses who actually made the world's first flight, The Wright brothers or Gustave Whitehead?

First Flight: The Race to Create the World's First Flying Machine - Full Documentary <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TGom0uiW130>

Next generation engine?

Another from John, this time about a type of aero engine we have seen before but the CFM RISE might be developing into a game changer, with a 20% reduction in fuel burn likely to see this engine and propeller being fitted to many future commercial aircraft.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ojVNOj-q3SQ>

Kai Tak, back then

One last item from John Whitfield, this time with two videos about Hong Kong's older airport. The first tells the story of its early days and the second shows just how difficult it was to land there

Hong Kong Kai Tak Airport - THE LEGEND (History&Ops)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UqpG9InUfEs>

Landing At Hong Kong Kai Tak 20 Years Ago - IGS 13
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kgphwcmnhxa>

And Ed says...

I showed these to Ed Lyon and this is his reply;

'I remember it well, very satisfying when you got it just right and landed on the touchdown markings, there was a tendency to level out on the turn and end up a bit high.'

Postscript



Ted Grossmith, who died last year, seen sitting in his Gloster Meteor Mk 3 when he was a young National Service pilot. He wrote about that time in his life for the Newsletter and this photo turned up during some correspondence amongst his friends.

You get a feeling for how young they were and what a raw brute of a plane that was, which killed half the pilots who flew them. I'm glad he survived to live a long, eventful and successful life in his adopted California.

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