

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



*Photo David Johnstone*

## Chairman's bit

*The weather has certainly gone downhill of late. I have very much been workshop bound.*

*Keith Griggs has won the Faulkner-Bryant Trophy for the Most Active Member in the Strut System. I don't think anyone would argue that Keith works tirelessly to ensure our Strut events are a success as well as being involved in LAA events across the country. Ambitious European trips and sleeping in the Emeraude are all part of it. I hear he is back in the air after a brief break due to a cylinder compression problem. Keith represents the ethos of the L.A.A. Well done Keith.*

*I recently attended another LAIT meeting (Local Area Infringement Team) hosted by NATS. There does seem to be will on the part of those in the business of managing our airspace to engage with the GA/VFR world. They, of course, want to reduce airspace infringements which is laudable. Using carrot rather than stick is a new approach and we should be keen to engage on the grounds of safety.*

*The subject of Drones and their airspace grabs also came up. The drone applications appear to show no understanding of VFR flight and, in my view, some of them are quite preposterous. Let us hope that common sense prevails!*

*Fly safe, Justin*

## Co-ordinator's bit

*Congratulations to Keith Griggs for his hard work over the years, awarded the David Faulkner-Bryant shield for services to the Strut System.*

*A presentation was made by LAA Director Ian Sweetland at RAF Kirknewton airfield in front of APSS's Sopwith Strutter aircraft, (see page four).*

*APSS's Sopwith Strutter stands completed and ready for test flying, the paperwork is with LAA Engineering for review and approval. So after 24 years, it looks like it's getting close to first flight.*

*All very exciting to see it standing there ready to go, then you look inside the cockpit, and it's a bit of a culture shock as there are few instruments and no real attempt to lay things out in a location where they can be easily seen. Aviation has come some distance since it was designed in 1915.*

*Not much flying this month as we have all been grounded due to the heavy rain and unfavourable winds. I keep hoping it's going to get better, not sure if that is the case, the long range forecast is not looking fantastic.*

*Ha ho back to doing some more maintenance then.*

*Tim.*

## The next meeting is on...

**Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November  
at the Harrow Hotel  
Eskbank Road, Dalkeith  
at 8.00pm**

**Photos of a visit to  
Beijing Aviation  
Museum in 1992  
(see next page)**



**About the Light Aircraft Association:**  
<https://www.lightaircraftassociation.co.uk>

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](https://eos-strut.org)**

## Monday's meeting

Way back in 1992 we went to China for a fortnight and I treated myself to a visit to the Air Museum, which lay quite a few miles outside Beijing and proved almost impossible to find.

It was housed in a huge, curved, nuclear bomb proof tunnel under a mountain from which fighters could emerge, already at speed and accelerating.

Absolutely fascinating. Mainly Soviet era aircraft but with many curiosities captured in Korea and elsewhere. There is now a new, startlingly modern museum in Beijing itself but 'my' museum was a million miles away from that. China's modernisation had still to start, farmers were drying grain on the concrete and 20 miles from the capital you could feel as if you were back in the Middle Ages. It's all different now.

This will be a short Presentation, just 20 or so photos. *Andrew.*



## Cover photo

Thanks to David Johnstone for this. He is just back from Reno Air Races and took this great photo of a Cassutt and there are more from his time there on pages 5 to 7.



## Iain Gibson

On Thursday 2nd November five members of the Strut were present for the Commemoration of Iain's life. His brothers Donald and Alastair had arranged this at Corstorphine Bowling Club and it turned out to be a very rewarding couple of hours.

Iain, as we know, was a private person but the thread that ran through all the stories told by his many friends, from childhood to the present day, were of a decent, kind and helpful man, if maybe not the safest driver! His life was more colourful than we had imagined and his knowledge of the geography of the British Isles was apparently encyclopaedic, starting with hitch hiking round England as a teenager looking for isolated airfields in the remotest countryside. He confided to a friend that he got as much pleasure from the travelling, exploring and discovering, as from the aviation itself and he felt his life was a fulfilled one, which was good to hear.

*Andrew*

## APSS

APSS facebook page  
<https://www.facebook.com/strutterapss/>

APSS have continued to develop more information,  
<https://www.strutteraviation.com/>

APSS have a new web site  
<https://www.apss.scot/>

Not only are there details of their work but also historical details of the Richard Bell Davies V.C. D.S.O. who was the pilot of the Strutter doing the first aircraft carrier landings on HMS Argus, these were done in the Firth of Forth off Port Seton. *Tim Rayner*





**Keith Griggs receives the Faulkner Bryant Shield from Ian Sweetland in recognition for everything he has done for the Strut and the LAA**

Photo Tim Rayner



## David goes racing

Dave Johnstone has just got back from Reno for the last Air Races held there and has started sorting through the 15,000 images he took over the week. Here are some of the first ones but the next batch should also include a visit to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) for a project on Forest Air Attack Tankers.

All pretty stirring stuff, and what a trip that must have been.





David Johnstone





## Inside the Strutter

The APSS's Sopwith 1½ Strutter is sitting at Kirknewton, waiting for its first flight. Tim Rayner commented 'Well laid out cockpit it is not but that is the way it was. Half the dials can not be seen. It's going to be interesting to see what it is going to be like flying.'



Tim Rayner





**Turned out nice again, didn't it?**

East Fortune East didn't escape last week's downpours. Photo above by Keith Griggs, and alongside by Tim Rayner.





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