



THE BRISSELE STRUTTER



Newsletter of the PFA Bristol Strut

October 2000

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This month's meeting: October 12th 2000. Flying into space: A presentation by Bristol Spaceplanes.

We are fortunate this month to have a presentation on something completely new and rather interesting. As their name suggests, Bristol Spaceplanes Ltd are indeed working on plans for vehicle to take payloads and (more excitingly) passengers, into space.

Their first design, the Ascender, is a passenger-carrying spacecraft which will use a turbojet for take-off from a conventional airfield followed by a rapid climb to around FL250. There, a rocket booster will be engaged, and Ascender enters an near vertical Mach 2.8 climb to an altitude of about twenty kilometres, where it remains briefly in space. All power is then reduced, and travelling at around Mach 3.3, the Ascender becomes a nearly vertical descender, plunging back into the earth's atmosphere, where the jet can be used again, to return the now exhilarated passengers to their point of departure.

Compared with the Space Shuttle, the cost of an Ascender ticket is peanuts, at around an estimated £10,000, but the company hasn't said yet whether travellers will qualify for Air Miles.

Locally based, if you want to take a look at their plans before Thursday's meeting, then direct your web-browser at: www.bristolspaceplanes.com

Young Eagles -16th September 2000.

Once again we had a very successful Young Eagles event at Filton, due very much to the fantastic co-ordination by Mary and Ian Leader. The weather couldn't have been better, blue skies, puffy clouds and light winds.





Eleven aircraft were involved, and a total of 35 Young Eagles and 8 'Older Eagles' were flown. I would like to thank all the pilots who took part, and also all the ground crew, whose efforts helped keep all the ramp activity safe. Filton seemed very happy with the day's goings on, and we were grateful for the opportunity to use the airfield as the venue.

A short report of the event has now been posted on our website, complete with photos by Spike Parker.

Last month's meeting.

The AGM.

Thanks to everyone who beat the petrol problems of that week and came along to the AGM. I had only just arrived back from the USA the previous day, and was therefore slightly jet-lagged and not at my best!

Gordon had sent his Treasurer's accounts in advance and these were circulated. It was noted that expenditure was down on last year, probably due to the Newsletter being distributed via e-mail to approx half the circulation, and also the lack of expenses paid out to speakers. Instead, collections were held at the meetings and donated to the Speakers' charitable cause. We also saved on insurance premiums for Young Eagles because the PFA had now changed their policy to include £7M Crown Indemnity which satisfied Filton/Bae. Balance in Hand is £961.91, and as this was healthy it was agreed that the annual subs should remain at £13 single (£16 Family) ie. unchanged for the next year. The accounts were accepted by the members present. Thanks to Gordon for keeping the books and maintaining membership records/subs so well.

As e-mailing the newsletter has provided such savings, I would encourage others who have the facility, but don't yet use it to receive an e-mailed copy of the Strutter, to let us know and we can add you to the list.

Our website has been very well received, and thanks were given to Ian Leader for his continued efforts to keep it a top notch site. Ian also reminded people that he was always happy to accept further contributions or suggestions to maintain the site's freshness and interest.

The election of officers followed, I am quite happy to stand again as Co-ordinator, and Gordon Pritt offered to continue as Treasurer. Both posts were unanimously accepted by the members present.

The coming 2000/2001 Strut program was discussed. We have enough material to take us through to January. Good suggestions included a "Curio evening", when anyone with an interesting aviation curio brings it along for discussion. Expect to see that one in our program next year.

November's meeting.

Ever seen the pictures of an intact 747-400 sat in the bay just off the end of Kai Tak airport's main runway? Ever wondered how they moved it out of the way? If the answer is yes, then you'll want to attend November's meeting.



Spike Parker has very kindly arranged for a presentation from a friend who was in charge of removing the Boeing. It should be entertaining.

Other news....

RV-6 Update.

Many of you will know now that the RV-6 kit arrived at the end of August. In fact, a few of you were there to help. It was an exciting day, and I think everyone was highly impressed with the quality and quantity of components that came out of the BIG boxes.

After a weeks worth of inventorying, component storage and workshop organisation, the building commenced. With my States visit just a week away, I just had time to fit the baggage bin floor skins before I left!

On my return, I found that my father had been busy making little components such as aileron bellcranks, and had set up the compressor for riveting. Since then, Nigel, Dad and myself have made what we feel is really good progress with things.

As I write this, the fuselage now has all the cabin floor skins installed, the electric flap installation is in place and working, the rudder and brake pedal assemblies are fitted, and we have seats and armrests and control sticks, the latter of which make for more enjoyable hangar flying!

Rear fuselage skins are probably one of the next tasks, and we have thought about installing the tailplane so that we can investigate making the elevator pushrods.

Homebuilding is proving to be great fun! If anyone is interested in visiting the Hicks/Hitchman aircraft works then let me know. I will be arranging a Strut meeting next Summer at the workshop anyway.

Strutters get new wings...

As well as the addition of another RV-6 to the Strut (there are 4 currently under construction by members), Mary & Ian Leader, and Geoff & Liz Roe took delivery of their CP301S Smaragd (Emeraude), G-DENS, on Sunday the 17th of September. Various happy co-incidences helped form their particular partnership (finding hangarage / the money / each other), and it wasn't long before they had found the aircraft of their dreams.

Ron Perry, one of the syndicate members in the UK's other Smaragd, well known PF cover star G-BSVE, helped with aircraft survey and pilot check out. Both Smaragd's have since been seen flying around the locality in formation (with an occasional Cap 10 appearing for good measure - the two types look remarkably alike, but the Cap noticeably has 100% more power...)

Congratulations guys and girls, I look forward to seeing G-DENS involved in future Bristol Strut activities.

The Passenger list...

At a previous meeting the idea of a list of people who would always be happy to fill spare seats in otherwise empty aeroplanes was re-addressed.

The concept is that if you would like a few more opportunities to go flying, get your details included on this list. Then, if a pilot member of the Strut happens to be going flying and has an empty seat, he can call you up and see if you want to go along for the ride.

It's a speculative arrangement, but hey, if you're not on the list then your chances of a flight are greatly reduced. If you're interested then let Ed, or Ian and Mary know and we'll start compiling a list.

Other Events:			
1st Oct	Aero/AutoJumble	Popham	01256 397733
7th Oct	Vintage Aircraft Club Flyin	Finmere	01296 712141
8th Oct	End of season fly-in	Popham	01256 397733
8th Oct	Conkers fly-in	Henstridge	01963 364231

Don't forget – Always check before setting out!

From Avweb....

HAVE YOU FLOWN *INTO* A FORD LATELY?

The engine on "Rusty" Hamer's Lancair 235 picked a fine time to quit last week ... when he was low and slow over heavily-wooded Chiloquin, Oregon. Hamer aimed for the only spot that didn't contain hardwood, the four-lane U.S. Highway 97. Quite by luck, Hamer wound up plopping down onto the thankfully empty flatbed of an 18-wheeler truck. Hamer didn't know where he was until he realised he was still moving at about 65 miles per hour and the truck driver didn't realise what had happened until he pulled over.

AVweb's Newswire www.avweb.com/newswire/news0033a.html includes a picture of Hamer's "Lancair 18-wheeler".

SHORT FINAL

The following R/T exchange was heard at Denver during push-back from the gate:

Denver Ground: "United xxx, the good news is you are clear to taxi to Runway 16."

United xxx: "Uhh, thanks ... but what's the bad news?"

Denver Ground: "I don't have any bad news right now but the sooner you get going the less chance there will be of my finding any."

**** Don't forget that all newsletter contributions, great or small, are gratefully received ****

Bye for now,

Ed.

Last month's Newsletter

Click [HERE](#) to open the September "Strutter".

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