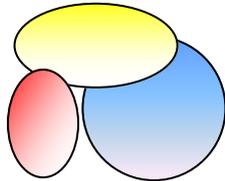




Brissle Strutter

Newsletter of the LAA Bristol Strut



bristolstrut.uk

April 2020

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A letter from our strut chairman —

Dear Strut member,

We live in extraordinary times! As you would expect, we have now cancelled the speaker for May as well as for April, and are rebooking them for next season. Rolls Royce have closed the Heritage Trust so unless conditions change our 1 June meeting is also cancelled.

Our CEO had approached the DfT with respect to continuation of flying during the crisis. The DfT statement on 18 March was "There are no plans to ban VFR flights. There may be some pressures on controlled airspace further down the line (e.g. if air traffic controllers are unable to go into work), but the current message from NATS and others is that demand is reducing faster than the ability to service that demand. (Obviously this pressure would not impact on uncontrolled airspace)".

http://www.lightaircraftassociation.co.uk/2020/News/GA_Flying.html

However things change fast, and the latest restrictions on travel make this irrelevant. Well, if we can't fly we can at least talk about flying; as our CEO says in his message later in the Newsletter: "Make sure we all keep in touch with our flying, and maybe ex-flying friends; offering help and support to those who might need to be isolated."

Mary will continue with the Newsletter, though perhaps not sticking to our normal publication schedule. Contributions that could brighten our day are welcomed.

Don't forget that the clocks go forward this weekend - around 4 months would be good!

Stay safe,

Trevor

Picture Quiz

The Blended wing body design generated some interest last month. In response to the question: *But what is the aircraft and who was the designer?*

Chris Wright said: *Vincent Burnelli – designer, of the Burnelli CBY-3 which still exists – much of it!*



And Alan George wrote: *Very topical given the Airbus Maveric is in the news, never mind the Boeing design. The quiz aircraft is a Burnelli, one of a long development of lifting bodies, Wikipedia says it is the last one, a Loadmaster.*

Alan also attached this photo.



Then the following message was received in response to this question:

Hello there, I'm the East of Scotland Strut Newsletter editor and have just been looking at your own fine Newsletter. Your item about flying/blended wings, (a Burnelli?) reminded me of an article I wrote some years ago about the work of Norman Bel Geddes, an American Industrial Designer from the 1920s and '30s. Doubtless hugely impractical and impossible to fly, but what a way to travel! Hope you like it. Best wishes, Andrew.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Airliner_Number_4

Graham has sent in this photo to keep your brain occupied while you are stuck at home—something quite different which he saw when they visited the refurbished museum at le Bourget last month.

Suggestions to the editor please—you won't be named and shamed if you get it wrong, but it is interesting to see other possible answers to the question.

Only correct answers will be named and congratulated!



Where to go... use your imagination!

As all travel has been suspended we'll have to look back at photos of places we've been to or thought about flying into and dream!

In fact as you delve deeper into your imagination you can plan for further, more exotic destinations and of course those flights will be held in perfect weather condition and ATC will be so cooperative that each flight will be perfect!

Or maybe we should plan for the inevitable deterioration in weather and practice exercising those Plan B tasks. Keep current in that virtual world!

SKITTLES EVENING, Postponed until Saturday 14th November

We have held occasional Skittles matches against the Bristol Aero Club - unfortunately, all of which we have lost! Now is the chance to reverse our fortunes. We have been looking for a suitable venue, for so long that BAWA have had time to build one!

We have the alley for the evening - a more salubrious venue than any we have used in the past. And there will be a buffet supper to go with it. £5 per head, partners welcomed.

Please put this date in your diary—hopefully by then life will be back to something like normal.



A LETTER FROM LAA CEO—STEVE SLATER

Please note that this was written and distributed to Strut Leaders before the latest government restrictions.

LAA and BMAA SUSPEND MERGER DISCUSSIONS + SOME THOUGHTS ON COVID

Hello all, and my apologies for the 'round robin nature of this e-mail, which is being simultaneously sent to the key people in all our Struts and member clubs. Please feel free to circulate among your Strut or Club members too. The first item here though, is disappointing news regarding the progress of BMAA/LAA merger talks. It's not good news, but I thought that you should be among the first to know, ahead of it being circulated to wider media.

LAA and BMAA SUSPEND MERGER DISCUSSIONS

On Friday 20th March, the LAA board wrote to the BMAA to say that they had decided regretfully to suspend the merger discussions between the two associations. The LAA board anticipates that there will be a continuation of collaborative effort underpinning the mutual passion for aviation and wishes to signal their readiness to enter into further discussions as and when a unanimous BMAA council position has been established on the subject.

Speaking personally, it's disappointing, because there has been a great deal of work done by volunteers from both organisations and I believe a huge opportunity is being missed. Together, we have demonstrated that a future single organisation can be viable, would be a powerful voice for sport flying, and our Board and the wider LAA membership believe in principle it is a good thing. Sadly, we haven't had similar reassurance from the BMAA council and their members so we'll focus on the LAA's future, but keep working together in areas where BMAA and LAA can jointly promote our mutual passion for flying for fun."

COVID-19

As you may be aware, we've taken some significant steps in the past week to minimise the effects of the COVID-19 virus outbreak on our activities. Our first priority is of course, the safety and health of our staff at LAA HQ, along with maintaining the best possible service to our members. We made plans based on three contingency levels; normal service with additional hygiene precautions, reduced staffing, and a full closure of our offices. On Tuesday 17th March, in line with Government advice, we moved to 'Level 2', with fewer members of staff in the office and others working from home on rotation, using 'cloud' computing to keep up with permit renewals and engineering approvals. We still have the option to activate 'Level 3'; with the office effectively closed and all the HQ team working from their homes. (NB this has now been activated—Editor)

Other contingency plans have been prepared to provide advice and support to LAA Inspectors. While there is a low risk of COVID contact during any inspection, some inspectors are in the 'at risk' age group and should self-isolate. For those that wish to continue, we've already secured a dispensation from the CAA to allow those who were due to revalidate their approvals at training events this spring, to maintain their current status until September.

The virus precautions have inevitably impacted other areas. There has been widespread cancellations of events until June and one major concern is whether any further virus control measures might trigger Government action to curtail sport flying completely. We are in daily contact with the CAA and DfT on this and have made the case against any prevention of GA flying, unless there is clear and pressing evidence of health or safety implications. So far at least, they are happy that VFR flights can continue. However, many flying clubs and schools are now restricting dual instruction, which may have a future impact on PPL revalidation and licence renewal flights. We're working with the CAA to seek mitigation on that. We would also advise owners whose aircraft may shortly require a CofV renewal check flight, to consider carry out such a flight sooner rather than later, in case increased precautions do restrict flying in the future.

Finally, a plea to make sure we all keep in touch with our flying, and maybe ex-flying friends; offering help and support to those who might need to be isolated. It is at moments like this our Struts and our Association itself can do much more than promoting fun flying. Let's look after ourselves, our friends and fellow flyers. Oh, and by the way, while we'll keep the situation under review, we're still progressing with our plans for the LAA Rally at Sywell on 4, 5, 6th September. Something to look forward to. See you there!

Best regards

Steve Slater

CEO

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FUEL, AND OTHER FUNDAMENTALS (Sadly, another true story) by Graham Clark

We return to our series of articles from which we all hope to learn something useful from Pilot X. Many thanks to Graham for these thoughtful insights. They are reprinted with very kind permission from Flyer Magazine

It was a fine August day when Pilot X decided to roll out the club's Rans S-12 Airaile and give it an evening whirl round the local patch. He liked flying in the evening, because the wind drops to give a pleasant ride without a lot of the day-time thermal turbulence experienced, but beloved of soaring pilots. It may be good for the soaring brigade he mused; but putting it mildly, turbulent air in a two-seater with a maximum take off weight of 400 kg can detract greatly from the pleasure.

The Rans S-12 Airaile comes either complete or as a kit. Now aged 44, X had flown a grand total of 55 hours of which 21 were on the high-wing S-12. The S-12 is an interesting if perhaps somewhat unconventional design, powered by a pusher configuration liquid-cooled Rotax 582. This arrangement has the distinct advantage that it enables the designer to provide a beautifully clear and unobstructed helicopter-like forward view, but the engine and prop are mounted in the fuselage frame directly behind the two side-by-side seats in an enclosed cabin.

To give the prop sufficient clearance from the rear fuselage boom, the engine is mounted fairly high behind the cockpit. This unusual arrangement was cause for a special remark in the pilot's notes, observing that pusher aircraft with a relatively high thrust line have an unusual characteristic not usually found with tractor engines and propeller arrangements.

The pilot's handbook says: "When power is increased in the S-12, it has the tendency to pitch nose-down. This can be compensated by slight backwards pressure on the stick. The tendency is particularly noticeable in slow flight. For this reason, the pilot should be careful to maintain sufficient speed in this phase of the flight, because if he should increase power during the final approach to land, this may result in a nose-down pitch in close proximity to the ground, and leave the pilot insufficient time to compensate with back-pressure. By contrast, if power should be reduced in this phase much more than is necessary, the S-12 has the tendency to pitch nose up, but this can be corrected by slight forward pressure. This is the sole critical phase of the landing."

Like the other members of his club, X had done the requisite dual training before being allowed to fly the S-12 solo. Of course, the club provided members with a standard pre-flight checklist based on the Pilot's Notes including the 'Engine Start' procedure, which then contained no instruction to check 'FUEL ON'. However, in a later chapter the

handbook observed that: "If the fuel tap is closed, there will still be fuel in the line between the tap and the engine. The engine will start, but will fail at low height immediately after take-off."

Unfortunately, the pilot's notes said nothing about the correct action to be taken following an engine failure at low height, particularly in view of the fact that the pitch response is critical in the landing phase or in slow flight.

With 21 hours S-12 time in his logbook, X probably thought he had all the bases covered. Like most microlights the S-12 is of very simple design, which is great because it is reliable, light and suitable for properly briefed low-time pilots in calm conditions. And today, the CAVOK conditions with 40 km visibility and temperature of 23°C were perfect. He had an 800-metre grass runway and a gentle 090/4 kt crosswind. No rush; no sweat.

However, what can go wrong will go wrong, and this evening it did, because X lined up on Runway 26 and had the wheels off after about 200 metres, but after ten to 15 seconds he experienced a total engine failure at low height. The S-12 dropped its right wing and crashed nose-first into the ground with fatal results.

A serious accident always triggers a full investigation into the circumstances. Of course, the accident inspectors did a thorough job and found that the Rans had taken off with the fuel tap shut. The engine had failed while developing full power at low height. The Rans had stalled, hitting the ground about 300 metres after the threshold of Runway 08 in an almost vertical 80-degree dive and the nose buried 25 cm into the surface of a dry ploughed field. The kinetic energy of the rear-mounted engine, combined with the aircraft's impact into the ground, compressed and destroyed the fuselage, and killed X. The tailplane was slightly distorted, while the wings were twisted with torn fabric. All the flight controls were still connected, while the prop and motor were undamaged. The cooling system had no leaks and the ignition circuit and sparking plugs were all fully functional. The carburettor contained no fuel, but the throttle flap was still fully functioning. By the time the investigators arrived, all fuel had drained from the wreck.

QUESTIONS

1. What was the first fundamental mistake leading to the accident?
2. What was the second factor leading to the accident?
3. What should X have done when the engine failed?

LAA COURSES

In light of the current situation obviously all courses are withheld for the foreseeable future. When 'normal service is resumed' please check the LAA website: <http://www.lightaircraftassociation.co.uk/Courses/courses.html> to see any courses which may be running. This newsletter only usually comes out monthly and often it's too late to follow any link as by then they are fully booked.

CAA UPDATES

Ageing Aircraft Component Reliability & associated Acceptance of Replacement Parts

CAA Safety Notice SN-2020/005:

<http://publicapps.caa.co.uk/docs/33/SafetyNotice2020005.pdf>

For GA pilots, owners and operators: this Safety Notice is published to raise awareness of reliability challenges relating to parts fitted to older aircraft types and the acceptance criteria relating to sourcing replacements.

Rules of the Air: Rule 11, paragraph 6, clause (c)

This has caused some fuss in *Flyer Magazine* and on the Flyer Forum (<https://forums.flyer.co.uk/viewtopic.php?f=1&t=114992>) because some pilots flying in, out of or through Manchester City (Barton) ATZ have been sent on GASCo courses for having failed to adhere to the above.

The clause states that: *The commander of an aircraft flying within the aerodrome traffic zone of an aerodrome must... if the aircraft is fitted with means of communication by radio with the ground, communicate the aircraft's **position and height** to the air traffic control unit, the flight information centre or the air/ground communications service unit at the aerodrome (as the case may be) **on entering the aerodrome traffic zone and immediately prior to leaving it.***"

Do you do this? Position and height? When leaving a busy aerodrome and about to leave its ATZ, what do you do if you can't get a word in edgeways? Not leave the ATZ? Interestingly the CAA Skyway Code, while repeating the requirements of clause (c), gives an example of a report on leaving the frequency/ATZ: "G-ME, now leaving the ATZ to the south west, changing to Luton Approach 129.55". Some more consistency is needed; meanwhile be fully aware of what Rule 11 demands!

The CAA has sent out a reminder:

UK national private pilot licence holders are not able to fly an aeroplane with an EASA certificate of airworthiness from 8 April 2020 due to a European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) derogation expiring on 7 April and not being renewed. The change does not affect balloons or sailplanes including powered sailplanes.

This of course applies to old lifetime full PPLs as well as to NPPLs. The solution at the moment - holding an EASA PPL or LAPL. The solution in the future - who knows?

Once again this is irrelevant in light of the latest Social Distancing ruling restricting any travel to the airfield anyway but will probably still apply once those restrictions have been lifted unless negotiations continue and are successful.

Brize Norton airspace infringement hot-spot

This infringement update is the eleventh in a series of narratives focusing on identified infringement hot-spots in the UK. It has been written by members of the Air Traffic Control Unit at Royal Air Force Brize Norton.

The Airspace and Safety Initiative website (<https://airspacesafety.com/updates/>) has a new infringement hot spot write-up from RAF Brize Norton.

AEROEXPO UK Along with every other event this has been cancelled too!

However, they will be back next year on 10 – 12 June 2021.

A full refund will be made for Tickets purchased and Landing Fees paid for the 2020 Show. The Finance team will be dealing with these over the next one to two weeks. If you have not received a refund by 6 April please email: tickets@aeroexpo.co.uk

PILOT X ANSWERS

1. The checklist based on the pilot's notes omitted the basic requirement to check that the fuel was ON.
2. X was either not properly briefed on, or was ignorant of the unusual pitch characteristics associated with the pusher arrangement.
3. His immediate reaction should have been to push the stick forward to maintain gliding speed and land straight ahead.