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# Brissle Strutter

Newsletter of the LAA Bristol Strut **APRIL 2026**

## Message from the Chair

Dear Strut Member,

It's a delight to be writing from home this time – and it was great to see so many of you for Bill Perrins' enthralling presentation in March (reported on elsewhere in the newsletter). April's meeting, as trailed at the end of the evening on the 19<sup>th</sup> March, is going to be on a bit of a self-help basis. Unfortunately Chris Wright wasn't able to make his presentation work in January, so we're going hopefully to be able to see his pictures from an interesting collection of classic aircraft this time round. Trevor and I are also going to do a short presentation on TopNav, in the hope of encouraging some of you to take part in this year's competition – and we have our formal debrief from the organisers from last year to run through so you can get an idea of what it's all about. We will also be running through the details for this year's Strut Fly-In – as well as working out just what we have to sacrifice to the weather gods to ensure a flyable day! Oaksey Park are very keen to have us back, so we just need to sort the dates out – which I will have done by the date of the April meeting. And if anyone else has anything they would like to share – please let Trevor or me know beforehand!

Of course this year is the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the LAA/PFA, and Amy Whitewick of the Wessex Strut came up with a great poster to advertise it – see the end of the Newsletter and our banner above. It would be great to have a Strut 'push' on one of the days and see how many of our aircraft we can get up there. A bit closer in terms of time, there is also a Flying Farmers Association fly-in to Oaksey Park to which we have all been invited – where my ex-boss, Air Chief Marshal Sir Glenn Torpy, will be giving a talk on his career. A pilot's pilot, it should be a fascinating session. Details are at the end of the newsletter.

Finally – just a reminder for those who might be feeling a bit 'rusty' after the biblical rainfall earlier this year put paid to flying for the first 2 months, that there are lots of resources available to help with approaching flying after a while away. One that I would certainly recommend are the Astral Aviation online workshops, and they've recently held one on the subject of 'Return to Flying' – you can watch it on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XBtRRczvCLO> – always lots of practical advice. If you're feeling particularly in need of sharpening up you could always book a session with an LAA Coach, FI or CRI...

Safe landings – especially on soggy fields!

Neville

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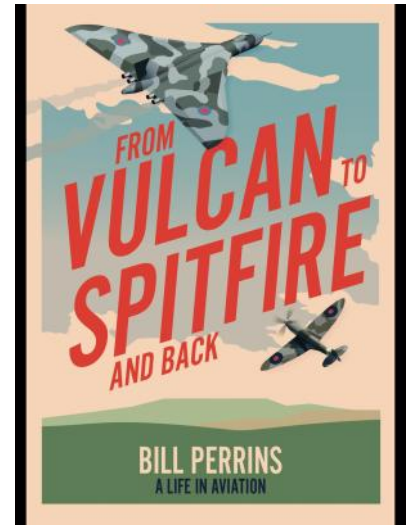
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## Last month's meeting

We were pleased to welcome Bill Perrins. Like many of us he started his flying career in the ATC with a Chipmunk flight. Unlike most of us, that's what he's flying now! His introduction to flying prompted him to apply to the RAF. After initial training he was posted on Vulcans, during which time he was involved in the extraordinarily lengthy Black Buck missions to the Falklands Islands.

Subsequent postings took him to Jet Provost tours, followed by fast jets with the Tornado F3. This included a "Close Encounter of the Worst Kind" with another Tornado; fortunately both landed safely. He moved to commercial flying with Monarch and Virgin, but also built up his tailwheel hours flying Yaks and other aircraft. This eventually led to the opportunity to fly Spitfires. Ultimately he was invited to join the team flying the last airworthy Vulcan XH588. Now he continues with his beloved Chipmunk — but enough here, you can read the full story in his book due to be published on 10 April!



## This Month's Meeting

See Message from the Chair on page 1. April 16, 19:45, BAWA Room 4. If you have anything you would like to "Show and Tell", come prepared!

## Information from the CAA and elsewhere

The March edition of CHIRP GA Feedback Is [here](#).

The next AIRAC update is on April 16th; don't forget to keep your electronic databases current.

I attended the Bristol Local Airspace Infringement Team meeting at the end of the month. Nationally infringements are showing reduction of around 3%/year, so there is more to do. Greatest hotspots are the Solent and Stansted areas. Bristol numbers are fairly flat since a significant drop in 2024, hotspots in SW (most) and NE corners. Of 18 infringements in 2025, 8 were from aircraft based within 25nm of Bristol.

Brize ATC updated us:

- weekend Brize LARS closure will become permanent.
- runway closed for 4 months from July for resurfacing. Planned for weekday LARS to continue and the airspace to remain (though it was pointed out that this was inconsistent with Flexible Use of Airspace policy).

RAF GSA are moving from Keevil to a new home at Colerne from 4 April, so look out for gliders and winch launching!

GASCo wound up operation at the end of last month, but you may still be able to find the report of their investigation into the human factors effects of Electronic Conspicuity devices in UK GA [on their website](#). If not, I have a copy. Well worth a read — one finding is that there are 79 combinations of EC devices possible giving a 50% average chance of detection at best whereas pilots estimated that they had 60% chance of detecting traffic and a 70% chance of being detected - thereby overestimating the capability of their equipment.

Also on the GASCo website is a reminder that the RAF's in house safety magazine - Air Clues - is freely available [here](#).

## Where to go in April

Landing vouchers:

*Flyer*: Skye, Balado, Barton, Audley End.

*Light Aviation*: Old Warden

April 18 Bodmin Pasty fly-in → → → →



As mentioned in the Message from the Chair, the Flying Farmers' Association Pop-In to Oaksey Park on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> April (Reserve date Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April) includes a talk at 12:00. Guest speaker Air Chief Marshal Sir Glenn Torpy. Contact [Neville.stops@gmail.com](mailto:Neville.stops@gmail.com) for more information.

And looking ahead to June, now is the time to register for the Royal Institute of Navigation's [TopNav 2026](#) at Compton Abbas, Popham, Bodmin. White Waltham or Conington. The DENS crew came overall 2nd in 2025, so why don't you have a go!

## Tailpiece - Structural test #3 of several

An early investigation into the suitability of a helicopter for urban commuting.



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# LAA RALLY 2026



LEICESTER AIRPORT

4th, 5th AND 6th SEPTEMBER 2026