



Letter from the Editor

We have a rich mixture this month, including a review of NASA's plan to put boots on the Moon. But we find fault with the call for a landing within the next five years, seeing instead why a more modestly-paced effort will bring along the commercial New Space brigade while easing the budget for a cash-strapped NASA.

But Apollo continues to attract interest as we close in on 50 years since the first landing by astronauts, considering the legacy of the programme on our broader perspective of the Earth and its environment as well as the cultural impact it had. We also continue with a series describing unique roles played by British scientists and engineers, as Pat Norris describes his work for Apollo.

Returning to examine new technologies for planetary exploration, NASA's Mars 2020 will carry a helicopter and we have the feeling this could just be a significant game-changer in the exploration of worlds with an atmosphere. If flying reconnaissance platforms can be seen to work, it could add a fifth stage of development after fly-bys, orbiters, landers and rovers.

Next month – the Apollo 11 50th anniversary special – brace yourselves!

David Baker

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COVER: NOAA-19 METEOROLOGICAL SATELLITE OF THE TYPE MONITORED BY DUNDEE SATELLITE RECEIVING STATION / NOAA

Features

12 Reinventing the future

SpaceFlight takes a long hard look at current NASA plans for getting boots on the Moon, finding President Trump's clamour for a 2024 target date to be unrealistic.

18 Course Correction

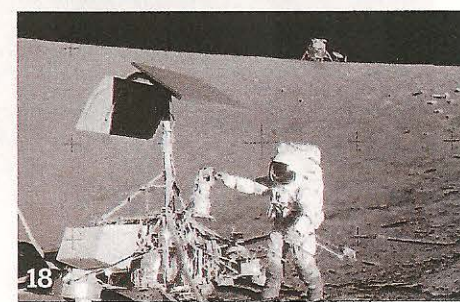
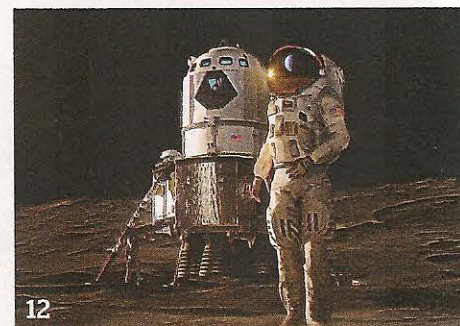
Former NASA contractor on the Apollo programme Pat Norris shares his experiences of ensuring that NASA got its Apollo spacecraft on course for the Moon – accurately!

22 Apollo 10 - so near, yet so far

In the final instalment to his trilogy on the meaning of Apollo, Nick Spall FBIS looks at the environmental and cultural aspects of this historic venture, 50 years on.

28 Mars Whirlybird

The Editor takes a look at what could turn out to be a seminal shift in rover support for Mars exploration as NASA gives the green light to the first helicopter designed for the Red Planet.



Regulars

2 Behind the news

DSRS threatened with closure

4 Opinion

6 ISS Report

9 March – 10 April 2019

36 Obituary

Valery Bykovsky (1934-2019)

38 Multi-media

The latest space-related books, games, videos

42 Satellite Digest

Valery Bykovsky (1934-2019)

44 Society news / Diary

What's happened/What's coming up



OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The British Interplanetary Society promotes the exploration and use of space for the benefit of humanity, connecting people to create, educate and inspire, and advance knowledge in all aspects of astronautics.

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Published monthly by the British Interplanetary Society, *SpaceFlight* is a publication that promotes the mission of the British Interplanetary Society. Opinions in signed articles are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or the Council of the British Interplanetary Society. Registered Company No: 402498. Registered charity No: 250556. The British Interplanetary Society is a company limited by guarantee. Printed in England by Latimer Trend & Co.

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