



Letter from the Editor

This year we are saddened by the loss of several pioneers in human space flight, as we went to press the most recent being Alexei Leonov – the first man to leave his spacecraft and float freely connected only by an umbilical. We will publish an obituary in the next issue with thoughts from some of those who knew him well, including Helen Sharman whose own flight pivoted on his approval that she had the “right stuff”. Of course, she did.

For the present there is much ado surrounding lunar exploration – getting experiments to the surface and, not least, putting the next humans on the Moon within the next few years. But there is also an effort underway to retrieve samples from special places such as the South Pole-Aitken Basin and I am pleased to bring you a detailed account of that activity and why it is so important.

Apart from that – don't forget to renew your subscription and do sign up to the new *Space Chronicle*, also out next month, which will bring you detailed space history from far and wide, written by experts for a better understanding of our past.

David Baker

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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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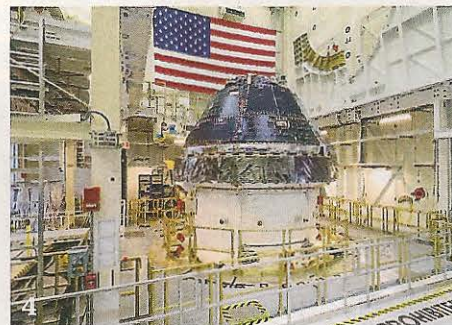
Contributors Gerard van de Haar and Luc van den Abeelen describe the broadening aspects of the US-led international satellite communication systems that are recruiting an increasing number of partners.

20 Grabbing a piece of the Cataclysm

Dwayne A. Day presents an in-depth study of the various proposals, past and present, for returning lunar samples to Earth from a particularly violent impact experienced by the Moon during the early days of its formation.

30 Hanging in the Balance

David Todd reports from the recent biennial UK Space Conference, which brought together the great and the good of the domestic space industry in Newport, South Wales, to carve out a roadmap for future development.



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