



Letter from the Editor

Just as we were going to press, news broke of the death of Alan Bean, Lunar Module Pilot for NASA's second Moon landing and Commander of the second expedition to Skylab. An exceptional astronaut, we will carry a formal obituary of Alan next month. In the meantime, for a very personal insight into this remarkable man, please see the letter from Nick Spall on page 42.

Elsewhere in this issue, we look into the mission of NASA's next Mars lander, now on its way to the planet, and hear from the chief engineer for the Beagle 2 programme about the spacecraft's remarkable discovery on the Martian surface – albeit still with a reluctance to call home! We are sure Colin Pillinger is looking down with a broad grin and a wry smile!

We also reflect on the life and achievements of Willy Ley – a rocket engineer turned publicist for a space programme that had yet to emerge, and a man who probably did more than any other to herald the dawn of the Space Age.

Talking of which... don't forget to firm up your plans for World Space Week in October and do the country proud!

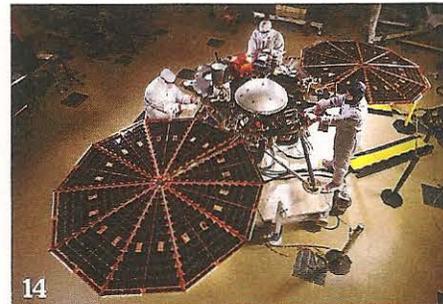
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Features

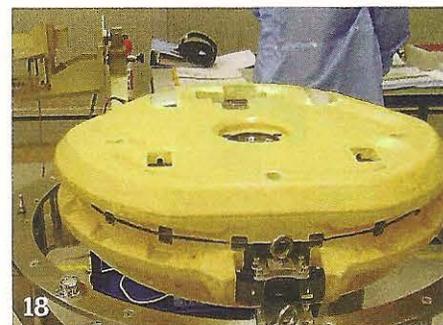
14 Along paths trod by Vikings

NASA's InSIGHT Mars mission is off and running but how does it fit within the general pattern of Mars exploration and what can we expect of it, with its twin CubeSats designed to relay communications during the crucial descent?



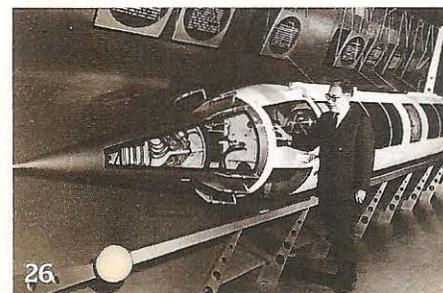
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Dr Jim Clemmet explains how Beagle 2 came to be found residing apparently intact on the surface of Mars and how images from Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter have helped rewrite the final chapter of this so very nearly successful mission.



26 Prophet of the Space Age

Author of a seminal biography of the renowned space age publicist Willy Ley, Jared S Buss gets behind this sometimes enigmatic character and helps us understand how he planted the first seeds of expectation before Wernher von Braun picked up the baton.



30 Happy landings

Phillip S. Clark gives us another deeply insightful analysis of the Russian space programme and examines 135 Soyuz landing times and recovery conditions, providing data which can be useful in predicting future landings.



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COVER: A GRAPHIC VISUALISATION OF THE INSIGHT LANDER AS IT WILL APPEAR APPROACHING MARS. NASA/ESA

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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