



### Letter from the Editor

Without specific planning, this issue responds to an influx of news about unmanned space vehicles departing, dying out and arriving at their intended destinations. Pretty exciting stuff – except the dying bit because it appears that *Opportunity*, roving around Mars for more than 14 years, has finally succumbed to a global dust storm.

Some 12 pages of this issue are concerned with aspects of the International Space Station, now well into its stride as a research facility, and a further six pages reflect on how the UK got involved during the 1980s courtesy of a former President of the BIS who was central to those developments.

Forward to the future again and a fascinating insight into a company based in Edinburgh that plans to put Britain back in the launcher business, this time sending small satellites into space. This is a long overdue feature of Britain's resurgent presence in a broader spectrum of space industry activities. And who knows where they will end up!

But there is much more and a lot besides as we move toward momentous celebrations in this, the year of Apollo at 50!

*David Baker*

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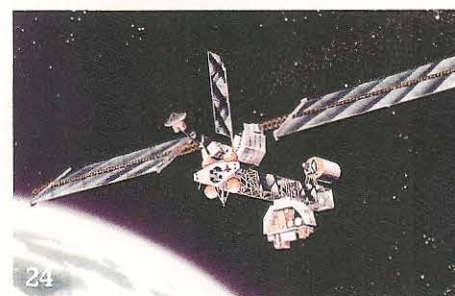
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### OUR MISSION STATEMENT

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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