

## ⌘ About RAeS

### History

The Royal Aeronautical Society was formed in 1866 by the 8th Duke of Argyll and a group of "aerial navigation enthusiasts". This unique group set about prompting heavier-than-air flight 37 years before the Wright Brothers made the first successful, powered flight.

From this start, the Society has striven to maintain its position as a leader, and provider of foresight, within the aerospace community. As a result, the Society and its members have, at many times during its history, been called upon to advise the government of the day and others on the best way forward. During the Second World War, for instance, the Society arranged meetings between aircraft industry leaders and the Services which allowed a free exchange of information.



The Society also set up a technical committee in the UK, staffed by Society members, on behalf of the Minister of Aircraft Production. This committee existed to answer any technical queries the minister had, but also allowed the members to avail the minister of any problems which they felt were impeding the war effort.



Throughout its history the RAeS can be shown to have stimulated the industry and been at the heart of advances in the state-of-the-art. Much of the pioneering work in many aspects of aeronautical study was either presented to, and/or published by, the RAeS. The Society's archives for the latter years of the 19th century show remarkable vision with early work on windtunnels and lightweight structures. One of the founder members had presented a paper in 1867 with the first recorded use of the term "jet propulsion", while in 1881 a member had stated that "it is definitely known that as this speed - 1,100 ft/sec [330 m/s] - is approached the resistance increases very rapidly". Later the Society published Sir Frank Whittle's early gas turbine studies long before his "new" propulsion system received any official support.

If one thumbs through the history books it becomes apparent that there have been very few aerospace endeavours anywhere around the world which have not had Society members somewhere in the team (very often as the leader). Throughout the Society's history, lists of prominent members read as a who's who of aerospace: something which is as true today as it has ever been.

Strong traditions and a distinguished history give The Royal Aeronautical Society a firm foundation on which to build for the future. The desire to emulate and improve on the success of the past is strong and the Society works hard to ensure that yesterday's achievements are the forerunners of many more to come.