

The Baragwanath Barometer

The 10th Issue
January 2011





Editorial

Welcome 2011 and the tenth issue of the Baragwanath Barometer!

This is a year of anniversaries, many of which have to do with Tiger Moths and our own beloved 'Tiggy' which lives in Hangar 1. I was chatting with my father this last weekend and it's amazing to think that Dad purchased and built ZS-UKW when the aircraft was around twenty years old. 2011 marks forty-five years that our Tiger has been in that family and the airframe coming out of the factory in 1941 makes the aeroplane seventy years old this year. October 2011 also marks eighty years since the first Tiger Moth had its first flight as well.

So, it is somewhat fitting that in just over two months time we are heading into Botswana along with another seven De Havilland biplanes – an epic journey for our family – and an experience that could well serve as an anniversary celebration for all of these milestones.

Which brings me neatly to the reason as to why there has not been much on the Baragwanath Barometer front since the last October edition of 2010. As you might imagine, the logistics of planning a trip through the remote Botswana wilderness are

somewhat staggering, and I have subsequently had my hands full prepping our Tiger, getting support aircraft together and organising fuel and accommodation. Nevertheless, things seem to be on track, and as the days draw closer and closer to our departure date, so does the excitement build up! At the moment, I'm struggling to get a proper days work in as my mind continually wanders to what it is going to be like over the salt pans watching flocks of flamingos, or seeing herds of elephants over the Okavango Delta. But most of all, I watch myself flying with six other Moths overhead Victoria Falls – what more iconic 'Out of Africa' image can there be?

You can watch our progress on our website, <http://tigermothbotswanasafari.yolasite.com> if you want to feel jealous, and you can also be guaranteed that the next newsletter will be jam packed with pictures, anecdotes and stories from our Botswana Adventure.

On to the newsletter...

Being the tenth edition, I have tried to make it a bumper issue full of something for everyone. I must thank a number of individuals who have contributed, including Noel Otten, Anne Pickard, Mike Gill, Kelly McAuley, Brian and Charlotte Zeedeburg, Johan Martiz and Paul Roberts.





Without your support and the use of your stories, pictures and suggestions, this newsletter would not be possible.

Thanks must also go to everyone both local and from overseas who reads the Baragwanath Barometer and keep the pages turning.

So, lucky number ten – enjoy it and until next time, blue skies.

Courtney Watson

On the Ground

We had a minor disaster with the earth moving equipment in early January.

Noel arranged for the driver to level out and straighten up our grass runway first. He thought that whilst the ground was still damp, the job would be done quickly. Work started on the morning of 12 January at the north-end and before the grader had gone 100 m it was bogged down.

So a front-end loader was brought from the quarry to pull him out and...the front-end loader sank so far into the quagmire that his wheels almost disappeared. So a bull dozer was brought from the quarry to pull them out.

The crew worked until midnight to free them up...but with no hint of success! At 07:00 in the morning the next day the quarry crew brought in truck loads of broken bricks to put under the wheels of the vehicles. The front end loader was freed... and then almost immediately it sank up to its gunnels again!

Then the bulldozer got stuck! These guys labored until 15:00 that day before they got the three earth movers to the road.

And just as they were leaving, one of the trucks got bogged down. Finally, at about 17:00 they all were freed.

The boss-man was quite relaxed about it...Noel supplied them with cool drinks... and promised a braai and some flips for him and his mechanics.





Young Eagles

What a super day and special thanks must go to Noel for allowing us to use Bara airfield. I must also thank Jason for his support as national coordinator of the EAA Young Eagle Program, who guided my son, Jade in his project.



Thereafter Jason gave an hour lecture on the principles of flight and some other interesting aspects of aviation.

We had scrumptious boerewors rolls and thereafter put the wings on the Harvard. What fun and how delightful to see young adults getting active and dirty, working together and enjoying themselves.

Thereafter we were treated to a model airshow where the boys flew all sorts of aeroplanes and helicopters for about an hour.

The day was a total success for aviation.



Special thanks to Keith Irwin for flying his Jabiru across from Rand. He wouldn't even accept payment for his expenses.

Thanks also to Trixie for entertaining the masses and helping with feeding the boys. The program formed part of Jade's leadership course.

Jade came up with the concept of hosting a Young Eagles Day for his school (essentially the aviation group at St John's College)

His group was coordinated through Young Eagles and they in turn all had to write an essay as to why they are participating and why they had a "love of flying". These essays were collected by Jason along with the indemnity forms that had to be signed.

The day started off nice and early (06.45) with Keith Irwin in a Jabiru and myself in a Supercub offering flights.





What's with the Weather?

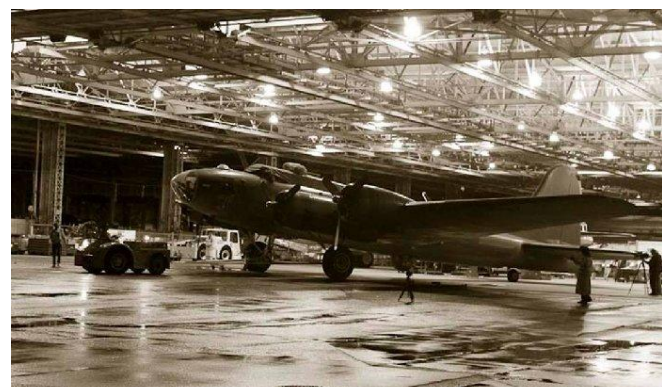
A friend of mine sent through some photographs of Augrabies Falls and the torrents of water that has moved through that gorge from all of the rain. So it isn't just Jo'burg that is under water...



images reflecting off the wet pavement, the last three airplanes are rolled out. The giant hangar doors are raised, the tugs and towbars are hooked up, and with lights flashing, they are moved out of the factory and onto the historic ramp. Where so many have gone before. Then across East Marginal Way and out onto Boeing Field. They are the last airplanes to roll out of these doors. EVER.

The End of an Era

Early Saturday morning in a rainy Seattle . 0300 hrs local time. The location: Boeing's historic Plant II - about to be torn down after three quarters of a century producing thousands of the most significant and historic airplanes ever built. In preparation for demolition, three airplanes that have been undergoing Museum of Flight restoration in the factory's assembly bays will have to be moved. Just as in days past, with lights and





First out isn't even a Boeing airplane - but rather a Lockheed Super G Constellation that flew for Trans-Canada Air Lines. The Connie is destined for the Air Park, next to Air Force One, after a Plant II stay of 1 year and three days.



This Boeing B-29 is the "last of the last."

The now empty factory bays sit - silently awaiting their fate.



Next is a Boeing B-17 - especially heart-tugging as she is the last B-17 to roll out of these doors. Boeing built 6981 B-17s in this factory during WW II, at a peak rate of 16 per day. I guess you could say they built 6981 and rolled out 6982 - including this last ship - 65 years after her last sister.



Everyone present knew they were witnessing history unfolding in front of their eyes. More than a few tears ran down more than a few cheeks, to mingle with the soft Seattle drops of rain.

The ramp that these three historic airplanes roll across, and the building they leave is one of the most historic aviation sites in the world. Here, in April 1944, the B-17 Flying Fortress bombers were produced in this building - that day, and every day!

In October 1944, the first Boeing XC-97 rolled out of these doors later to become the C-97

A poignant moment in time.

Finally, a Boeing B-29 rolls under the raised hangar doors and out into the dark and wet night. The very last airplane that will ever roll from this factory.



transport, KC-97 Tanker, and B-377 commercial Stratocruiser.

And so, History meets History as the last three airplanes roll out of these doors.



In the late 1940s and early 1950s, myriad B-50 bombers and C-97 Transports are being produced in this factory.

On 12 Sept 1947, a radical new airplane - the Boeing B-47 six-jet bomber Prototype is rolled out. This airplane is the direct lineal matriarch for all the jet airplanes Boeing has produced since.

In 1952, in the darkness and wet of a Seattle night, the Prototype Boeing B-52 8-engine Bomber is rolled out and across East Marginal Way. She's shrouded in secrecy and covered by canvas and tarps. This amazing airplane is still in front-line combat service to this day.

And, in 1966, the first Prototype Boeing twin-jet 737 was manufactured in this building and rolled out of these doors on to this ramp. This airplane (which I worked on - then, and which I still work on - now) is in the Museum's collection. She's the first of more than 8000 737s built or ordered since then.

Boeing's Plant II is truly aviation *Hallowed Ground*.





The Baragee Quiz

1. You could have flown one or plotted on one
2. Piper's 12 Indians
3. Fourteen aircraft having a twin tail boom



8. E.E. Lightning's engine
9. What thrust did it produce?
10. Bristol's Bombers
11. De Havilland's insects
12. Shackleton's lineage
13. The 4 types of Hypoxia

4. Who built the Tunan and what was it nicknamed?
5. The Blue Angels first aircraft
6. The Red Arrows flew them



14. The axes of an aeroplane intersect at...?
15. Angle of incidence definition
16. The 4 forces to which an aircraft is subject
17. An aircraft has 3 axes of rotation name them
18. What movement happens around the Lateral axes?
19. What is deviation?
20. One wild horse was a Mustang what was another?

7. Called whispering death by the Japanese.



New Members

A warm welcome to the following members:

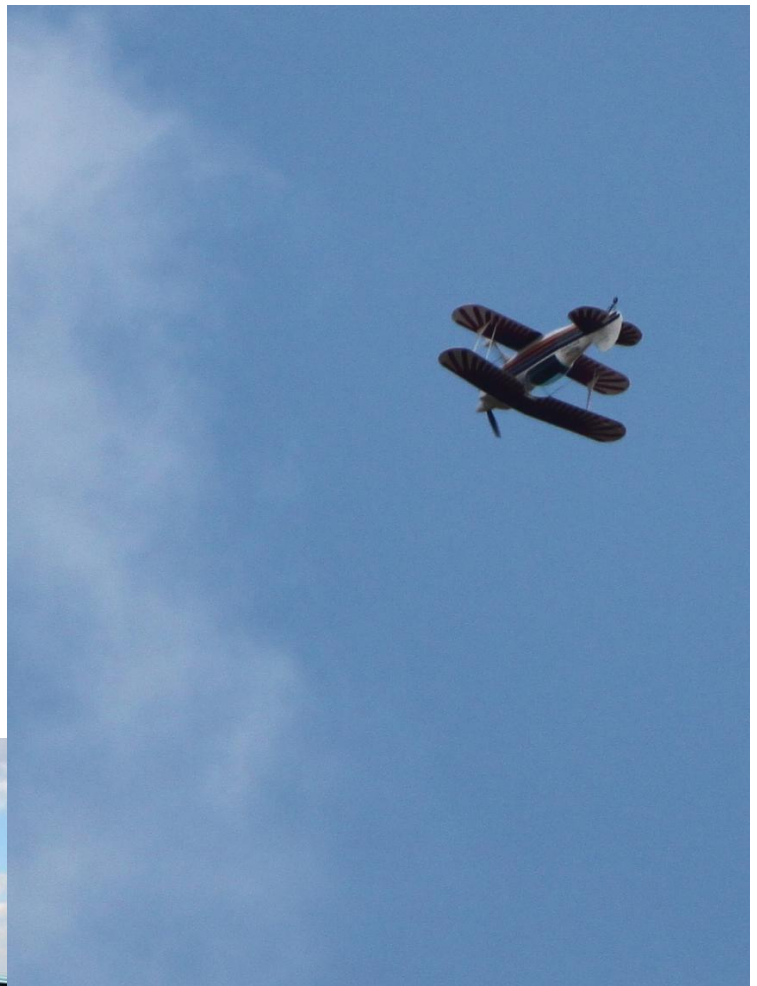
Ian Hanes, (Alan's brother) ... partner in soon to be completed Super Cub ZS-ASI;

Johan Loubser, new owner of Pitts Special ZS-MEL;

Don Lucas C172 ZS-MCW

On Wings of Eagles

Noel I recently had the opportunity to take Trixie Heron up in the Eagle 2 for her first experience of aerobatics. Trixie is a well known aviation personality and avid supporter of the EAA in South Africa.



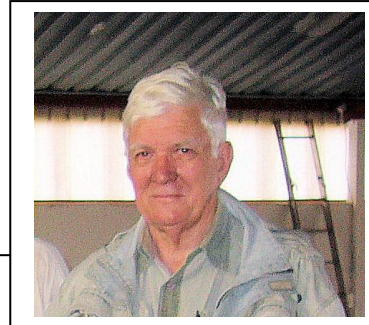
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Bill Holden

This article is long overdue on my behalf, a letter written by Noel Otten to Bill, a key member of JLPC...



Dear Bill,

It is with great reluctance and regret that the JLPC Committee accepts your resignation from the committee.

Without fear of contradiction, yours has been a valuable and enduring service to the club. One which will be difficult to replicate or replace. If my calculations are correct you have given unbroken service to the committee of **48** years.

That is truly remarkable! Importantly, you were "on hand" to help guide the club through one of its most difficult periods the move from its original home to its present site and the break-up of the membership into its component parts, viz. "gliding" and "power flying". I am aware that there were others who played a part in keeping the JLPC functional and I am not dismissing their contribution. But you have been the continuing and consistent "thread" that has endured from one committee to the next for nearly half a century.

On a personal note, I recall when I first met you back in 1965. I was 17 years old and learning to fly with Nick Turvey and Mike van Ginkle at AVEX Air based at Rand Airport. You, Piet Nutt, Ewald Wessels and Twisty Winter *what a group!* The core of "aerobatics" in South Africa I don't expect that you remember me from those days, but I was in awe of all of you who had mastered the ZLIN 226.

Then, in 1966, when we all went down to Virginia in Durban for the SAAerobatic Championships, I again had the opportunity to spend time with you. Just being able to be a part of that group was something I have treasured ever since.

That same year, 1966, I was allowed to fly Pikkie Rautenbach's Turbulent but only after I first did some flying in ZS-EMM, a Citabria, which years later you owned and flew as ZS-WEH. That same aircraft is sitting in my workshop today undergoing a complete restoration by Mike McAuley.

Then, in 1970, we met up again when I bought my Tiger Moth and joined the JLPC at Baragwanath. What grabbed my attention from the very first day I was there was the "history" of the club. To this day I am still proud to be a member of the JLPC and this is in no small way due to the likes of you who have been guardians of that history. You have helped create a legacy for generations yet to come.

But it was whilst I was building my Pitts Special ZS-NJO, that I really got to know Bill Holden, "the man"! For 3 years and 10 months you, together with Mike McAuley and Piet Nutt were the most regular visitors I had to my workshop. You were one of the people whose advice I truly respected! If I had any doubts about a manufacturing procedure, a part or process I could count on one of you to set my mind "at ease" with some "good engineering advice". Thank you!

Bill, the JLPC salutes you and thanks you! Your shoes are going to be hard ones to fill!

On behalf of the Committee and Members of JLPC we wish you a peaceful and gratifying "retirement". We expect to see you "out at the club" often.



Mechanical Souls

There are two types of pilots. There are the mechanical, number-crunching, accountant type characters who are concerned with the cold, hard, analytical method of getting people and cargo from A to B. These are the career pilots, with gold bars striped across their shoulders, and the cool professionalism that comes with someone who holds the responsibility of taking packets of peanuts and weary travellers thousands of feet above the ground. They are important because, without this attitude, our own safety in flight would be compromised, and after all, flying is a job for them.

Then there is the other type of pilot, the romantic. This is the sort of person that sees an aircraft not as a series of steel tubes vacuum packed in fabric with an engine bolted to the front, but rather as a living, breathing machine. When they climb into their plane, it is not a series of nuts and bolts; it is a phoenix, which comes alive when the hanger doors are opened, and dies again when they are closed. It is something that rises from the ashes the moment we start the engine and begins to breathe with the fire of moving pistons and articulating control surfaces. This is a machine that has a soul and a heart.

But this idea doesn't hold true for all aeroplanes. Those hardy tin cans, which you often see tied down outside flying schools, abandoned to the elements, do not hold this same sort of character, this personality. They are moulds of the each other, part of a production line that have been bred for a specific purpose and do not retain any sort of individual separation, besides for their registration. They look the same as well, Cessna or Piper; each standing at attention, bravely anticipating what the next student will ultimately try to throw at them.

They remind me of a military regiment, emotionless, hard, cold and expressionless.

But one day, there is a gap in the line, and one of these soldiers has gone missing. Someone has hunted it down, and made it their own. This is where the aircraft goes through a change. From the time it feels the warmth and shelter of a hangar, it begins to resonate with its own sense of identity. It gets a cover to keep out the dust, or a polish, and provides a new sense of amusement to the owner and his or her friends and family. It is the source of smiles and laughter, and carefree patterns in the sky. Its purpose is no longer methodical and sometimes abusive; and slowly from somewhere, this plane begins to develop its own soul.





If you have your own aircraft, you'll understand what I mean. It's the reason why some of our 'toys' are christened with names that somehow suit their personality, and the same reason why they are spoken to in quiet whispers when no one is around. It is the reason why we thank them for their loyalty after a particularly good sortie around the airfield, and sometimes, we get the sense that a good landing is not because of the pilot, because of us, but because of how we have treated the aeroplane. It has been given to us, in return for its shelter and attention.



And some planes have more of a soul than others. Some even have universal souls. You have all seen a picture or perhaps a movie clip of a spitfire. In your mind's eye, you might have the sort of picture that I have – the sleek elliptical wings cutting the air like a samurai sword as it banks close to the ground. You can almost hear the Merlin engine screaming against its mountings as it picks up speed. The plane echoes with energy and power and beauty. The wings flex against the G-Forces as the spitfire twists level and then gulps up high for an aileron roll. The sun glints from the

cockpit, where the occupant is almost forgotten and it seems as if the airplane is flying of its own accord. The world tumbles inverted, and then spins level again. And just like that, with a gentle wing wag, the spitfire disappears from sight.



How can something as perfect, as beautiful, as inspiring as that, not have a soul? And what cascades through my thoughts even more, is how can a mere mortal have designed something so pure?

The Concorde finds itself in the same class. With its hooked nose and sleek, swept back wings, she stands as a testimony to human ingenuity and performance. She was created well before her time, and has always been and will always remain an icon of Aerial Endeavours. The Concorde would definitely have a girl's name, something smooth and sensuous. That's why, when she was put out to pasture, it was a stab in the heart of the imagination of small boys who wanted to fly.





It would no longer evoke the imagination of youngsters who had a poster of her on their bedroom wall. Yes, Concorde had to retire, but it seems like a step backwards that something so lustrous, so fast, so ingenious could be grounded. It goes against progress, and I almost feel sorry for her. I equate her abandonment with man discovering the wheel, and then destroying it because someone's foot was run over. Concorde did not know why, all of a sudden, after so much loyal service, she was abandoned. You can almost picture a puppy-dog face painted over her nose right now.

And that is what worries me. Imagine that the Wright Brothers decided not to pursue their flirting with flight because society's bureaucracy thought that it might not be a good idea. We would have all lost something.

So in our overly cautious paradigm, will we still be able to nurture the boy's imagination within ourselves with the continuing advent of red tape and health and safety? Should I be concerned that we could get to the point where elastic band aircraft are deemed dangerous in the hands of youngsters, or where sport aviation is strangled because of too many insurance implications? Will spit and string aviation still be a reality that we can afford in the future? Will we be able to own or have a share in our own aircraft, complete with heart and soul?

And what will happen to those boyhood dreams that are reflected in films like Stephen Spielberg's 'Empire of the Sun'? Do you remember the part where a Mustang performs a low fly-past amidst the shouting of a bowled-over boy? That moment is burnt into my memory, because it's part of why I wanted to fly in the first place, and I, for one, don't want to lose that innocence that goes along with my own skybound experiences. In this film, the boy screams with enthusiasm, 'P-51 Mustang, ferrari of the skies, whoohooo'. He wishes he could be and can probably even see himself in that plane, free. He has given

the craft a name, something fierce, war-like, but beautiful. It has a label which a thirteen-year-old would think strikes fear into the hearts of all. It has a soul, a life, and the mustang is equated to a person in his terms.

He will be this second type of pilot.

These are the figures that we cannot afford to lose, the grassroots men and women, which are actually just bigger versions of the girls and boys whose imaginations are always turned upwards. These are the pilots that see aeroplanes as companions, as friends, and evoke a personality within them. They are the grown up versions of boys with balsa wood models, that can see themselves cutting the sky into ribbons as they twirl their favourite planes and they run in their gardens. They are the same people who stop what they are doing and can't help themselves but to glance up when an aeroplane flies overhead. They are the ones who constantly watch the sky, and instead of seeing blue and white, see themselves with stick in one hand and throttle in the other, swimming about in it. They visualize themselves flying around mountains and skimming the sea when they are on holiday.

The pilot in them is always flying.

Courtney Watson





Member Profile

Anne Pickard is one of our newest club members and new committee member. She is assisting primarily with the events committee as she has quite a bit of experience arranging flying events over the last twelve years of her involvement in aviation in various capacities.

Anne started learning to fly at the relatively 'ancient' age of 38 and because she had to overcome an inherent fear of flying, it took her a while longer than usual to go solo and then to get her PPL. She finally managed to reach these milestones through the patience of some incredible instructors to whom she will ever be grateful for never giving up on her.

Anne had the choice of learning to fly either the veritable and trusty Cessna 172, or the DV20 Diamond Katana. She chose the Katana as it seemed like a lot more fun because of the large canopy which gave better visibility. Because of the design which is based on a glider with its long wingspan, this aircraft climbs like a homesick angel and can glide forever. She even did several sessions of full spins, which she described as being quite scary, as the Katana flicks very violently.

In order to gain more confidence, Anne went on to do a night rating on the Katana, as well as an aerobatic course and tail dragger rating on the trusty DHC1 Chipmunk. She grew to love this aerie to the point where she felt it was like getting into the front cockpit and strapping it on like a harness!

She learnt to do barrel rolls, aileron rolls, loops, Cuban eights, stall turns, slow rolls, spins and recoveries and was shown how the Chippie would even come out of a spin all on its own, if all the controls were left alone and there was enough height to recover. The spin would stop and all that was necessary was to recover from the dive. Amazing!

It was such a wonderful, stable aeroplane to fly. One day she even went cloud chasing amongst the fair-weather cumulus clouds which was great fun. Her instructor at the time decided that the best way to end the course would be to enter the Gauteng Regional Aerobatic Championships on the 25th March 2000 held at Barragee.

It was nerve-wracking and learning to put together the sequence required for the entry level graduate competition was not easy, but she took part and came first in the Graduate class (since she was the only entry!) Martin van Straten was her safety pilot.

The sequence required a stall turn into a one turn spin, loop and straight roll. This from someone who was afraid of flying to begin with is quite an accomplishment!

Working in the aviation industry for the past 12 years, she has had the opportunity to fly in many different and interesting aircraft, including the C130 Hercules, Fieseler Storch, Aviatika Microlight, Pilatus PC12, Tiger Moth, L29 Delphin, and several different rotary wing aircraft amongst others.

She currently has 6 types on her license – the Sportstar X303, DHC1, C172, DV20, P28A and PA22 series.

Anne's most favourite aircraft on her license is the latest addition and she has really enjoyed the challenge of getting to know the beautiful and very stable Czechoslovakian Sportstar X303, which I own.





Anne took to it like a duck to water, so to speak, and although she had hardly flown since her last license renewal on a Chipmunk two years ago, with my encouragement, Anne was brought up to speed to do her conversion and license renewal.

I arranged for Anne to have a couple of sessions with Arthur Karatzas, the CFI from Starlite Aviation at Rand. Arthur was able to get Anne up to speed with the necessary requirements for her PPL renewal, putting ZU-EIJ and Anne through their paces out in the GF. Currently there are only five people in South Africa who have the Sportstar X303 on their licenses, and Anne is one of them!

Anne has two grown-up children. She has a son of 27 who is an architect and is living and working in London. She also has a daughter of 26 who lives in Johannesburg. Anne's other great love, apart from flying, is travel and she has visited many unusual and beautiful places including the Ecuador, the Galapagos Islands, New Zealand, Fiji, Peru, Tanzania and many beautiful reserves in Southern Africa.



News from Oz

Hi guys,
We flew to Gloucester (about 1 hrs flight) on Saturday in November over some beautiful countryside and got a few nice pics of UTD. B and C





The Language of Flight

“...a lonely impulse of delight brought to this tumult in the clouds”

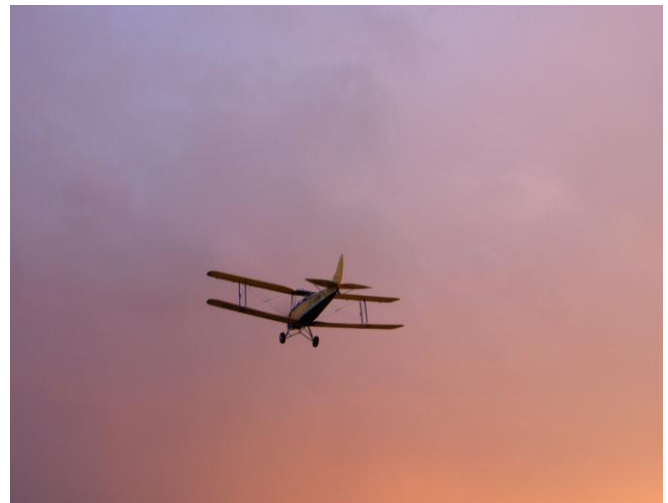
William Butler Yeats

Flying is unique to the individual. It is endemic to each one of us. We present our own fears, our own hopes and our own dreams in that one moment when we grip lightly onto the control column and feel the vibrations of the air around us. With one hand on the throttle we gently nurse the engine to life, cradling the creature made of fabric and tin beneath our two hands, and escape the reality, which our world has conformed us, becoming our true selves, whispering towards our individuality.



Flying in its amateur and sporting capabilities offers something which little else is able to give us. We are able to escape the fears of what was and what is, to the realm of what

can be. Flying is something that we each do with our own unique, original characteristics. Not one of us flies with the same flare, with the same eloquence. We can all escape the bonds of earth, yes, but the reason behind that escape moulds our airborne experiences into something that can only be understood by the individual. Let me explain.



When you start up whatever craft you call your own, you find a reason that lies behind the premise of pleasure, and that moment motivates you to the euphoria that is offered by such an experience. Learning to fly is just a stepping stone to that junction of aviation in which we become part of something much greater than ourselves, and yet something so intrinsic to ourselves. We become part of the legacy that has been written before us, and add our own chapter of own experiences of becoming free in the skies.

How many times have you crept among the clouds and found that all of your earth-bound problems slowly fade beneath you. Flying slips into the moment of soaring above the highest peaks and drifting among the sanctities of the great blue yonder. We leave our problems behind and move closer to a world that is only encapsulated in our dreams. It is why we fly. It is the passion behind it all.



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Each one of us approaches the miracle of flight in a different way. It is the thing that makes each one of us smile, whether it is pulling off a perfect three pointer, or feeling the slipstream buffet the wingtips of your craft after a ideal loop. I read an article that was written last year in 'African Pilot' that articulated the mystery and sanctity of opening a hanger door, to find that aircraft that is enshrined in almost a religious air. It is that same feeling that is engrossed in flight.

Too often all of this is missed in the rustle of everyday life, but that moment of navigating amongst the slipstream of lift, allows all of that to disappear. We must ask ourselves why man intended to fly in the first place, and that reason is the same explanation that holds us in awe of this feat to this day. It is not something that makes us want to mimic the birds; it is something that makes us feel we can be birds in our own right.

I climb into my antiquated craft. Goggles pressed tightly against my head and the whip of air buffeting my jacket from the propeller. I push the rudder bar to line up with the runway, and with my left hand, move that comforting and familiar grip on the throttle forwards. The aircraft gathers speed and the tail slowly lifts up. Still there is more acceleration, and as the air rushes quickly over the wings, sucking them upwards, the

watch my shadow become smaller and smaller and it never ceases to lift my mood. That moment of becoming free of the earth, free of the confines of gravity keeps the smile in my eyes. The earth and the difficulties associated with that place seem to slip away into obscurity and I am alone to the sound of the air and the engine. The aircraft is cosy and familiar, almost to the point where I don't have to think to turn or glide or climb. It almost feels as if I have sprouted these wings miraculously from my shoulder blades, and it is I that am able to create this poetry in the skies. This is what flying is all about and it is the freedom that such a feat is able to give us.

We are not alone in our endeavours in the clouds, but linked by this experience that makes us unique and individual in our flying. We each hold a special point of momentum, whether it is performing formation aerobatics in a Harvard, or the Sunday afternoon flip in a Tiger Moth. It is the moment that makes us whole, and forms the point where we can face the earth again, by escaping it in the wonder of flight. If you are not sure what I am talking about. Just bear this memory in the back of your mind the next time you slip into the confines of you cockpit and take to the skies. I am sure that in that moment, it will all make sense, and you will realize how to cherish this brotherhood of flying.

Courtney Watson



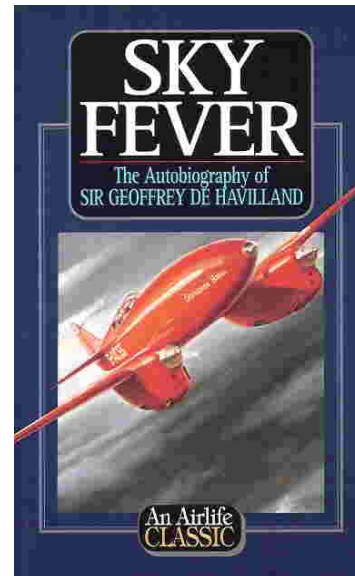
Book Review

'Sky Fever' by Sir Geoffrey de Havilland

'Sky Fever' is one of the most remarkable books that I have read. I was astounded by the story behind the story of such an iconic aircraft manufacturer who was both humble in his achievements and insightful in the creativity of his designs.

Born on 27 July 1882 at Magdala House, Terriers, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, de Havilland was the second son of the Revd Charles de Havilland and his first wife, Alice Jeannette. He was educated at Nuneaton Grammar School, St Edward's School, Oxford and then later Crystal Palace School of Engineering from 1900 to 1903. After engineering school, his first interest was in automotive engineering, building cars and motorcycles. He took an apprenticeship with engine manufacturers Willans & Robinson of Rugby, after which he worked as a draughtsman for the Wolseley Motor Company in Birmingham, a job from which he resigned after only a year. He subsequently spent two years working in the design office of an omnibus company in Walthamstow. He married in 1909 and almost immediately embarked on the career of designing, building and flying aircraft to which he devoted the rest of his life.

Built with money borrowed from his maternal grandfather, de Havilland's first aircraft took two years to build and he crashed it during its first very short flight near Litchfield, Hampshire. Subsequent designs were more successful: in 1912 he established a new British altitude record of 10,500 feet in an aircraft of his design. In December 1910, de Havilland joined HM Balloon Factory at Farnborough, which was to become the Royal Aircraft Factory. He sold his second aeroplane (which he had used to teach himself to fly) to his new employer for 400 pounds - it became the F.E.1 - the first aircraft to bear an official Royal Aircraft Factory designation. For the



next three years de Havilland designed, or participated in the design of, a number of experimental types at the "Factory". In January 1914, he was appointed an inspector of aircraft in the Aeronautical Inspection Directorate and later recruited to become the Chief Designer at Airco, in Hendon. He designed many aircraft for Airco all designated using his initials DH. Large numbers of de Havilland designed aircraft were used during the First World War flown by the Royal Flying Corps and later the Royal Air Force. De Havilland raised £20,000, bought the relevant assets he needed and in 1920 formed the de Havilland Aircraft Company at Stag Lane Aerodrome, Edgware where de Havilland and his company designed and built a large number of aircraft including the *Moth* family of aircraft. In 1933 the company moved to Hatfield Aerodrome, in Hertfordshire. One of his roles was as test pilot for the company's aircraft, in all of which he liked to fly. The company's aircraft, particularly the *Mosquito* played a formidable role in World War II and de Havilland was knighted in 1944. He controlled the company until it was bought by the Hawker Siddeley Company in 1960.

In 1955, de Havilland retired from active involvement in his company, though remaining as president. He continued flying up to the age of seventy. He died aged 82, of a cerebral haemorrhage, on 21 May 1965 at Watford Peace Memorial Hospital, Middlesex.



Film Review

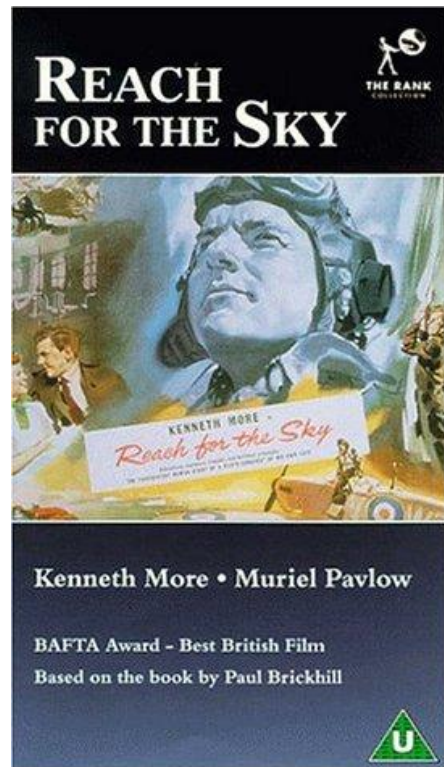
'Reach for the Sky'

Ask Mike Myers what his favourite film is and you might be surprised by his answer. A die-hard fan of British comedy in general and Peter Sellers in particular, you could be forgiven for thinking the Anglo-Canadian would plump for, say, an early Ealing offering or one of the **Pink Panther** pictures. But it's not the auld country's comedy the **Austin Powers** star craves but **Reach For The Sky**, the World War II biopic of Douglas Bader, the British airman who, in the immortal words of Derek Trotter, "didn't let a little thing like having no legs" stop him contesting the crucial chucks of the Battle Of Britain.

Familiar to millions owing to this picture's constant presence on British television since its release, the details of Bader's story have lost none of their power. A gifted rugby player and cricketer, the cocksure Bader lost his limbs in a flying accident in 1931. Given no hope of recovery, he stubbornly fought against the doctor's diagnosis, his pig-headedness leading him to return to the air within a decade of his near-fatal crash. A key contributor to Britain's successes against the Luftwaffe in 1941, Bader's never-die-spirit was so great that, upon being captured by the Nazis, he promptly escaped, so forcing his captors to confiscate his legs. Along the way, Bader met and romanced his future wife, received a knighthood for his public work for the disabled and became a talented golfer.

What a film, one that audiences of all ages will appreciate despite its old black and white cinematography. An autobiography that is sure to aspire and astound. If you haven't seen this one yet, then don't waste any time and buy yourself a copy.

They are available through Amazon or at Phase Two CD Shops.



Johan's Chair

It's funny how alike humans and animals are...I put a new outside chair next to my hangar and everyone was very inquisitive, testing the waters so to speak...



And after one or two people sat down, then the ice was broken, and all and sundry decided that it was 'safe' to use.

Johan Maritz





Congratulations

We must extend our congratulations to Mike and Nicky Gill on the birth of their first son, Matthew... another budding aviator has been born!

Parting Shot



Thanks to Kelly for this beautiful photograph



As you are no doubt aware, Peet Taljaard, our caretaker is in hospital at the moment. Our thoughts are with him and his family.

We hope you have enjoyed this issue. For any comments please email me at cwatson@stithian.com