

The Baragwanath Barometer



Issue 12, September 2011



Editorial from Hanger No.1

I have been overwhelmed by the response from the readers of the Baragwanath Barometer in their contributions to this latest edition. In particular, thanks to Ron Wheeldon, Noel Otten, Brian Poulton and of course our new chairman Dave Gill.

At the same time, the committee seems to be 'moving and shaking' when it comes to Baragee, and I think that their efforts are really starting to pay off, in the regenerating enthusiasm amongst the members as well as creating a really welcoming and attractive airfield for each of the members. But more of that in 'Noel's Notes' and 'Chairman's Chatter'.

From my side, my long sabbatical at work has come to an end, and I am back at St. Stithians, trying to get back in to the swing of what work is like. It has been a bit of a shock to the system to say the least. Flying whenever I want is not going to happen during the week anymore, but we have to earn the bucks to get us in the air somehow, right?

Spring is in the air, and I think that the airfield is going to be looking spectacular this summer so to take advantage, there are a few events coming up before the end of the year which are worth pencilling in to your diary. I have also included a few For Sale notices which are worth having a look at closer to the end of the newsletter.

As always, any contributions are most welcome and once again I hope that you enjoy this latest edition.

Blue skies,

Courtney Watson

Editor



There is something special about shadows in a hangar

Quote of the Day

3 July, the usual lazy Sunday afternoon at Baragwanath:

Dave: "Look at those three vultures circling above the field; I haven't seen vultures here for years."

Bob: "They must have heard you were flying the Tiger today, Dave."





Perspective

As a flying enthusiast, I find myself constantly looking up at the sky whenever I hear some sort of an aircraft flying over. Whether it is a Cessna 172, a Learjet or even a Boeing 747, I am equally drawn skyward by their distinctive sounds that cast a noisy shadow on the earth below. I sometimes feel isolated in this pursuit, though, as companions who rush outdoors and peer through squinted eyes at the sky are few.

still flew close enough to appreciate the clouds and sea and earth and sky around them. Being aloft was something that was treasured and respected.

Now, when one travels through the airwaves in a commercial jet or turboprop, most passengers are drawn immediately to the in-flight entertainment and they close the blinders that cover their personal windows, eager for the journey to be over as quickly as



What I fear is that flying is slowly losing its importance for the average person. For Joe Soap, flying is strictly for the purpose of getting as quickly as possible from one place to the next. It is a means to an end for traveling, and instead of being something wonderful, it is just a quick way to get to a destination.

The pioneers of flight sought a way of extracting a means of moving from one part of the world to the next with relative ease and comfort in flying, but unlike us, they still appreciated what it meant to be aloft. They

possible. I was recently on a flight to the France and I noticed that there was only a very sparse community of passengers that dared look outside the window at all (most of them kids and teenagers).

As we climbed out of O.R. Tambo, the Airbus was faced with a brief smattering of a Winter South African Landscape before it disappeared through a candy floss sky of virgin clouds. The view was simply astounding as I watched the breath of these clouds make the wing beside me invisible for a moment. It caught the light in streaks of gold that stretched like angelic fingers upwards and downwards. I was irritated that the window was positioned slightly behind me and my



other option of a view hole in front of it was obscured by the seat in front of me.

How could all these other travelers be so oblivious to such beauty, though!

The positioning of these windows seemed to substantiate this feeling. They were purposeless as most passengers closed the blinds to keep out the light before we had even taken off. It was almost as if the designers of these huge transporters knew that windows would be one of the features superseded by the in-flight entertainment screen in the backrest of the seat in front. It

was ironic that one of the features of this little screen was a camera that showed a view directly beneath the aircraft, and one could watch what was going on outside not through a window, as it really is, but through a digital projection of the outside world.

I felt sorry for those who missed out on the real flying outside. In my eyes their ignorance is not so bliss.

Perhaps this mindset is endemic of our immediate gratification society where watching the outside is not as enthralling as watching someone else's world through a television screen.

Could this be the reason why the recreational side of flying needs to be nurtured now more than ever. The days of Piper Cubs and Tiger Moths being a tether which the Average Joe can hold on to and afford in their pursuit for achieving dreams of flying have disappeared. Let's face it, flying is expensive, and we must endeavor to source a means of attracting

more people to this market. That is why places like Baragee are so important. They are places where flying at grassroots level is grown and enjoyed.



The majority of the population is unaware that there are people out there that sink every Rand they earn into a fiberglass or rag and tube homebuilt that nestles in their garage, just waiting to take flight.

At Baragee, we have a core of pilots that are a throwback to the pioneers who knew aviation was something to be taken seriously because they too believe the sport is so special.

I read a book recently which puts it all into perspective...Graham Coster writes understandingly and poetically about this inspirational nature of air travel in his book, "Coursairville". This novel reveals the romance and symbolism in traveling with flying boats, but he also describes an account of Alan Cobham:

"But flying itself – what aeroplanes do – was in the inter-war era a constant process of time-shrinking. The race between nautical and aeronautical was joined on 26 February 1926, when the Union Castle ship, Windsor Castle,



steamed out of Cape Town, Southampton-bound, on the same day as the pioneering aviator Alan Cobham took off from there in his de Havilland biplane. Cobham was on his way home after having completed a survey flight from London... The simultaneity was coincidental but, once realized, the challenge was on for an aeroplane to be the first home" (Coster 2001: 83).

The aeroplane won, and can you imagine the thought of trudging the length of Africa in an open biplane, just to prove that air travel was something that should be taken seriously. Would Cobham have expected his flight to be materialized in literally hundreds of flights the length of that same continent with pin point accuracy and no attention given outside the window some ninety years later?

We know that recreational flying is diminishing, but is needed as a vital

component to support commercial endeavours.

Ever pilot who flies a big aeroplane started on a little one, and we cannot forget that. We are all linked through the passions of flight. Flying is not just a hobby or just a job. Because without the spirit of recreational aviation, flying will never be able to achieve its commercial goals either.

Courtney Watson



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skies
since
1945.



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Of this and That

HANGAR NEWS

**JLPC Hangar Project - New 15 x 15 m Hangars
(225 sq.m) – Waiting List Now Open!**

New Hangars

The 'Waiting List' for the new 15 x 15 m hangars is open.

Recently, the committee sent out an enquiry to selected members to gauge the interest of the members and determine what size the hangars should be. The majority of the respondents indicated that the hangars should be 15 x 15 m (225 m²).

With this in mind the hangar project sub-committee is now calling for tenders. If you have been out to the airfield during the past few weeks you will have noticed the earth-works preparation which is underway. The plan is to construct 4 new hangars 15 x 15m. Clearance height will be 3,5 m. The hangars will have 'hard floors, electricity and water. I already have one confirmed tenant for one of these hangars and two 'outsiders' who have expressed an interest. If you are interested in reserving one for yourself, please send me an e-mail. It will be strictly 'first come, first served'! As for rental, our initial calculations put the rental at ± R 2 500- per month. This figure is subject to review.

New 'Storage' Sheds

The 'second' project already underway is the construction of storage sheds. The goal is to

return the hangars to their primary purpose, i.e. to provide housing for aeroplanes. Too many of the hangars are being used for general storage. Already, we have 'recovered' a few hangars and here I wish to say a 'big' thank you to those members who co-operated and put aircraft in their hangars or allowed others to use their hangars for 'flying' machines. This has allowed us to increase our membership.

We are not asking you to give-up your hangars and we certainly don't want to chase you away from the club. We are constantly approached by people who want to join the club, but having access to a hangar is a condition of their membership.

The storage sheds are to be erected on the west side of the clubhouse. They will be 3 x 6 m sheds. The 40ft container you see standing in the 'storage yard' has already been occupied.

Again, contact me if you are interested in one, (or two or three or ...) of the sheds. If you have mates who are in need of a hangar, please pass on 'the message'!

Noel Otten





Frank Persson has a New 'Old' Toy

Totally original 1942 72cu.in flathead Harley Davidson. Original police motorcycle still in original 2 tone colours, with lights and siren.



Forthcoming Events

It's ironic that as a relative youngster in the flying world, my real interest is firmly placed in the 'old' aeroplane camp. I am fascinated by the intricate 'spit and string' that seems to keep these aerics in the sky as well as their aesthetics that hark back to a bygone era of aviation where pioneers solved aeronautical problems with ingenuity and inspiration.

My imagination races when I think about the 1930's, 40's and 50's when (as the old dotage goes) "flying was dangerous and sex was safe." Men and women, armed with courage and common sense (well, nine times out of ten they had common sense), explored the globe in flimsy flying machines and I think that everyone can appreciate the romance that goes along with that bygone era.

So, I have decided to try and put something new together where we will all be given the opportunity to marvel at the 'old aeroplanes' on a regular basis.

Starting from 16th October 2011 (and on the third Sunday of each subsequent month) I'd like to hold a get-together for the old aeroplanes. Aircraft built before 20th July 1969 (when Neil Armstrong set foot on the moon and man was no longer earth-bound) will be eligible to park in the prime space in front of the clubhouse as the 'old aircraft'. So if you have an aerie which qualifies, bring her along! Arrivals are from 10:00 and some tea, coffee and scones will be available at the clubhouse. This is intended to be a family event, so bring along the wife and kids! If you would like to stay on, feel free to bring your own braai meat for a picnic lunch – there are braais available at the clubhouse as well.

Anyone with a more 'modern' aeroplane is more than welcome to come along, but obviously priority parking will be given to the 'old birds'.

Old Birds at Baragwanath



Sunday 16 October 2011

Arrivals from 10:00

Pre-1969 Aircraft are encouraged to come

Email cwatson@stithian.com for details



Chairman's Chatter

Having recently found myself in the position of JLPC Chairman, I am pleased to take this opportunity to say hello to all the members and friends of Baragwaneth.

I have been flying from Bara since the mid eighties and remember the pre- electricity and water days when red dust and cold wors were the order of the day. My two children grew up on the airfield and my son Mike can be regularly seen flying with me in the Auster or flying Bob Hays Tiger Moth.

As you will know there have been rumours over the last few years that we would have to move because we were in the way of a low cost housing development. This put the brakes on any expansion plans that we had and meant that our membership also remained stagnant as no more hangers were available.

We have made extensive enquiries as to this proposed development. We are therefore able to state that there are NO officially lodged plans and that allocated funding does not seem to be currently available for the rumoured project.

Anyone visiting Baragwaneth during the last few weeks will have noticed the preparations for the construction of new "Superhangers" and also the groundwork for storage units to enable us to return the existing T hangers to active use. The hanger repair program is also well under way and you may well be contacted shortly by Noel Otten with a request to allow us to move your aeroplane or hanger contents to allow for well

overdue structural repairs to take place. This will of course only be done with your consent and assistance.

There is a new dynamic committee in place that has the interests of the club close to their hearts. We will soon be holding a Club Open Day at the newly re-vamped clubhouse and all members, friends, families and prospective members are invited to attend to meet and see the progress made.

The Johannesburg Light Plane Club has a new impetus and we intend to see that our facilities and re-modeled airfield are second to none.

See you all at the open day (watch this space for details),

Dave Gill
Chairman





1946 Aeronca 11 AC Chief Taking Shape at Bara



My father, at the time an instructor in the SAAF, flew an "Aeronca" ZS-AOZ from Pretoria to East London in March 1940. I found out from Ray on Avcom that it became 1478 in SAAF service and I believe it was based at East London for a few years. This was a pre-war Aeronca 50 Chief that did not survive the war, but Rob Belling coincidentally did a painting of it and this was posted on Avcom...

Flying this aircraft on 21st March, 1940, my father landed at Cradock and recalled meeting two pre-teen boys on bicycles, sons of the local doctor, one of whom became the father of my wife many years later. They recall seeing this little silver aircraft at about that time, and the two old boys speaking together agreed that they had indeed met that day! The 21st of March is my birthday (also many years later) so it is one of those strange coincidences.

The older Ron Wheeldon (Mk1) went on to amass in excess of 30 000 flying hours (mainly

on Vikings, Dakotas and Viscounts) in his flying career which finally ended with 44 Squadron in 1984, when, having just received the Chief of the Defence Force's, he was retired for turning 65. I thought it would be a good idea to get him flying again and bought an Aeronca Chief project" in the USA in order to replicate ZS-AOZ. It turned out that, as a 11AC Chief,

it is a different aircraft really to the pre-war Chiefs, although they do look quite similar, the lower cowling being the real giveaway.

Unfortunately Mk 1 passed on at the end of 2004 and the planned restoration had not progressed. I then spent some time trying to sell it, but none of the "buyers" was actually prepared to pay for it. Then Chris van Hoof went and restored his Chief and it appeared that the estimable Theuns Van Vuuren, having done that aircraft, could equally repair mine.

So it is that N9004E, tossed on its back by a windstorm in Arizona in 1971, and having had no less than 4 potential restorers in the years since – none of whom went on with it – has finally been x-rayed, carefully repaired and now recovered by Theuns in silver. Theuns has begun final assembly in hangar 22 at Barra and she finally looks like an aircraft again. As usual, the budget is ancient history and the cost of the rebuild will probably exceed the market value by a large margin, this including the acquisition of a C-85 to replace the



original A-65 motor, but I look forward to many years' happy flying in this special aircraft – I understand that Chris LOVES his!

The Aeroncas have never had the iconic appeal of the J-3 Cub, but it does seem that they are better performers for the same power and the Chief is an attractive machine.

Ron Wheeldon (Mk ii)



Tales from the Toy Boxes

ZS-WEH CITABRIA

Mike and daughter Kelly McAuley's complete restoration of Citabria ZS-WEH. Mike has stripped this aircraft down to loose 'nuts and bolts' and has rebuilt it to 'like new' standard! It is a superb example of his craftsmanship.



ZU-ASI SUPER CUB

After laying about in a garage for close on 20 Years, Alan and Ian Evan-Hanes' Super Cub, ZU-ASI is nearing completion.





ZS-CMU SKYBOLT

The components of this aircraft spent close on 20 years in storage! We inspected every component; every piece of wood; and once we were satisfied that the timber had not dried out below limits, we started work on the project. It is now structurally complete. Once John Powell decides on his colour scheme and panel lay-out, we will be ready to assemble!



ZS-UGN TURBULENT

This is a project I am happy to be involved with. Some of you may recall Peter from the 'old' Baragee. Tragically, he was murdered when he was attacked in his home in Port Elizabeth about 3 years ago. UGN was his baby. At the time of his death, he was in the process of giving the Turbulent some 'TLC' and this was the problem for his family. When they tried to sell the aircraft, no-one was willing to pay a 'reasonable' price for it. I had the family send the aircraft to me and slowly but surely, we have been working it over. I must say a huge 'thank you' to member Trevor Trautmann who remembered Peter from the 'old' days and he has offered to restore the engine for the 'cost-of-parts' only. I am looking forward to seeing it back in the air.





ZS-VCP SKYBOLT

And last, but not least, my own Skybolt, ZS-VCP, (ex Heine Venter), is nearing the finish line. This project has been stalled for about 2 years due to a number of stupid issues...I measured the lengths of the centre section bracing wires incorrectly and that took more than 6 months and a 'fistful of dollars' to sort out! I also discovered that the crankshaft was cracked. Now, thanks to Bob Cohoe (son of that legendary aircraft homebuilder Murray Cohoe) the Skybolt's engine re-build is nearly complete. It will be, to all intents and purposes, a brand new engine. It has a 'solid flange' aerobatic crankshaft which I had Lycoming modify to take a constant speed prop. I am also fitting a 'cold-air' induction sump which will boost the power by approximately 20%. I can't wait to get it into the air!



My Prayer:

*"Dear Lord,
When I need to swap my 'Spruce and Cloth Wings' for a pair of white feathered 'heavenly' ones, please, please, please don't let my wife sell my toys for what she thinks they cost me! They cost much more than that!"*

See you all out at Baragee! Oh! And if you see me out there, and we've never met each other, please 'pop-in' and say "Hi!"



Noel Otten

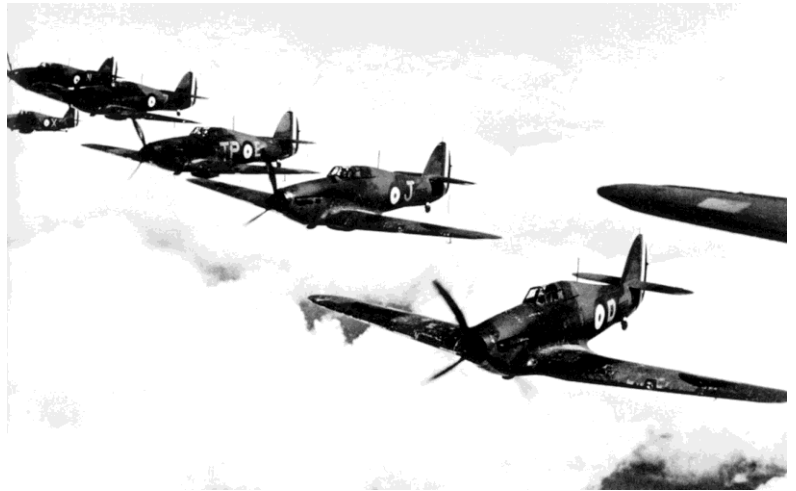
An advertisement for Spitfire beer. On the left is a tall glass of beer with a thick head of foam. In the center, the text "You started it." is written in large, bold, white letters with a blue outline. On the right is a bottle of Spitfire beer on a tap. At the bottom right, the text "The BOTTLE of BRITAIN" is written in white. The background is red. In the top right corner, the website "www.shepherdname.co.uk" is visible.



Hawker Hurricane Mk 1

There is an ongoing debate about “warbirds” – especially the more historically significant – should they be grounded to be tucked away as static displays in museums, or is it acceptable to fly them? Every time a warbird crashes, the debate starts again, driven normally by people who do not own them or have anything to do with operating them. Indeed, having been closely involved with warbirds for some 14 years now; I have never heard a restorer or operator advocate grounding.

There have been quite a number of accidents, the list is quite daunting – Hoof Proudfoot in the P-38 at Duxford, Mark Hanna in the Bouchon (Merlin powered 109) near Barcelona, the last airworthy Mosquito in the UK, the crash of the Messerschmitt 109G ‘Black 6’ at Duxford, the RN historic flight’s Firefly Mk 5, the Jet Heritage Hunter F 4, the French Dewoitine 520, the Super Corsair in the USA (pilot survived), P-38, Hellcat, Bearcat, Heinkel He 111, Corsair and a few Mustangs in the USA, and locally the demise of the Percival Provost, taking with it Rich Culpan, both flyable Mk 9 Spitfires, two L-29s, two L-39s, the Stearman and the Lightning T5. The list is as long as it is sad, Johnny Hattingh,



Gabriel, Martin Van Straaten, Mark Beckley and Dave Stock. It is quite a catalogue and that is just what I can think of sitting at the computer. Generally, the pilots are killed and, also generally, they are neither inexperienced nor foolish. On the contrary, they are generally very experienced, charismatic men of great energy, vision and ability. Each of them leaves an enormous hole in the lives of those who knew them, and I count two on that list as good friends of mine who I miss very much to this day.

Yet it is not just warbirds that crash and take good people with them, is it? My brother was killed in a Cessna 210 crash in Etosha and all pilots can probably reel off a list of names of those they know who were killed in air crashes. In South Africa, most of us can reel off a list of friends lost in hijackings, robberies and plain ordinary car accidents. People get killed daily in all manner of ways and even if you limit the list to just pilots, I’m guessing more succumb to heart attacks, cancer and non-aviation incidents than in air crashes. The fact is that life is a fatal disease and all of you mortals are going out one way or another and even the most saved are generally not rarin’ to go – death is an unpleasant fact of life that we like not to think about.





When other people, non flyers or non enthusiasts, decide to use the statistics as a lever for removing the liberty of those who are enthusiasts to do what they are enthusiastic about, in the name of preserving historic artifacts, they make a big mistake. In May 2007, in England, I found about as eloquent an argument for “hands off warbird flyers” as I have seen. It is Peter Vacher’s Hawker Hurricane Mk 1.

There is a Hurricane Mk IIC preserved at the war museum in Saxonwold and it is a pleasure to see, but it is an artifact. I discussed with a General I met in the eighties, then the curator of the museum, the pros and cons of restoring that very aircraft to running condition. He felt that would be wrong, because as an artefact it is important that it is preserved exactly as it was, down to the pistons in the bores. He has a point – most of the aircraft in that collection are unique and irreplaceable and they should be preserved as they are as long as the will remains. Yet, if I send a quiz question to Highveld radio to ask what fighter Mick Mannock flew for the bulk of his 74 victories, they will not use it. Why? The bulk of their

listeners haven’t a clue who Mick Mannock was and the beautifully restored SE 5A at Saxonwold is simply a funny old aircraft with two wings (if they notice that much). The World War II generation is also quietly fading away now and with them goes much of the significance of the weapons of their war, except to a small audience of history buffs. As new history is made, it tends to crowd out the old and it won’t happen yet, but the time may well come when some of the Saxonwold exhibits will be consigned to the scrapheap (still complete with their original pistons). It





will not happen to the Hurricane, The Spitfire, the 109s – any of the aircraft actually – as long as it is possible to fly “warbirds”. Not because they are historically significant, but because of airframes is so large and the supply so small, that they are worth a fortune.

In contrast to the Saxonwold Hurricane artifact, the Hurricane I met in the UK is a working – some would say living – machine, a time machine. It has the power to take one back to 1940, to stand in the shoes of members of “the few”, to touch and smell and hear, to experience the reality of the machine that saved the world as we know it, 67 years after it was saved.

Peter Vacher, a car enthusiast who has for many years rescued ancient Rolls Royce motor cars from dusty repositories in India and painstakingly restored them to their former magnificence

quite literally stumbled, in 1996, on the remains of a Hurricane. It was in the grounds of an Indian University where it had apparently been dumped in about 1946. His knowledge of old aircraft then was scant and he actually initially thought it was a Spitfire. It had been complete and freshly overhauled in 1946, but 50 years in the weather and the normal vandalism had not done it any good – the wood and fabric had rotted to nothing, the instruments had been stolen or smashed and the engine heavily corroded. No-one at the University knew what it was or cared and its most likely fate – like South Africa’s other Hurricane survivor in the mid-seventies – was the scrapman. Naturally, once Peter tried to buy it, it became an essential part of India’s heritage that had to be denied to him at all

costs! Don’t you just LOVE people? Fortunately for Peter – and those of us who have an unnatural affection for old warbirds – that attitude was not universal, but it took almost six years of wrangling to get the aircraft out of India and over to the UK.

As time went by, it was possible, through meticulous research and not a little luck, to tease the identity of this aircraft out of the remains. It turned out to be a Battle of Britain veteran that had drawn considerable blood from the Luftwaffe in that pivotal period of



months. Its RAF serial had been R3118 and Peter was able to trace and speak to many of the pilots who had flown her during her RAF career and their stories are evocatively told in the book he has written and self published. Damaged during the Battle of Britain, the aircraft was withdrawn from service, repaired, and then issued to a training squadron as the Mk II Hurricanes became available to the front line. Withdrawn again, she was sent to Wales for overhaul, crated and shipped to India for use by the Far east air force. With the fortunes of war turning rapidly in favour of the allies, and the availability of newer fighters, she never went back into service being struck off charge, with 57 other Hurricane Mk 1’s in 1946.



The Hurricane never received the development that the Spitfire did. There were a number of reasons for this, but it was mainly because of the limitations inherent in the biplane era design using a lot of wood and fabric and its thick wing which limited speed. That of course could have been redesigned, but the development by Hawkers of completely new technologically advanced designs, such as the Tornado and Typhoon, which were state of the art aircraft, meant that development centered on those, leading ultimately to the Tempest and Sea Fury, arguably the best fighters of the war. Aided by the eclipse of the Hurricane in the public mind by the more glamorous and technologically more advanced Spitfire, these factors have tended to make people forget that, in terms of Axis aircraft destroyed, the Hurricane accounted for more enemy casualties than all other British arms combined. Its performance was always somewhat inferior to the Spitfire and 109, not quite as fast at any altitude, but it could out turn either of them, it was relatively easy to handle, easy to repair, resilient, stable and increasingly heavily armed. Fully two thirds of the RAF fighters committed to the Battle of Britain were Hurricane Mk 1s, almost all RAF fighters in the Battle of France were Hurricane 1s, arguably the highest scoring allied ace in World War II, South African Pat Pattle, scored his victories and met his death in Hurricanes, and Hurricanes held the line in every theatre in the early days of the war when it seemed the allies would be overwhelmed. It has been suggested that, had the Hurricane not existed, the Axis would have won the war. Certainly, it would have been a much closer run thing and the historical significance of the Hurricane Mk I is therefore strong.

One of the downsides of any historic performance machine is that the temptation is strong to enhance the performance with later technology. There are today around a dozen Hurricanes airworthy globally, but these are universally later developments of the aircraft. The famous Merlin engine, which



the Hurricane shares with the Spitfire, Mustang, Mosquito, Lancaster, Warhawk and others underwent continuous development during the war, ultimately producing as much as 1700 shp and the most numerous survivors are naturally late production examples which tend to be fitted to warbird airframes, giving certain aircraft performances their wartime crews could only have dreamed of. As a case in point, the only airworthy Spitfire Mk I, owned until his death by the Hon Patrick Lindsay, had a Merlin 45 engine of some 1400 hp, proper to the Mk V Spitfire, and had been stripped of wartime impediments such as guns, armour plate, heavy radios and the like. This lightness with enhanced power imbued it with a performance superior to any other Spitfire flying.

Peter Vacher wanted his Hurricane to be a completely authentic Mk I, exactly as she was during the battle. Early Hurricanes had an early Merlin, the Merlin 3 of 1050 hp. At the time, that was a remarkable output, but by 1942 it was next to useless and most such early engines were dumped or recycled. The engine recovered with the aircraft had suffered massive internal corrosion and was thus useful only as a donor of a few parts, but Peter managed to track down and acquire no less than three such engines so as to equip his Mk I properly. He meticulously researched and then set about finding authentic



components throughout the machine down to the original type of IFF and radio and commissioning the recreation of the correct type of cloth covering for the wiring (although modern specification wires are used in the interest of safety). To comply with modern airworthiness standards, a modern VHF radio and a modern transponder have been added, given that the channels of the original radio are not compatible with modern communications.

Having lost six years to Indian officialdom and mindful that time is precious, Peter did not undertake the restoration alone. He commissioned teams of restorers and had considerable help from an Australian based Napier expert, car restorer and Boeing 747 captain, Bill Bishop and others. The result is quite simply stunning. A feature of the Hurricane I had not previously realized was the fantastic accessibility of controls and components because the sides of the fuselage around the cockpit are removable and are removed in pre-flight procedures. This actually allows the ground crew to see what they are doing, something which does not seem to concern most designers. To be able to do your checks with adequate light and easy access, rather than digging in dingy recesses while contorted over the cockpit coaming, is a revelation and may go some way to explaining why this aircraft proved so maintainable in the field!

If those who would stop warbird flying had their way, this remarkable story would

not have happened. I can only speculate as to the cost of the recovery and restoration of this machine, but it probably represents around R20 million of private money – very few indeed would spend that on a single museum exhibit! It was essential to Peter that the Hurricane should fly and fly she does from a grass airfield not far from the old MG works at Abingdon. Peter limits his personal operation of the aircraft to taxiing, but his son has flown it and a small cadre of experienced warbird pilots fly her for airshows. The day I was there, Stuart Goldspink, fresh from test flying Peter Jackson's Bristol fighter in New Zealand was taking it off to a display some 200km away, so I managed to watch and participate (to a limited degree) in the pre-flight preparation, wheeling the machine out onto the windswept field and then putting it away afterwards. A thoroughly wonderful experience!

Ron Wheelton





Goering. Goering. Gone.



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The BOTTLE of BRITAIN



“Relax Smudger, it’s one of ours.”

The BOTTLE of BRITAIN



For Sale

PIETENPOL

John Taylor's Pietenpol Aircamper and his Luton Minor are both up for sale. Contact Noel and he will forward some information. The workmanship on these aircraft is superb.



KR-2

Johan Maritz's KR2 is for sale. Contact Johan for details.

TURBULENT

PvdP's Turbulent ZS-UGN is for sale...but only when I've finished it! This particular aircraft was built by one of the best known aircraft builders of the 1970s, Bruce Vivian of Pietermaritzburg. It won the 'Best Homebuilt' award at one of the EAA Conventions in the mid 1970s.



PIPER TRI-PACER

½ (or possibly full share) share in Piper Tripacer ZU-BDF hangared at Baragwanath. Anyone interested can phone Brian on 082 453 7057 or Keith on 083 268 4521.



TIGER MOTH BOTSWANA SAFARI DVDS

DVDs featuring stunning footage of six Tiger Moths and one Hornet Moth flying over the Makgadikgadi Salt Pans, the Okavango Delta and Victoria Falls are available for purchase at R120.00 each. Filming took place during a trip in April 2011 which drew participants from all over the world. For more information contact cwatson@stithian.com or alternatively you can look at our website <http://tigermothbotswanasafari.yolasite.com>





Parting Shot

This photograph was taken by Brian Poulton in October last year when he hired a Robin from Birr Airfield in Switzerland, to fly over the Alps. The Mountain are from left to right the Eiger, The Munch and the Jungfrau (just before the window separator). Shutter speed was 1/200th with fill in flash and the camera inverted to light up the dash better. The Camera was a Panosonic Lumex (almost muk and druk).

An interesting fact is that there is a seven kilometer geared train tunnel running from the base of the Eiger to the Jungfrau station that is 100 foot below the top of the Jungfrau.

