



*The Paragwanath
Barometer*



Newsletter of 'The Johannesburg Light Plane Club'

Issue 14, April 2012



Editorial from Hangar No. 1

A new chapter has opened in my life with the birth of our baby girl, Bella. She has turned my world upside down with her smiling gurgles and sleepless nights and hence the reason for my tardiness on producing the latest issue of the Baragwanath Barometer.

She was born on 8 January and I'm proud to say that she has been to the airfield a few times already! It's amazing how perspective changes when you have kids, and those of you who have children of your own know what I'm talking about. There are all of those firsts that we keep on looking forward to, least of which will be her first flight!



Bella Rose is amazed by a Gloster Gladiator

On a separate front, I have been running the 'Old Birds' at Baragwanath Open days on the third Sunday of each month which have not been overly successful. We have had a number of pilots bringing their toys from other airfields but there has not been the same sort of enthusiasm at the airfield, which was a pity. Therefore, I have digressed my interests into the St Stithians Boys College Aviation Society at the school where I teach. A number of boys have shown a keen interest in all things aviation related and their first experience of grassroots aviation was at Baragwanath in February. I have



included an article written by one of the Matric boys, Deane Odendaal, about the event.

As a gauge of how keen the Saints boys are about flying, Jim Davis has also kindly donated three copies of his book, *PPL*, for the best written one-page essay entitled *Why I want to Fly*. I have included the top two for you to read as well as my own version. For the next edition of the *Baragwanath Barometer* I would like to hold our own competition. We'll put into print the best article entitled *Why I Fly* and the winner will also receive a flip in our Tiger Moth, ZS-UKW. I look forward to seeing what our readers come up with! Please email submissions to cwatson@stithian.com before 1 May 2012. Winners will be announced in the June Baragwanath Barometer.

So, happy reading, I hope that you enjoy this one and pop in to Hangar No. 1 if you're at the airfield.

Happy landings,

Courtney Watson

Editor



Why I Want to Fly

Deane Odendaal

“Decide whether or not the goal is worth the risks involved. If it is, stop worrying!”

If there is one lesson I can tell someone has truly formed part of my ultimate passion for flying it is this quote made by the famous woman aviator, Amelia Earhart. She also had a yearning for adventure and travel, one which I strongly uphold as well and she has been the most influential figure in building my passion for flying.

Where am I going with this? Well I am going to tell you about a young man, who had his head and face skywards in the hopes that one day he too can take to the skies...

Why I want to fly is actually very straightforward and it begins with the quote I mentioned earlier. I have had not only a goal, but a passion ever since I first climbed into the cockpit of a TAP Air Portugal Airbus A330 jetting off to Lisbon when I was barely small enough to stand and look out the enormous windows.

However, one might think that this little boy is just like the others who “wow!” and “aahhh!!” at the sight of such glory and shout out that one day they are going to be pilots and at the end of the day the dream goes as quickly as it came.

Then the young boy ends up becoming a stock broker or lawyer (not that I have anything against these jobs), but I had different emotions.

My sense of adventure and travel was too strong as well as the passion for flying that I grew. I did shout in amazement at the technological beast of a cockpit one day imagining myself sitting in those seats and I did look out the airliners windows imagining myself soaring outside.



Deane goes for a ride in a Cessna 140

But I never, ever for one day after that changed my thoughts on soaring into the wild blue yonder. It had definitely become part of me; I

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was literally at peace and so happy when I was in the skies. I knew from day one that this is what I had to do. Ever since the days when I was about two, I have been drawing propellers and I have been amazed at the sight of an airplane passing overhead.

I would jump at any opportunity where I could go flying. I would do anything to get into a plane, wash them, or simply talk to the people at the controls who instantly became my role models. I would immerse myself in books, films anything that could pull me closer to flying instantly drew me in without effort.

but if flying is a passion then no matter how stressful, you will love every minute of it!

It's a place where the Earth is seen from the most beautiful perspective one can imagine Amelia herself stated: "you have not seen a tree until you've seen its shadow from the skies" and what's more incredible than the feeling of adventure and travel that comes with flying? It's the idea of knowing that you are taking off and exploring the one place where there is peace, tranquillity and freedom! The sky is the ultimate chance to escape but also a place where the



Washing Tracy Robb's Dornier27

I can truly say that the skies are a special place to be; a place where the problems and stress are left behind. One would not agree with this statement if you had to observe the TAP crew,

amazing experience of soaring like an eagle is found. It is a chance to meet incredible, daring people with experiences of flying to share like no other person. I have been lucky enough to meet

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some of these amazing people and they only thrust me further forward in my dream of flight. Their sense of adventure leads one into a world of everlasting, memorable experiences that is in essence, flight. I can't imagine not wanting to takeoff early in the morning, feel my body slowly sink into the seat as I lift off and know that today is going to be filled with adventure and the sense of soaring 10000 feet above the earth in a space where I can be myself, where I'm happy and where I know I belong.

That is, in essence my feelings as to why I want to fly and the key points I can highlight are the people, the adventures, the memories, the thrill and the realization that I have the freedom of the skies!

In conclusion I would like to link my thoughts toward flying to the quote I made earlier. Recently I have been told that flying is not something I'm close to achieving for reasons I won't go into now. This is such an absurd comment to make, because this goal, actually this passion is worth every risk and I will not worry a minute about the shouldn'ts, wouldn'ts and cannots. I mean if it is something you really love, you would have to be foolish not to take the risks; after all that makes it all the more exciting. My passion lives on, it will never end.

Photographs courtesy of www.pilotspost.com



IN THE ATTACK TODAY - ON THE TRADE ROUTES OF THE FUTURE.

Proud Symbol
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... the D.H. Mosquito ... inspiring proof of the prowess of British genius in designing and engineering, of British enterprise and British thoroughness ... most versatile and hardest hitting aircraft of the United Nations in Europe ... now assisting in ever increasing numbers in the fight against Japan. When peace comes de Havilland, with traditional skill, augmented by the knowledge which comes from war's accelerated tempo of development, will be ready for the era of reconstruction and for the continued service of mankind.


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Blast from the Past

A friend sent me this old article about inventive ways to merge the police force and flying in what must have been the 1930s which you might enjoy. Imagine seeing this happening on the N1 to chase after an errant taxi – what a job! And it looks like Scully has been practising for it!

The horsepower is a little different and so is the brute of a bakkie, but other than that, nothing much has changed...

Police Planes Take Off From Car to Hunt Down Crooks



When alarm comes in, Oregon state police pursue fugitive criminals in this small plane, which takes off from platform mounted on top of a touring car as shown above.

FUGITIVE criminals stand little chance of escape when the Oregon State police take out after them. They are hunted down from the air by a plane that takes off from the top of an automobile, which then goes after the felons on the ground.

How the scheme works is illustrated at the left. The small plane rests on a platform on the top of a sedan and has folding wings to facilitate storage. When an alarm comes in, the wings are unfolded, the motor car speeds up to 25 miles per hour, and the ship takes to the air in search of the fugitives. Dick Rankin, Portland, Oregon, aviator, is the originator of the stunt.

Maybe it's sex appeal, but there's something about an airplane that drives inventors crazy.

— Alfred Kahn





Website of the Quarter

Thanks to Brian Zeedeberg for passing this one along!

1930s, the global population stood at approximately 2 billion. In less than a decade,



This is a fabulous site! It is a Historical photographic treasure. It will take hours to go through all 20 sets, but what an education en-route!

Save this site on your "favorites," for you will want to return time and again for impressive enlightenment. Just click on the photo described by verbiage above the picture, and each will take you to a site with many more photos.

Thanks to Dick Lammerding, USMC & UAL, for forwarding this goldmine!

www.theatlantic.com/infocus/pages/ww2/

the war between the nations of the Axis Powers and the Allies resulted in some 80 million deaths -- killing off about 4 percent of the whole world.

This series of entries was published weekly on TheAtlantic.com from June 19 through October 30, 2011, running every Sunday morning for 20 weeks. In this collection of 900 photos spread over 20 essays, I tried to explore the events of the war, the lives of the people fighting at the front and working back home, and the effects of the trauma on everyday activity. These images still give us glimpses into the experiences of our parents, grandparents and great grandparents, moments that shaped the world as it is today.

From the site:

"World War II is the story of the 20th Century. The war officially lasted from 1939 until 1945, but the causes of the conflict and its horrible aftermath echoed for decades in both directions. While feats of bravery and technological breakthroughs still inspire awe today, the majority of the war was dominated by unimaginable misery and destruction. In the late





Online Magazine of the Quarter

I might be a bit biased in this one...

Recently a St Stithians Old Boy, Paul Steyn contacted me. He is the editor of the online Africa Geographic Magazine, Safari and he had received an email about our Tiger Moth Botswana Trip around Botswana. Paul was keen to do a story on the trip, complete with video

footage, photographs and interviews.

I think it came out very well and is a good overview of the trip. Go to the following link if you would like to explore it further:

<http://africageographic.com/safari/#6/1>



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Why I Would Like to Become a Pilot

Thomas Frames

I sat down into the passenger seat of a 1940's de Havilland Tiger Moth. I strapped myself into a very simple but yet efficient safety belt, and put the old looking leather headset over my head. Now set and ready in terms of my safety I looked at all the different old instruments and how simple they were. This was my first ever flight in a light aircraft. I failed to comprehend the words of excitement through the mechanical communication device to my pilot Courtney Watson.



Thomas's first flight in a Tiger Moth

There was a constant grin on my face as soon as the 120hp engine started. The constant cackling of the metal components which littered the plane sent thrills down my spine. I could barely

peak my head over the side to see what was happening outside. I could hear faint radio jargon spoken by the Pilot, we started to taxi down to the runway, with short little bursts of throttle, slowly pushing us forward. I looked side to side; the pilot was testing his ailerons, rudder and elevators. We reached the runway, and pointed our nose into a northerly direction, the wind was now directly in our faces. The revs counter slowly increased and in sync the engine started to scream. We started to pick up speed, the back wheel slowly lifting off the ground. Our pitch was now suddenly flat. We started to rise slowly off the ground.

The flight in the Tiger Moth gave me a very good insight into aviation. What I felt in that aircraft I had never felt before. It was the most amazing flying experience I have ever had. I would like to

become a pilot because it will give me an opportunity to do this by myself where nobody would be able to touch me. Being a pilot would give me an opportunity to travel the world via the air. Travel to the most beautiful places that have been untouched.

I was first introduced to flying at a very young age, I grew a very

strong passion for it and it remains with me today. I absolutely love flying model aeroplanes and have done for the past 5 years. Model



Radio Controlled flying on the St Stithians College fields



mother earth from up in the clouds. This is the reason as to why I would like to become a pilot.

aeroplanes gave me a very good insight into how airplanes work; it taught me what the different control surfaces did and what components are important in order for an aircraft to remain flying.

Flying is one of my interests; it's something that I love. I wish to someday be able to be in control of an aircraft with no strings attached, looking at

“More than anything else the sensation is one of perfect peace mingled with an excitement that strains every nerve to the utmost, if you can conceive of such a combination.

— Wilbur Wright

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Of Cubs...

Rob Makinson

Of interest to all aviators should be the completion of Tim Kearton's multi year restoration of his beloved ZS-LHL Supercub PA-18-95.

I purchased LHL last year and the project was completed in January 2012. The Supercub was test flown by Ben Meyer and was moved to Bara at the end of Jan 2012 and now sits in my hangar.

Piper would have been proud to put such an aerie on their showroom floor. Tim's attention to detail including the complete remanufacture of all metal panels and cowlings is a dream to behold. Tim has stuck religiously to the authenticity of the rebuild.



Rob's beautiful Supercub, ZS-LHL

You need to see it in the flesh – it is mind blowing how much love Tim has put into this aerie. If he had to have charged for his hours, no one could have afforded to buy it.

I look forward to showing it off, preferably after I have learned to fly the damn thing! I haven't started my conversion yet. I will be

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doing so in the next few weeks. John Reeder did his conversion and can fly from front and back seat so we have spent some time together in it but I need to strengthen my calf muscles for all the peddling. Not used to that in my 172, which is now also at Bara by the way (ZS-EDI).

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The venerable Piper Cub was famous for making the impossible look easy. One daring Piper distributor regularly flew a J-3 out of his small, tree-lined back yard. His trick? He tethered the craft to a pole, raced around in circles until gaining flying speed, then released the cable and sailed off over the treetops, frequently plucking off leaves with his landing gear. (Unfortunately, history fails to record how he managed to get back home, but the Cub was noted for its uncanny ability to land in a peapatch.)

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Saints Aviation Society

Trip to Baragwanath

19th February 2012



The members of the Saints Aviation Society were thrilled and very excited to join a trip to Baragwanath Airfield just outside Johannesburg in the Syferfontein area. The day would turn out to be an amazing and eventful one, filled with interesting experiences and the chance to meet real world pilots and an introduction to the amazing and adventurous world of aviation.

The setting of the Airfield is ideal, with wide open plains and very little development in the surrounds. The small Baragwanath Airfield had a wonderful and relaxing atmosphere. What is so nice about this setting and atmosphere is that it truly reminds people of the way flying started out and where the soul of flying lies, also known as grassroots flying, which is exactly what the Aviation Society wanted to expose the boys to, so that they could understand flying at its best. The laid back family atmosphere at the airfield also made the trip that much more enjoyable because we felt we could connect a lot more

with the pilots and not feel restricted to ask questions or walk amongst the beautiful aircraft.

There was a wide array of interesting and beautiful aircraft that lined the grass apron, ranging from small kit built planes, to an old German Dornier reconnaissance plane which intrigued the boys a lot and urged many of them to try and get a flip in one of the planes. There were of course others including an old Tiger Moth as well as an interesting Cessna 140 painted in US air force colours.

Sadly, a few aircraft left due to the fear that they would get caught in a thunderstorm that was drifting our direction and we also started to think we wouldn't be able to make the most out of the day either. However we were greeted to the wonderful sounds of other aircraft from all walks of life that joined us at the airfield, including a matric from last year who flew down just for the day.



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We had a short briefing before the day got underway and shortly afterwards we got cracking on our first job, cleaning the planes! Much to the dismay of the boys we realised nothing is for free and in return for washing some of the aircraft we would be treated to a flight. We actually really enjoyed spending time cleaning the aircraft and debating as to who was going to fly in what.

I was fortunate and very privileged to get on-board the Dornier for a short 15 minute flight which was an awesome experience. I had the amazing opportunity to take the controls and gracefully fly over ridges and wide open plains which truly kindles ones love for aviation and definitely reminded me about what aviation is all about, flying low and gracefully and having the freedom of the skies literally at your fingertips. The flight was suddenly cut short by the presence of the oncoming thunderstorm which resulted in a lot of frantic radio chatter and sudden urge to get the Dornier on the ground.

After landing we were all disappointed as a torrent of rainfall covered the airfield for about an hour, much to the dismay of one boy who was stranded on board the Cessna 140 stuck on the apron in the rain, which un-expectantly started moving about the apron as the wind picked up! However it was a great opportunity to ask pilots questions about careers in aviation and what suggestions they had and just talk to them about flying in general. The skies cleared

and although most members had left, the best flying was about to begin...

Those who stayed behind again had the enormous privilege to take to the skies in the Tiger Moth, Cessna 140 and a Cessna 152 in a series of formation flights which were none other than sensational. To literally see the facial expressions of another pilot from the window of the plane you're flying in is indescribable as well as nerve wrecking for the pilot! The day ended with happy faces and the boys left with good stories to tell about a truly unforgettable experience of flying in some extraordinary aircraft with wonderful pilots behind the controls which were very informative and helpful in the many questions we had to ask.



I will certainly take this day as one that kindled my passion for flying even further and hopefully the same applies to the other boys that attended. Outings such as this will definitely urge us to take our first steps into the exciting world of aviation.

The Aviation Society hopes to visit Baragwanath Airfield again in the near future.

Deane Odendaal

“No one regards what is before his feet; we all gaze at the stars.”

— Quintus Ennius

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Why I Fly

Courtney Watson

A little while ago, a friend sent me a picture which depicted this beautiful riverine scene with a man casting a fly as he fished for trout. The setting was idyllic and the caption read 'Not all Churches have Pews'.

That sentiment, in a nutshell, is why I fly. I am not a particularly religious person, but having said that, flying provides a connection to a beauty that I can scarcely describe. It's the stuff that poets write about and it's the same reason why people find peace and rejuvenation when they go on a trip to the bush.

In the film, *One-Six Right*, one of the pilots that are interviewed comments that (and I'm paraphrasing) "Finding a reason as to why you love to fly, is like trying to motivate why you like Mozart or van Gogh. The reason defies words...it just is." That's why I find it difficult to put into words why I fly. It's not about getting from A to B; it's not a faster method of

transport; and it's not because I need to keep current.

There is something inside of me that feels incomplete if I haven't been in the sky recently. I think that the President of the Piper Aircraft Company, William T Piper puts it quite well, and he's the sort of authority that carries quite a bit of weight on an issue like this, having designed what is arguably the epitome of what it is to be a recreational aircraft, the J3 Cub. He said "Once you have learned to fly your plane, it is far less fatiguing to fly than it is to drive a car. You don't have to watch every second for cats, dogs, children, lights, road signs, ladies with baby carriages and citizens who drive out in the middle of the block against the lights...Nobody who has not been up in the sky on a glorious morning can possibly imagine the way a pilot feels in free heaven."





“This is all about fun. You can grab hold of an airplane here, and literally take your life in both hands. One for the throttle and one for the stick, and you can control your own destiny, free of most rules and regulations...”

— Alan Preston

I think that every aviator has felt this way, and sadly, sometimes this passion is lost in the progress of efficiency and safety that rules out the pilot and is translated into the binary codes of computers. That is why recreational aviation is so important and it must be safeguarded, like all things that are so terribly vital to happiness and rejuvenation.

For me, a life without flying would be like a life without music. It would be dull, the lesser for its loss. I don't think that this romantic view of aviation is confined to these aerie-fairy musings, but somehow it also incorporates a personal challenge. You only compete against yourself when you fly; for the perfect landing, the balanced turn, or the optimal cruise. I think this reason is probably similar to why people play golf. It's for the personal satisfaction of rewarding and testing yourself.

Coaxing all of that machinery into one fluid, graceful movement is part of that satisfaction which, I suppose, makes up so much of its appeal.

You might have read the musings by Robert Traver where he tries to articulate what drives him to go fishing whenever he has a spare moment. I like what he has to say, because I understand where he is coming from and I've adapted his words to suit my passion:

“I fly because I love to. Because I love the wide open spaces of sky and cloud that swallow up

my worries and let me be free. No matter what the weather, the skies are invariably beautiful, contrasting the places where crowds of people are found, which are invariably ugly. Because of all the television commercials, cocktail parties, and assorted social posturing I thus escape. Because in a world where most men seem to spend their lives doing what they hate, my flying is at once an endless source of delight and an act of small rebellion because in flying there is an absolute truth. Aircraft do not lie or cheat and cannot be bought or bribed, or impressed by power. They respond only to quietude and humility, and endless patience. Because I suspect that men are going this way for the last time and I for one don't want to waste the trip. Because in the sky my skills are reflected in honest judgement by the craft, and although I will never reach perfection, there is a thrill when I get close. Because in the sky I can find solitude without loneliness. ... And finally, not because I regard flying as being so terribly important, but because I suspect that so many of the other concerns of men are equally unimportant and not nearly so much fun.”





De Havilland Club South Africa



John Austin-Williams, a long-time aviation enthusiast and historian has taken over the running of the De Havilland South Africa website: www.dehavilland.co.za. He is looking for any information and pictures related to DH aeries in South Africa past and present please.

Contact him on the following phone number and email with anything you are able to contribute:

083 459-7802

jaws@dehavilland.co.za

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TIGER MOTH BOTSWANA SAFARI DVDS and CALENDARS

DVDs and calendars 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 Shots

These pictures are from our family's archives.



Through the streets of Kimberley, Roy Watson tows the Patterson Biplane (now owned by the South African Air Force Museum) with a de Dion Bouton motorcar, similar to the one that Compton Patterson drove himself. This picture is particularly relevant as we hope the event will be re-inacted at the Swartkops Airshow commemorating the SAAF Anniversary.



Boeings and biplanes at the then Jan Smuts International Airport.

I hope that you enjoyed the latest newsletter...feel free to pass it along to your friends and as always, any contributions are most welcome