



*Newsletter of the Johannesburg Light Plane Club*

*Issue 16*

*March 2013*



*Baragwanath*

*Barometer*





## Editorial from Hangar No. 1

It has taken me a long time to get back into the swing of things and produce another issue of the Baragwanath Barometer. With the enthusiasm generated by the committee as well as my own new role in capturing the history of JLPC, I thought it time to get off my backside and put pen to paper.

So, here it is...the first issue of 2013.

I have included a range of historical items, stemming initially from the stories behind the pewter beer tankards that were found fairly recently at the clubhouse. We are trying to infuse the history of JLPC into the clubhouse through pictures, memorabilia and anything else from Baragwanath's past, so if you have any material, please pass it along to me.

Also in this issue, enjoy pictures from the various events that have taken life this year, including the Regional Aerobatic Championships and a visit by an Antonov AN-2.

Ron Wheeldon has written an interesting and entertaining article about his 'Air Knocker' and it is accompanied by some nice visuals. There is also a great story about the Baragee of old thanks to Noel Otten...

Dave Gill has included his Chairman's report and John Reeder is trying to put together a consortium of members to take shares in the Zlin that finds its home in Ian Pop's hangar. See John for details about his brainchild...

So, the pages are full and I hope that you find them interesting.

As always, any contributions are most welcome. Email then to [cwatson@stithian.com](mailto:cwatson@stithian.com) for the next issue. If you're at the airfield, pop in to Hangar 1 for a chat, and otherwise, blue skies and safe flying,

*Courtney Watson*

Editor



Flying the Tiger Moth with a kilt, in formation with an AN2 isn't something that happens every day! For the record, the kilt was in honour of Rabbie Burns and the Burns Nicht that was honoured at the end of January...

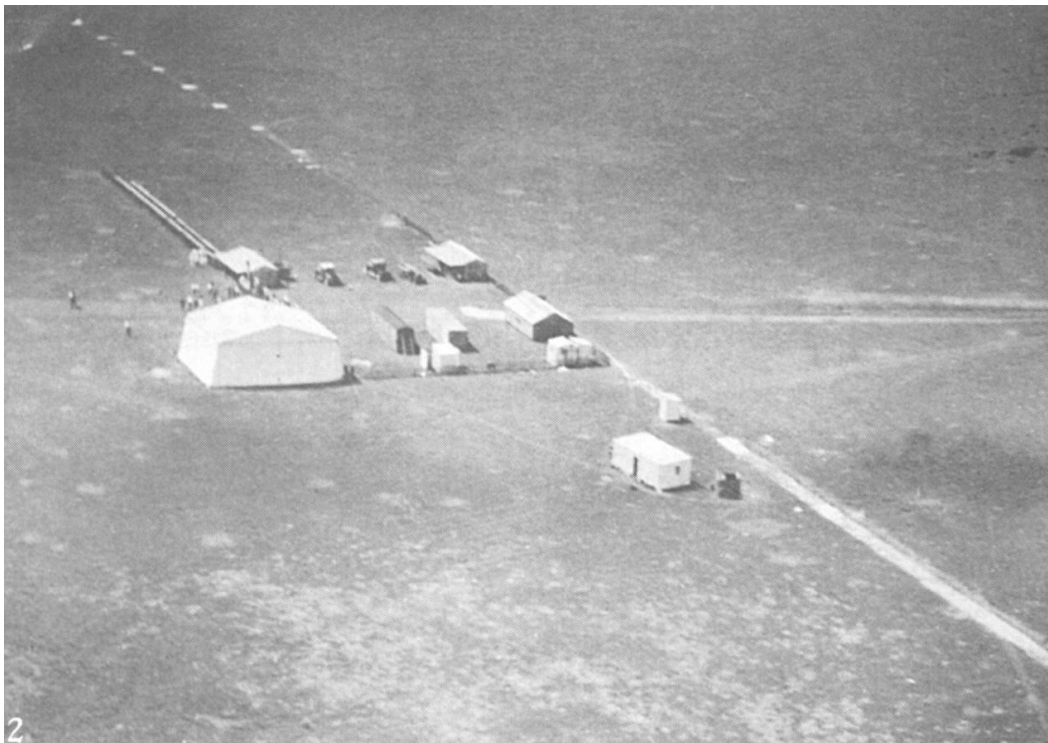




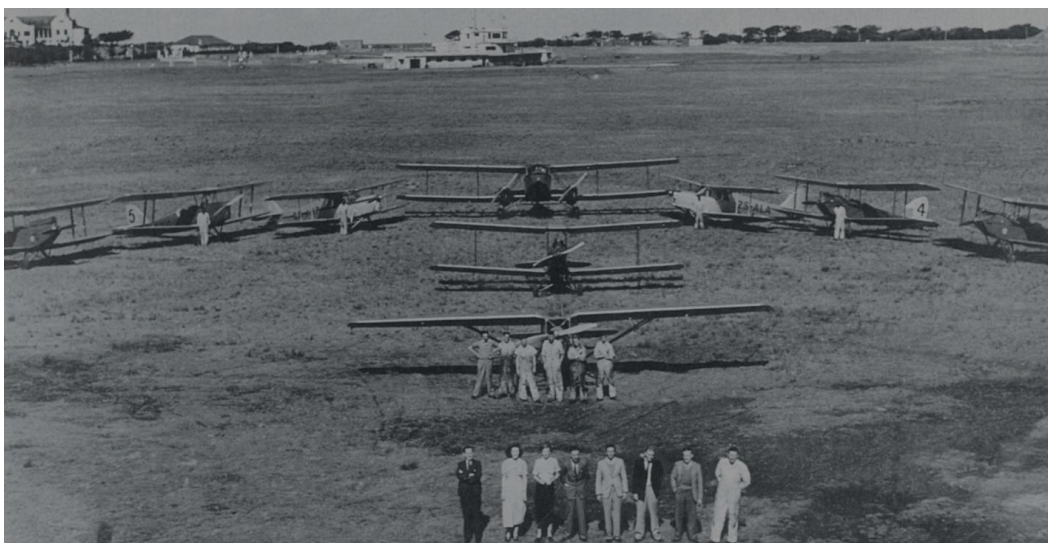
## Baragwanath History

So this is what has been uncovered thus far...

Perhaps to start we need to look at the beginning and the origins of Baragwanath and the Johannesburg Light Plane Club at it's original grounds:



An early photograph of Baragwanath Airfield with the ex-military hangar and Thompson's container of the South African Aerial Transport Company Ltd ('In Southern Skies' John Ilsey)



The de Havilland South Africa Aircraft Company based at Baragwanath Airfield ('In Southern Skies' John Ilsey)



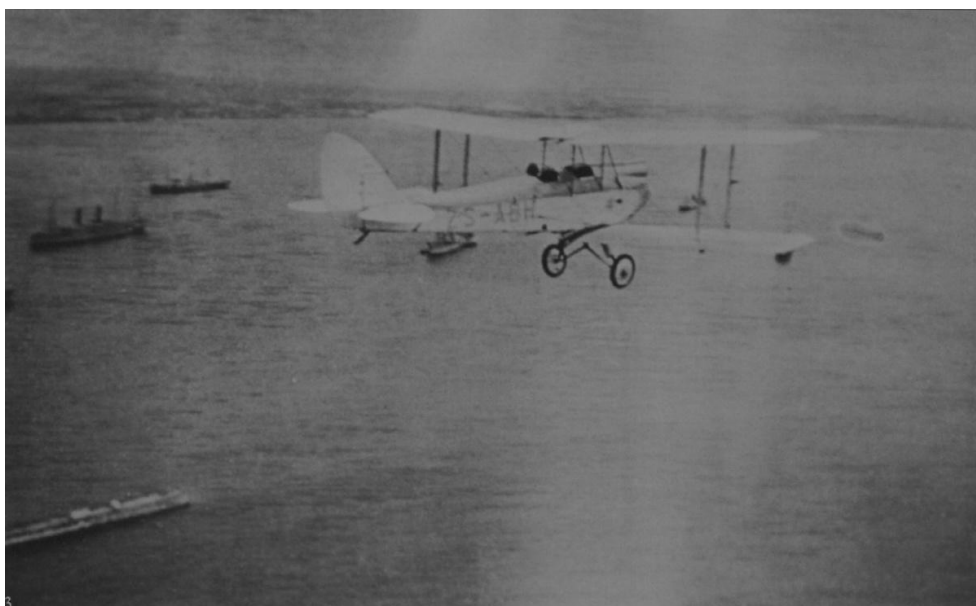
And now that you have a context, you can have the pictures and the rest of the story. I haven't been able to find a complete story behind all of the solo mugs, but these are the pieces that I have managed to fit together thus far:

## SOLO MUG DETAILS

D. R. Judd	13/5/1937	ZS-AKE	
L. E. Leon	4/5/1939	ZS-AKE	
H. D. Reid	3/5/1939	ZS-AKE	
D. D. Longmore	6/5/1933	G-AASM	
R. A. Von Malitz	18/5/1937	ZS-AHK	
N. J. Pretorius	10/5/1937	ZS-AHK	
"Canary Tommy" C. R. Thompson	July 1917	Maurice Farman, 'Rumpety', England	
"Canary Rod" Rod Douglas	July 1917	DH5, Egypt	
"Canary Harry" G. H. Lotton	17/4/1934,	Gipsy Moth	ZS-ABH, Baragwanath

## The aircraft...

ZS-AHK	DH.60G III Moth Major	ZS-AHK	12.06.1936	Cancelled
ZS-AJA	DH.82A Tiger Moth	SAAF 1524	19.6.1958	Written off at Kranskop



ZS-ABH  
DH.60G Gipsy Moth  
SAAF 1489

Photograph from  
'In Southern Skies'  
John Ilsley



ZS-AKE  
DH.82A Tiger Moth  
SAAF 1530  
Owned by JLPC

Photograph from  
[www.avcom.co.za](http://www.avcom.co.za)



G-AASH  
Supermarine Southampton  
Imperial Airways owned  
08.11.29 Returned to RAF

Photograph from  
[daveg4otu.tripod.com](http://daveg4otu.tripod.com)

The Supermarine Southampton was the first flying boat designed after the First World War to enter RAF service, and was the first of a series of successful military flying boats designed by Reginald Mitchell. It was based on the single Supermarine Swan flying boat, and was ordered off the drawing board in August 1924 after the Swan impressed in tests. The Southampton would become the second longest serving RAF flying boat (behind the Short Sunderland), entering service in 1925 and remaining in use for over ten years.

The Southampton was a two-bay biplane. The two engines were mounted on pylons carried between the wings. The Southampton uses a triple fin and rudder.

The Southampton entered service in the summer of 1925 with and it was best known for a series of long distance flights, carried out partly as flag waving exercises and partly to gain experience in operating flying boats in remote waters.



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Maurice Farman,  
Tommy Thompson's  
Solo aircraft in 1917

The Maurice Farman Shorthorn was designed and built in France by a pioneer aeroplane manufacturing company established by the Farman brothers. The Shorthorn became the first armed aircraft to engage in aerial combat during World War I. It was affectionately known as 'Rumpety' to the students because of the noise it made while travelling over the ground.

[http://www.airforce.gov.au/raafmuseum/exhibitions/training\\_hang/shorthorn.htm](http://www.airforce.gov.au/raafmuseum/exhibitions/training_hang/shorthorn.htm)

And here is the interesting part about the people featured on the tankards:

## **C R THOMPSON 'TOMMY'**



The 'office' of  
South African  
Aerial  
Transports Ltd  
with Captain  
Charles Ross  
DFC, Major  
William  
Honnett and  
Lieutenant  
Tommy  
Thompson DFC

(*'In Southern  
Skies'* John  
Ilsley)



*Thompson's Barnstorming tour of South Africa in the AVRO 504*

## **Military History Journal**

**Vol 12 No 6 - December 2003**

### **A SOUTH AFRICAN AVIATION PIONEER'S STORY**

by Angela Embleton

*This article, reproduced with permission, was first published in The Star, 26 July 1969, under the name Angela Malan.*

#### **The German South West African and East African campaigns, 1914-1916**

Periodically, the Germans flew over the South African regiments and dropped Howitzer shells, each with a strip of torn sheeting attached to it with thin wire, to ensure that the shell landed nose first and exploded on target. A monkey unwittingly became the first African air raid siren. The monkey, a mascot of one regiment, would hear the aircraft long before any human ears picked up the sound and give warning by squealing and chattering excitedly. 'It was the first time I ever saw an air attack', Tommy Thompson told me. Tommy (Major C R Thompson, DFC) is one of South Africa's pioneer aviators. It's a far cry from the jumbo jets of today back down the years to the goggles and oil-spattered overalls of those pilots who learned to fly, not on beams or beacons or radio fixes, but by the seat of their pants. The graduates of the 'stick and string' days, the men - and women - who piloted flimsy, under-powered, open machines, were regarded (to quote from an early cutting of The Star) as 'a congregation of amusing and comparatively harmless madmen with suicidal tendencies'. Tommy (he has always been known by this name and it seems impossible to refer to him by any other title) was one of those courageous 'madmen'. He flew in the Royal Flying Corps long before Lindbergh had flown the Atlantic. He was the first pilot to 'loop the loop' in South Africa.

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On that fateful day, August 4, 1914, when South Africa entered the First Great War. Tommy was in his twentieth year ... it was to be the end of a career on the mines. He joined the 1st Transvaal Scottish and was shipped from Cape Town to Luderitz. The Germans surrendered at Otavifontein. All troops were then returned to South Africa and disbanded.

After the German South West stint. Tommy volunteered for service in German East Africa with the 4th South African Horse under Colonel Elliott and Major Hopley, in 1915 to 1916. Finally, after a rigorous campaign, he went down with malaria. Later he was discharged and returned to South Africa to spend a 'get fit' period at Mossel Bay. It was then that he read an advert in a Cape paper, calling for volunteers for the Royal Flying Corps.

## **The Royal Flying Corps (RFC)**

The small band of South African officers who had joined the RFC in 1914 had well proved the worth of South African flying men. Such was the excellence of their performance that the British Government asked the Union Government to conduct a recruiting campaign in South Africa. The task was given to Major Allister Miller, DSO, son of a Swaziland pioneer, who arrived in Cape Town in October 1915 to recruit young men for commissioned rank in the RFC.

'Men like Pierre van Ryneveld. Johnny and Hector Daniel. Chris Venter and Kenneth van der Spuy were already in the RFC. I was one of Allister Miller's first 100 to be shipped over to England in 1916 to learn to fly ... First we were put through military training at Hursley Park, then went to Christchurch, Oxford, for technical flying training.' Tommy was a second-lieutenant when he was sent to Uxbridge for practical training on Maurice Farmans.

'They looked like big kites,' said Tommy. 'You sat up in front with the engine at the back ... and you were well aware that if you crashed nose-first the engine would drive you into the ground. The whole contraption was held together with piano wire festooned in every direction - lift wires, landing wires, drift wires, bracing wires; we used to say that the mechanics tested these kites by putting a canary in the middle of the wires and if the damn bird got out, there must be a wire missing!'

After a mere three to four hours' dual, the pupil pilots went solo and received their wings ... and then went on to Avros and Sopwith Pups-the latter the forerunners of the Sopwith Camels. These machines had the advantage of the engines being situated in front.

The SE-5 was, in 1917, the last word in fighting scouts turned out by the Royal Aircraft Factory. It was a single-seater which would do 128mph (206km/h) at 10 000ft (3 048m) and 115mph (185km/h) at 15 000ft (4 572m). It was powered by a 140Hp Hispano Suiza engine and had two guns -a synchronized Vickers machine gun which fired through the propeller by means of the new Constantinesco gear; and a Lewis gun, clamped on to the top and firing over the propeller. The Lewis could be pulled down on a quadrant mounting if necessary to reload.

Bomb load of the SE-5 was four 25lb (11,34kg) Cooper bombs, to be used when ground strafing. The craft could be looped, rolled and dived almost vertically without breaking up ... and was altogether the most successfully designed scout of the Great War. It was relied upon to re-establish the Allied air supremacy.



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Tommy had three hours' experience on SE-5s when he was booked to go to France. 'A group of us, booted and uniformed in our best, were due to go up to London for a last spree before leaving for France on the Tuesday. Unfortunately, the CO decided I must have a total of four hours on SE5s.' It was Friday afternoon and snowing when Tommy came back to put in one more hour. Taking off in the whirling snow resulted in a cart- wheel and broken shoulder which kept Tommy convalescing again, in England, until the following February when he put in a few more hours on Avros and SE-5s and then, in May 1918, he went on to join No 84 Squadron at their base north of Amiens.

One September morning at about 09.00 a patrol of fifteen SE-5s took off from No 84 Squadron, flying in three groups. They had completed their patrol and were on their way home when, coming out of a cloud bank, Tommy spotted nine German balloons. He was leading, the last flight and broke away with two of his scouts to attack.

'As I was diving on one balloon I became aware of somebody shooting at me from behind and for one moment thought the other two guys were firing too soon'. Then he realised that the firing came from a group of Fokkers who had also come out of the cloud. Despite this, Tommy continued to attack and blew up the first balloon. He then managed to get one Fokker before he got a burst which went through his shoulder and jaw. He came to in a spin, regained consciousness, pulled out and somehow limped back to the squadron where he was able to land, but unfortunately finished up in a bomb hole on the runway, much to the annoyance of the CO. Tommy had landed at 09.45. By noon, he had been operated on and come round from the anaesthetic - a tribute to the medical service of those far-off days. He was sent back to England in a Red Cross ship. Reluctantly he admitted that he received the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) for this encounter. Armistice came in November and by then Tommy had regained his health and become so fit that he was chosen for the newly renamed Royal Air Force rucker side in a series of inter-Dominion rugby matches. (I must mention that the famous South African, Capt Beecham Proctor, VC, DSO, MC, DFC, was also a member of 84 Squadron. He was the only flying South African to get a VC in the First World War and had 52 victories to his credit.)

## **'Looping the Loop' in South Africa**

After Tommy had returned to South Africa, Major Allister Miller asked him to join him in the newlyformed South African Aerial Transport Company which was formed to foster flying in South Africa. The pilots were Major Honnett, Major Carl Ross and captains Thompson, Rutherford and Harrison. 'We had five Avros and carried out a series of commercial and propagandist flights in practically every town in the Transvaal, Free State, Eastern Province and North and South Rhodesia (now Zambia and Zimbabwe).'

Pegoud, the famous French airman who was killed in 1915, had looped the loop at Brooklands on a specially rigged Bleriot in late 1913, but the first person to 'loop' was a Russian officer, Lieutenant Nesteroff. Tommy became the first pilot in South Africa to perform this aerial feat when he looped over Baragwanath, although he was a trifle out of practice and 'hung on top' of the loop. Later, he looped over the old Wanderers Cricket ground during a test match between South Africa and Australia - much to the enjoyment of the spectators and the annoyance of the players! Eighteen months after its inception, the South African Aerial Transport Company was forced into liquidation. To its credit, however, the company's machines had carried 5 000 passengers and flown more than 30 000 miles (50 000km) without a single accident or injury to passengers and only comparatively minor mishaps to the aircraft.

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Tommy, in partnership with Carl Ross, purchased the aircraft and equipment and, in 1921, formed the Ross-Thompson Co Ltd, which barn-stormed its way through the Transvaal and Natal for the next eighteen months. 'When we intended visiting a town or dorp, we'd telephone or telegraph the local town clerk and tell him we'd be there on a given date. We'd ask him to select a flattish piece of ground, about 150 yards square (125m<sup>2</sup>), and clear it of ant hills. Then we'd ask him to test it by driving a Model T Ford over it at 30mph (48km/h). If the car could take it, we reckoned our planes could too. When we arrived they'd shut up shop and the crowds came out to watch. We'd ask them to make a smoke-fire and light it as they heard us approaching so we could get the wind direction. '



*The mayor of Johannesburg, Mr T F Allen, prepares for the inaugural flight from Baragwanath with pilot Carl Ross.*

After a variety of experiences Tommy and his business partner sold out to a Rhodesian syndicate. Carl Ross joined the newly formed South African Air Force and Tommy joined a commercial company in Johannesburg. Although no longer engaged in full-time flying, in 1926, together with enthusiasts such as Col Rod Douglas and his sister Marjorie, Frank Boustred, Bert Evans and his sister Dulcie, and Mr and Mrs Gordon Haggie, Tommy was a founder member of the Johannesburg Light Plane Club at Baragwanath. Captain Stan Halse was one of the club's flying instructors. Tommy, who had 'had flying in a big way then', took an active part only by being official examiner. The first club member to gain his 'A' licence was Glen L Bateman. Twenty-five years later, at the club's anniversary celebrations in 1952, two of the original members were asked to give flying demonstrations again. They were the late Sir George Albu, and Tommy Thompson. And once again, although a trifle rusty, Tommy triumphantly looped the loop above Baragwanath.

## **Second World War service**

Tommy's military career was not quite over. He joined up again in 1939 as a transport officer in the 5th Brigade, which was broken up in 1940, and he was then appointed Officer Commanding Military Police, Johannesburg: 'We had to turn out the 2nd Transvaal Scottish in Johannesburg in 1940 to keep the peace during the riots.' After this, Tommy transferred to the air force and went to SAAF Headquarters in Nairobi. 'When the campaign against the Italians up there came to an end, I was transferred as adjutant

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to 24 Bomber Squadron. Eventually we got organised and equipped with Maryland bombers and went up to the desert early in 1941.'

Tommy was in one of the biggest blow-ups in the desert when 24 Squadron was stationed at a railway siding called Fuka: 'Through the grapevine, the Huns heard that an ammunition train and a petrol train were in the siding. One evening they came over and bombed the lot. The ammunition train had several trucks loaded with 250lb (113,4kg) bombs which went up in smoke.'

Together with the burning petrol, it must have been quite a sight. The noise was unbearable as the bombs exploded. The next day, a heavy truck wheel was found 880yds (805m) from the siding. Finally, Tommy was seconded back to South Africa and appointed administrative officer to the training camp at Milner Park. Today, as the great craft of the modern air age come flashing out of the skies and land gracefully at Jan Smuts Airport, as the American spacemen land on the moon, it is amazing to realize that it is within the lifetime of an air pioneer like Tommy Thompson that all this has developed.

## ROD DOUGLAS



*LEFT: Graham Bellin accepts the first aircraft (DH Puss Moth) from Rod Douglas of de Havilland South Africa at Baragwanath Aerodrome.*

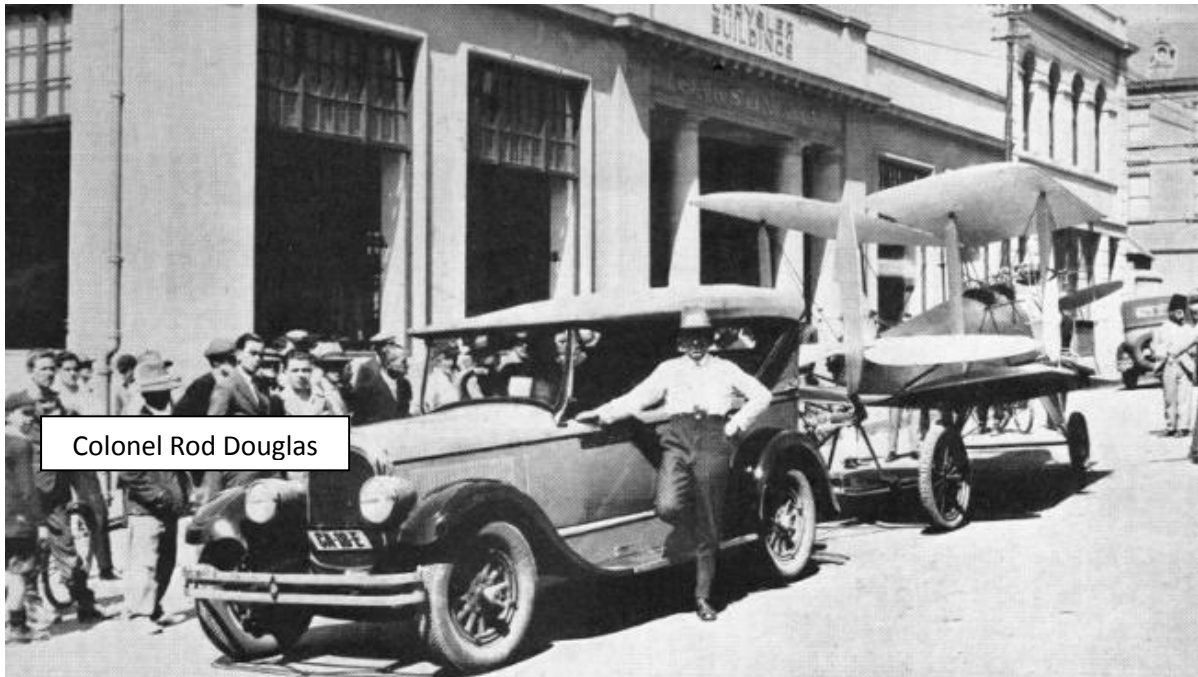
*(‘In Southern Skies’ John Ilsley)*







## **de Havilland's First 25 Years in Southern Africa 1930-1955**



Colonel Rod Douglas

*Major "Mac" Miller made a historic flight round the Union of South Africa in the first Moth ever to be imported there. In this photograph he is seen with his aircraft which was towed through the streets of Cape Town without causing any obstruction to the traffic.*

WITH the pride of shared endeavour, South African aviation will mark up a quarter of a century to the de Havilland Aircraft Company of South Africa (Pty.) Limited in September this year. Flying history in the Union is closely inter-linked with the Company's record of achievement and, even prior to its formation, with the tradition of de Havilland products. Ever since those bygone days of hazardous air adventure when a D.H.9, appropriately named "The Voortrekker," completed the last leg of that first trail blazed between England and the Cape, de Havilland aircraft, de Havilland engines and de Havilland propellers have been used to write important chapters of air history across the skyways of Southern Africa.

It was de Havilland enterprise that first fired South Africa's air-mindedness in the 'twenties, setting it off on the light aeroplane movement that in less than another decade brought flying within the reach of the ordinary man. Economically successful commercial aviation was introduced into the Union by the de Havilland Moths - Puss Moths, Fox Moths and Leopard Moths. Tiger Moths played their part with de Havilland South Africa in its great role of pioneering and conducting large-scale air training to swell the ranks of the South African Air Force in World War II. The de Havilland Dove heralded post-war civil aviation throughout the continent of Africa. The Comet and Vampire brought in the new age of jet propulsion.

It is a far cry, from these days of "faster than sound," back to that first Board Meeting on September 13,

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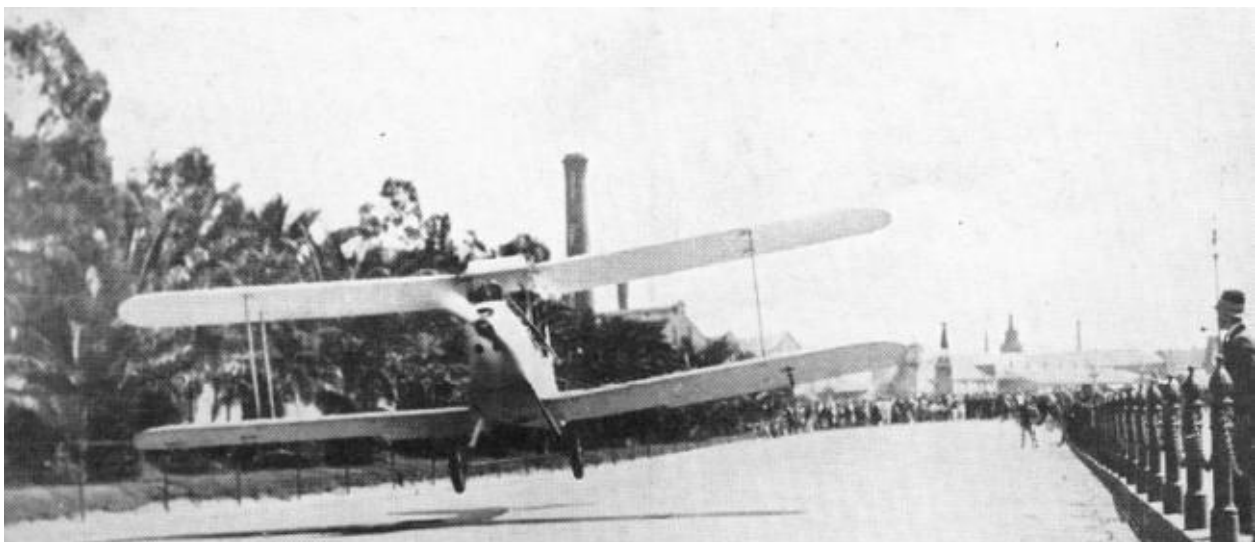
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twenty-five years ago, when a handful of flying enthusiasts met in Johannesburg to launch the new company. Rod Douglas took the Chair that day and in addition to himself the first Directors appointed were G. S. Haggie, S. S. Halse and, from the parent Company, Capt. Geoffrey de Havilland and A. S.

Butler, who were represented in South Africa by N. H. Gilfillan. Jack Davison - who has risen to become the Company's present Managing Director - attended that historic meeting and in his minutes recorded the arrival of the first Puss Moth into the country. Among those present there was great faith in the future, and almost unbounded optimism that already had its roots, back in England, in that intangible stuff out of which aircraft companies are built - reputation, experience, popularity, initiative and drive.

At that time the merit of de Havilland products was already proven and widely recognised in South African flying circles. Linked with those famous names of an earlier day - such as Sir Pierre van Ryneveld and Sir Quentin Brand, Frank and Shirley Solomon, Major "Mac" Miller, Cobham, Bentley, Lady Bailey and Stan Halse - were equally famous de Havilland types of aircraft. First things had come very much first in laying the foundations for rapid expansion in aviation. Van Ryneveld's inaugural flight was soon followed by Cobham's first return flight (D.H.50), Bentley's first solo flight from England in a light aeroplane (D.H. Moth), the first woman (Lady Bailey) to fly out solo (D.H. Moth), the first flight from England in a light plane carrying a passenger by Capt. and Mrs. Halse (Gipsy Moth). Then there was the first experimental service operated by the South African Air Force for three months between Durban and Cape Town, with D.H.9's.

There was " Mac " Miller's historic flight around the Union in the first Moth ever imported, which, after being assembled in Cape Town, was flown off from the esplanade in front of the town alongside the Docks. Again before 1930, " Mac " Miller had landed the first contract to operate a Government-subsidised airmail service using Gipsy Moths. The Johannesburg Light Plane Club was formed with a fleet of four D.H. Moths. Those were the days when the romance of flying rode high, and almost invariably each new achievement was marked up to de Havilland aircraft and/or engines. The time was suitably ripe when de Havillands South Africa - the third subsidiary of de Havilland - was opened up.



*Major Miller taking off in his Moth from the esplanade at Cape Town.*

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*Early days. Left, a Puss Moth outside the offices of de Havilland South Africa at Baragwanath in 1930.*



*In 1932 Captain Geoffrey de Havilland and Mr. C. C. Walker visited the South African company; a contemporary snap shows (left to right) Mr. Rod Douglas, Capt. de Havilland, Mr. Walker, Mrs. Noel Gilfillan, Mrs. Douglas.*

With its sales talk lined up and its products already a household word, the new Company in 1930 also found itself equipped with a wealth of minted experience to guide its course. In effect the Company had already been blooded when it went into action. The South Africans on its Board were there by dint of hard work and planning; the Company itself had evolved out of a series of incidents that, far from being accidental, seemed to have developed inevitably towards its creation. Flying club activities in South Africa had started in the middle 'twenties with the formation of the JLPC, with headquarters and airfield at Baragwanath, on the southern outskirts of Johannesburg. All the famous pilots of the day landed at Baragwanath; here the first great air rallies were held in conjunction with the South African Air Force. The aerodrome was the cradle of the Union's lustily growing civil aviation baby, the breeding ground of future pilots. Rod Douglas, with a few flying friends of the first Great War had started the Club going, but as more and more pilots were trained, difficulties arose on the technical side with regard to service



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and aircraft spares. Unfortunately the de Havilland Agency of that day was not keeping up with the pace: the flying business was still regarded as hazardous and not everyone was prepared to take long chances. So Douglas (then Hon. Club Capt., JLPC), G. S. Haggie and S. S. Halse (instructor at Baragwanath) started a small company on the side, Aeros (Pty.) Ltd., hoping to come to an agreement with the de Havilland Agent, whereby any additional capital would be used for carrying a larger range of spares, which would be offered to the biggest buyers, such as the JLPC, at a lower price. But high hopes and negotiations failed to materialise and, undaunted, Aeros took over the Avro Avian Agency, importing two Avians and persuading the S.A.A.F. to order 20 for its Elementary Flying Training programme.

de Havilland sat up. From England swiftly and unannounced came Sales Manager F. E. N. St. Barbe to take stock of the position. He saw, summed up, and "started in" on Aeros. Within a matter of weeks Aeros had relinquished the Avro Agency in favour of the de Havilland Agency, and under the terms of the new agency agreement, made two farreaching appointments. Jack Davison was brought in as full-time Secretary and S. T. E. Stanley People came out from England to be Service Manager. The latter played an unforgettable part for ten crowded years in maintaining and still further increasing the great reputation of de Havilland products in South Africa. Popular, able, industrious and studious, he was a fine leader of civil ground engineers, rendering invaluable service to aviation in the country, until a great career was tragically cut short when both Mr. and Mrs. (May) People were killed in a flying accident on May 4, 1940.



1933. The first Dragon to be imported into South Africa, and the entire staff of D.H. South Africa at the time Left to right:

*H Sharman (now an engineer in Salisbury), D. Raubenheimer (now a Senior Pilot of South African Airways), W. Gillman, S. T. E. People, Miss Normington (typist), Rod Douglas, Jack Davison, C. F. Strecker, W. Magee, N. H. Phillipps (who handled the Company's stores until 1946).*

*In front of the standing row are four African handymen who served the Company at that time.*

While the new de Havilland Agency flourished beyond even the brightest expectations, it was destined to be short-lived. Enormous expansion in aviation was taking place in England, and it was abundantly clear that Aeros were inadequately equipped financially to cope with the similar expansion which was sure to follow in South Africa, de Havilland were persuaded to buy out Aeros six months later, and in place of that company to form the de Havilland Aircraft Company of South Africa (Pty.) Limited.

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Workshops and a servicing agreement were right to hand. Through an affiliation made with the JLPC, from which Rod Douglas had resigned to take his place on the new Company's Board, the Club handed over its workshops to the Company which in turn undertook to do the Club's servicing at a fixed rate per flying hour. The rebuilding of crashed aircraft was to be done under separate contract. What was tantamount to a unique partnership grew from strength to strength as the scope of the South African Company widened. Within three months of operation de Havilland South Africa had imported no fewer than six Puss Moths, with a seventh on order. Enquiries for aircraft were pouring in from all parts of Southern Africa. Optimism ran high.

Further attempts were being made on the London-Cape record. Lt. Pat Murdoch's 1928 time of 13 days had been lowered in 1930 by R. F. Caspareuthus to 8 1/2 days in a Puss Moth, only to be beaten early in 1931 by Commander Glen Kidston using a high-powered Lockheed Orion, with a time of 6 days, 10 hours. This started the fashion of measuring times to the nearest minute and also using the machinery of the Rojfal Aero Club for official starting, time-keeping and clocking-in at Cape Town. The talk about this flight had not yet died down before Gordon Store and Miss Peggy Salaman, flying a Puss Moth, reduced the time to 5 days, 6 hours, 40 minutes. The keynote of the talk all over the world was - de Havilland products have done it again! The clubs and flying companies reported increased demands for instruction and private charter - the Register of Private Owners continued to expand.

Growing pains there had always been, and by diagnosis and remedy, effort and more effort, they were cured. The early 'thirties were times of difficulty in world trade which hit de Havilland at home and overseas, including Southern Africa, adding to technical burdens.

Directors, staff and friends of the Company threw in their weight to assist in the workshops and on the tarmac, acted as salesmen and thought up brainwaves to increase revenue - one was the installation of an electric plant at Baragwanath to popularise night-flying trips, and over and above that the Company sold electricity to the Club. Flying hours gradually built up, with still those occasional great flights that thrilled everyone concerned. Bert Hinkler and the Mollisons went on to break new records with Puss Moths.

Capt. de Havilland, accompanied by Mr. C. C. Walker, visited the Union at the suggestion of the South African subsidiary, and their talks with officials, public and Press helped tremendously. There was widespread enthusiasm at Capt. de Havilland's announcement of the Leopard Moth - a 3-seater with two passenger seats behind the pilot - which he had designed. Biggest headlines, however, were made on that 1932 visit by the news release of the Fox Moth, designed to give commercial operators an entirely new "high" in payload in relation to horse-power. Commercial aviation was on its way. Interest in the arrival of the first Fox Moth in South Africa was further stimulated by a new Speed Model Fox Moth winning the King's Cup Air Race, and before the end of the year the Company had started to make steady profits, never to look back again in its career.

Creative is the one word that describes the course on which de Havilland South Africa then embarked. Fox Moths, Dragons, Leopard Moths, Hornet Moths and Dragon Rapides were captivating the public fancy. The territory for sales expanded to Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika. Concurrently with the development of the Rand Airport plans were put into operation to treble the size of the aerodrome at Baragwanath. Tempting offers to move the Company to the Rand Airport failed - Baragwanath was too firmly part of its tradition and history.

Highlights of the thriving 'thirties boosted belief in aviation and confirmed the Company's destined role

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in Southern Africa:

1933 gave another great lift to de Havilland products when news flashed round the world that Capt. Geoffrey de Havilland had won the King's Cup Air Race. It was a universally popular win, with a famous pilot flying a Leopard Moth designed by himself and manufactured by the Company that bore his name.

1934 saw great territorial expansion. Two new subsidiaries of the de Havilland Aircraft Company of South Africa came into being - the one was founded in Southern Rhodesia, the other, African Air Transport Limited (A. A.T.), was purchased by the Company in the Union. A Sales and Service Organisation was simultaneously started at Durban, Natal.

1935-1939 brought further developments in the commercial field and thrust de Havillands South Africa to the fore in the field of air training. The Gipsy Six engine, fitted in a variety of aircraft, took over the racing business down Africa, de Havilland still led the field, setting the pace for commercial and military training, spurring on private and unsubsidised flying.

In 1935 Jack Davison took over the Managing Directorship of the Rhodesian Company and C. V. Giddy was appointed Secretary of the South African Company.



*Growth of a Dragon. Uncrating, and the start of the assembly, of the first Dragon to arrive in South Africa in 1933.*



*Where it all started and carries on to this day-Baragwanath aerodrome. This photograph was taken in 1935, on the occasion of an air display celebrating the enlargement of the aerodrome and the opening of new quarters for D.H. South Africa and the Johannesburg Light Plane Club. During the display the old premises of*



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*both organisations were "bombed out of existence". . . .*

Rod Douglas returned from a visit to England where prodigious expansion was taking place in the parent Company, with that country aware that war with Hitler's Germany was only a matter of time. The fine new military trainer, the Tiger Moth, had been developed and from then on the Company's main role in the Union was to develop flying training facilities as quickly and extensively as possible. The three companies of the local group, other flying companies, flying clubs and the Press were all brought into line by very necessary "scare" tactics. A scheme formulated by the Company for Flying Bursaries at Baragwanath spread to other centres. The Rhodesian Company worked on the same lines, starting a Travelling Flying School and co-operating with the Department of Civil Aviation and Defence in flying training programmes. Tiger Moths were in great demand. It was not surprising that 1938 proved to be the peak year for the sale of de Havilland products in South Africa. So great was expansion that hangar accommodation at Baragwanath was doubled to cope with increased business.

In September Mr. St. Barbe paid his second visit to South Africa - what a change in conditions from 1929! And a full Board Meeting with representatives from all the subsidiaries was held to celebrate this phenomenal progress with him. Portuguese East Africa was included in the Company's new territorial limits - and it proved to be one of the staunchest and best of associations. The wisdom of the policy of creating two subsidiary companies and purchasing a third became clear in 1939, when all were operating at a profit and doing work of great national importance in the Union, Rhodesia and South-West Africa by turning out pupil pilots and training ground engineers. At the outbreak of war on September 3, de Havilland enterprises in South Africa could best be summed up as follows:

1. A large measure of credit for the success of the JLPC and the activities at Baragwanath, including a service contract for the maintenance of their fleet which had been successfully operated for nine years.
2. The existence of a large number of privately owned aircraft distributed all round South Africa and flown by well-trained pilots.
3. Successful flying training establishments at Durban, Pietermaritzburg, Cape Town, Kimberley, Bloemfontein and in South West Africa, and some credit due for the success of the Pretoria School and the Technical Training College enterprise at Germiston. In Rhodesia an excellent Sales and Service and a flying training organisation at Salisbury, a successful Travelling Flying School and a good measure of credit for the success of the Flying Club at Bulawayo.

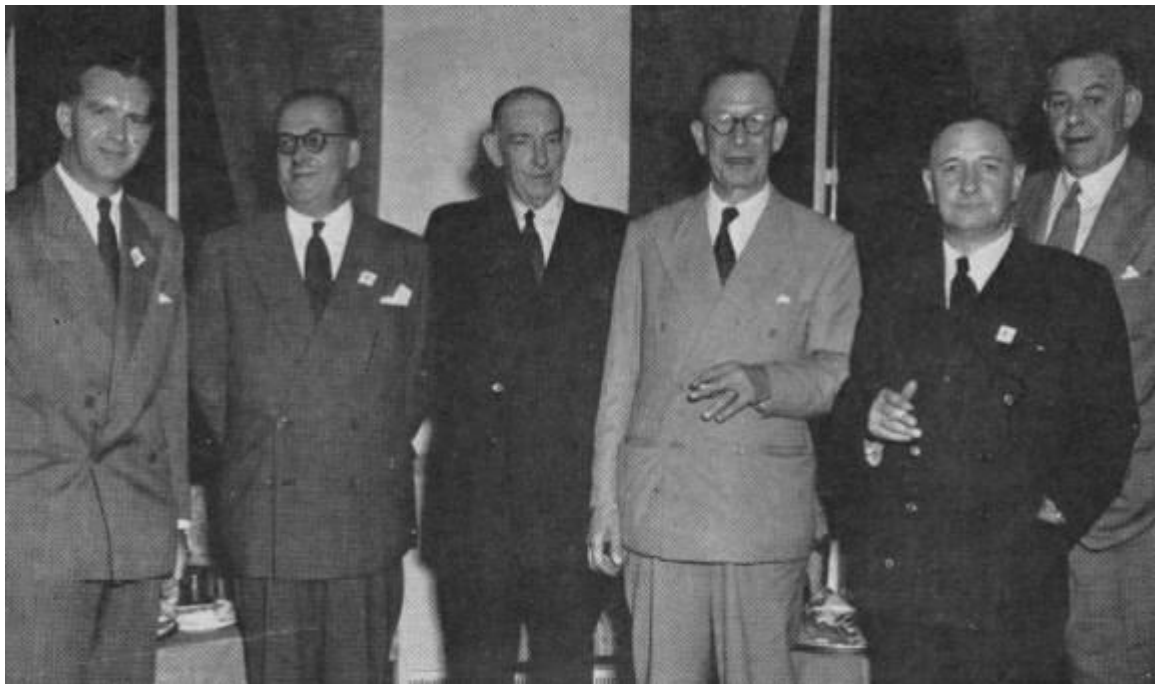
In addition, Dragon Rapides were doing great work for their owners and flying on daily schedules all over Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika, the Belgian Congo, the two Rhodesias, Nyasaland, Portuguese West Africa and Portuguese East Africa. In South Africa and South West Africa de Havilland products, mostly Leopard and Fox Moths, were handling 90 per cent, of the private charter work offering. What a legacy of equipment and trained personnel for the Government concerned to build on in the war against Hitler! Trace the activities of these pilots and all the ground engineers throughout the War, and the story makes even prouder telling. Rod Douglas was called up and remained in service with the South African Air Force from September 9, 1939, to November, 1944. On the staff of the Director-General of Air Services in Pretoria, he had the satisfaction of seeing Tiger Moths ordered almost exclusively for S.A.A.F. training. Jack Davison served with the Southern Rhodesian Air Force from September, 1939, to November, 1945, part of which time he served in England as Liaison Officer of the Southern Rhodesian Government. In 1940 the Government took over the Company's assets and activities for the duration; similarly the Rhodesian Company was taken over in 1939 by the Rhodesian Government and its personnel absorbed into the Rhodesian Air Force. The A.A.T. was put into cold storage for the duration.

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The post-war policy of The de Havilland Aircraft Company (which had increased its scope and prestige enormously during the war), was being laid by 1945 - no longer would it be trading in light aircraft, its interest in club and school flying activities was a thing of the past, so its need for an independent servicing associate company in South Africa fell away, de Havilland South Africa was to become more closely a part of the parent Company - which in due course bought all the locally held shares. The parent Company also decided that there was no need to go beyond the retention of the two executives, Rod Douglas and Jack Davison as directors.



*In December of 1952, Mr. W. E. Nixon went to Johannesburg and is here seen on the occasion of a reunion of pre-war directors of the South African company. Unfortunately Mr. H. K. Hull, who had been a director until near that time, was unable to join the gathering, but Messrs. Jack Davison, H. D. Evans, Gordon Douglas, W. E. Nixon, N. H. Gilfillan and Rod Douglas were there and the picture shows them, in that order, left to right.*

A great part had been played by the South African Company's Board of Directors during 1930-1941, in particular by N. H. Gilfillan, Gordon Douglas, H. D. Evans and H. K. Hull. And in the golden annals of the Company there must also be recorded in appreciation of their sterling contributions to its progress, the names of R. B. Sinclair, auditor of the Company since its inception; G. S. Haggie; H. R. Hoar; P. E. Hunt; Sir E. Lucas Guest and the Hon. John Stuart.

The new Board of the Company consisted of Rod Douglas (Chairman), Jack Davison (Managing Director), Sir Geoffrey de Havilland and A. S. Butler. Mr. W. E. Nixon and Mr. F. E. N. St. Barbe were appointed in 1946 and Mr. Butler resigned in 1950. Mr. F. T. Hearle was appointed in 1951 and that is how the Board is constituted at the present time.

First in the field after the switchover from war-time to peace-time production was the de Havilland Dove, and this aircraft was taken up eagerly by East African Airways, Central African Airways, South African Airways, DETA, Sabena and West African Airways, while private companies helped to swell the

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order book. The S.A.A.F. ordered nine Devon#, the Dove's military counterpart. Another post-war development, the Heron - a luxury four-engined commercial and private owner type - is proving popular in Southern Africa. Chipmunks found their way into the country, followed by another Canadian venture - the Beaver, the agricultural version of which is expected to find a ready market in Southern Africa. Again, the London-Cape record was broken in 1947 by S/Ldr. H. B. Martin, flying a Mosquito, with the spectacular time of 21 hours 29 minutes. Remember Dickie Bentley's 1927 solo record of 28 days. From that to jet propulsion, ushered into South Africa with the D.H. Vampires ordered in 1950 by the South African Air Force. In July, 1951, the Mosquito record on the London-Johannesburg section of the run was lowered by a Comet 1 flown by Capt. A. M. Majendie of B.O.A.C.; flying time: 17 hours, 31 minutes. The triumphs and the tragedy of the Comet are common knowledge, its final chapters are still to be told, but faith in its come-back is firmly held by South Africans who were proud to fly it and fly in it.

At the 21st Annual General Meeting in December, 1951, the Chair was occupied by none other than Mr. W. E. Nixon, who had come to South Africa for the first time and who we were very pleased to welcome with Mrs. Nixon.

The Company's Technical section still operates from Baragwanath Aerodrome under Jac. Lorentz who joined the Company as Technical Sales Manager in 1951. He has with him on the aircraft maintenance side, Denys Mail, who started his apprenticeship in the Aviation Industry under "Pops" People, and except for the War and a short period thereafter has been with the Company and its subsidiaries ever since. On the Engine side we have F. E. G. Quinn, who came out from the parent Company in 1952. Though many engineers come and go, as it is the Company's policy to be thoroughly up to date with the latest aircraft, engine and propeller developments, the other general servicing staff which covers the area in Africa south of the Equator as well as Lagos in West Africa, must perforce change periodically. There are six of them coming and going all the time.

In 1953 the Parent Directors were persuaded to allow Mr. A. J. Brant to tour through the territories administered by the South African company and to advise whether the technical services were in accordance with the plan envisaged by him in his world-wide Service Department set-up. He was able to offer constructive and useful suggestions which have been put into operation and which are working admirably. Mrs. Brant accompanied him on his tour and he was able to meet and acquaint himself with organisations which previously had been but names to him.



*The Ascanius farewell-Mrs. St. Barbe, with Messrs. Rod Douglas and Jack Davison on board s.s. Ascanius at Durban at the end of the visit paid by Mr. and Mrs. St. Barbe to D.H. South Africa in 1938.*

The Technical Headquarters is within six hours' flying of our furthest point and the speed and efficiency with which technical service is provided throughout the Company's territories has maintained its boast of unsurpassed after-sales service.

Stock control and stores were handled



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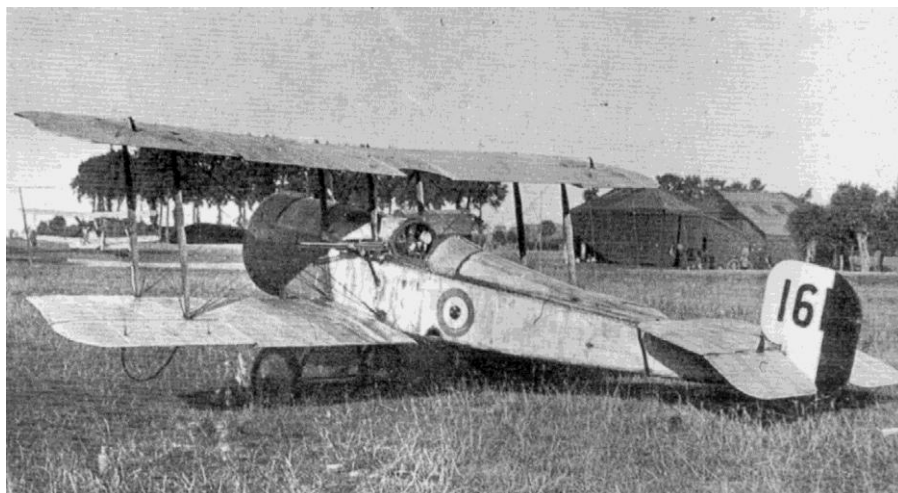
practically from the Company's inception until 1946 by Noel Phillipps, who incidentally "kept the Company's flag flying" during the War when all the executives were on active service. His place was taken by R. A. Parrot for six years when he left to join de Havillands in Canada. Since his departure the section is being handled by T. J. Maguire, with his provider of every requirement, W. A. Rundle.

This year the Company added further to its staff- Allan Bell, who handles aircraft sales and is presently flying Beavers through all sorts of African conditions including locusts! In the Head Office at Maritime House we have the two Betty's - Mace and Dall - who have been there for eight years and always offer a de Havilland welcome to any visitors to Johannesburg.

The only director who had not previously visited the territory was Mr. F. T. Hearle; however, in February, 1954, he was persuaded to have a look at the South African organisation, and we were happy to have the Chairman of the de Havilland Company in England occupy our Chair at a meeting held in Johannesburg. Mr. Hearle was accompanied on his visit by his sister, Mrs. M. White.

Briefly, at the completion of its first quarter of a century, de Havilland South Africa pauses to look back over the years of battle and achievement, to smile at the good old days, the tough times, to remember friends and allies, the matching of wits against diehards and the Fates, the taking of chances in "flying type" style. Remember the laughs, too - the D.H. Dragon Party at Baragwanath, when the Ladies' Committee looked after the catering and the Company looked after the drinks - wherefore the most glowing Press reports appeared on the Dragon's debut. High times with the early pioneers of the skies; the "Ascanius" farewell to the St. Barbes at Durban just prior to the war - but even as they talk, those stalwarts Rod Douglas and Jack Davison, a little grey now at the temples, but with fire and enthusiasm undimmed, have their eyes on the next quarter of a century with its plans for the Company's progress. From the walls in the Chairman's office in Maritime House, Johannesburg, look the original five men who inspired and have maintained that lasting belief in de Havilland products: Sir Geoffrey de Havilland, F. T. Hearle, W. E. Nixon, C. C. Walker and F. E. N. St. Barbe. From the bond between that team and the South African side, has sprung the great de Havilland tradition that is part of South Africa's aviation history.

[http://www.dehavilland.co.za/DH\\_in\\_SA.html](http://www.dehavilland.co.za/DH_in_SA.html)



An Aircro DH5 similar to that which Rod Douglas did his solo flight in whilst in Egypt, 1917  
[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/e/ef/Lanoe\\_Hawker's\\_No\\_1611\\_Bristol\\_Scout\\_C.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/e/ef/Lanoe_Hawker's_No_1611_Bristol_Scout_C.jpg)

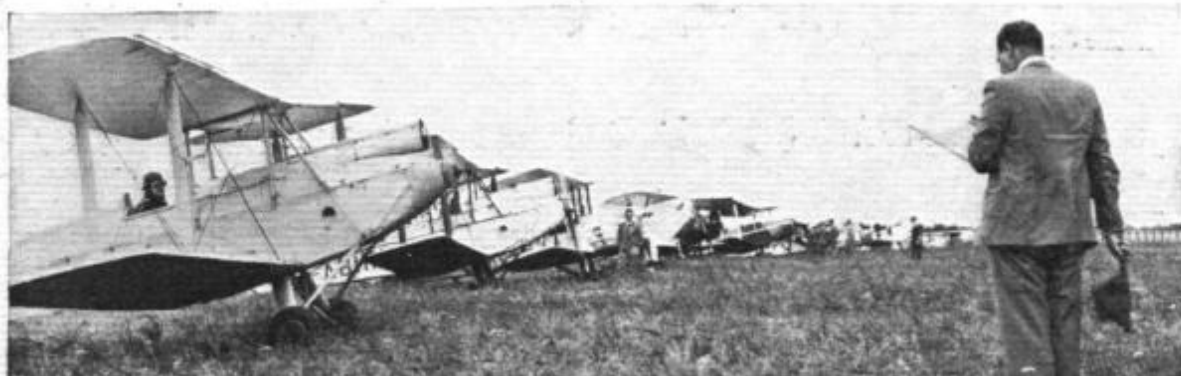


**D D LONGMORE**

## The S.B.A.C. Challenge Trophy

**N**EXT Saturday the Society of British Aircraft Constructors' Challenge Trophy Race will be flown at Bristol. There will be two heats and a final, the first being flown at 12 noon and 12.30 p.m., and the second at 3 p.m. There will be three laps of a circuit between Bristol Airport, Marksbury, Somerdale, and Bristol, the distance being approximately 45 miles. The list of entries is as follows:—

Entrant	Pilot	Machine	Engine	Registration
Laurence Lipton...	Laurence Lipton	D.H. Mk. III Moth.	Gipsy III...	G-ABVW
Bristol and Wessex Aeroplane Club.	The Hon. H. C. H. Bathurst.	D.H. Major Moth.	Gipsy Major	G-ACPT
C. O. Powis ...	C. O. Powis ...	Miles Hawk...	Gipsy Major	—
A. H. Cook ...	A. H. Cook ...	Comper Swift	Gipsy Major Special.	G-ABWW
Lancashire Aero Club.	R. F. Hall ...	Avro Cadet...	Genet Major	G-ACMG
A. Henshaw ...	A. Henshaw ...	D.H. Leopard Moth.	Gipsy Major	G-ACLO
Leicestershire Aero Club.	D. D. Longmore	D.H. Gipsy II Moth.	Gipsy II ...	G-ABTF
London Aeroplane Club.	Flt. Lt. W. E. P. Johnson.	D.H. Gipsy II Moth.	Gipsy II ...	G-AASL
Sir Charles Rose...	Sir Charles Rose	Miles Hawk...	Gipsy Six .	G-ACTE
Miss E. D. Tyzack	Miss E. D. Tyzack	Avro Club Cadet.	Genet Major	G-ACHW





## My 'Heli Lasch' contribution

This is a story that has to be told in two parts! There are 2 versions of this story. If I get some of the details out of order, or inaccurate .... it is simply that 40 years have 'flown' by!

Early one Sunday morning in the early 1970s I was busy prepping one of the WGT Super Cubs for the day's towing at the fuel pumps at BaraGee when Heli Lasch walks by wing-walking his glider. Heli, in his typical fashion, stops for a chat.

He tells me he is planning a 'loonng' flight that day and wanted to know if I would have any objection if he filled his ballast tanks. Now 'that' was typical Heli Lasch. Always concerned that everyone involved with his flight would be fully briefed and be made aware of his intentions.

Now Heli named all of his gliders 'Orcilla' .... his daughter's name. There was 'Orcilla 1', 'Orcilla 2', 'Orcilla 3' and so on! This had always intrigued me somewhat, so I took the opportunity to ask Heli what had happened to the earlier gliders. None of the previous gliders had survived Heli's exploits unscathed. He had, for example, looped one of them into the ground right in front of the JLPC Clubhouse. He wanted to see how many loops he could complete from 2000 ft or whatever the height was he had started from.

He then pointed to his current glider, (I don't remember if it was #3 or #4), and tells me that it had just recently been 'repaired' after its latest 'mishap'. I think the glider was a Libelle. I asked if this was the 'looping' accident. "No!" he replies. "That was the accident before!"

### **Heli Lasch's Version of this story .....**

After the the 'Looping' accident the glider was repaired and was ready for its test flight. It was mid-week and the regular tug-pilots were not available.

"Zo!" says Heli, "I vent to ze flight school and asked ze flying inztruktor if he vud fly ze tug plane for me. He didn't vant to at first because he had never tugged before. But I persuaded him that it vas not zo difficult and all I wanted him to do was take me up to 1000 ft or zo! 15 minutes maksimum time!"

So they get out the tug plane and rope in a wing 'runner', Heli briefs the 'new tug pilot', straps into the glider and off they go.

Tug and glider lift off ..... but suddenly the airspeed drops off, both glider and tug are barely above the stall and they have run out of runway.

Now the ground to the west of Baragee was lower than the airfield elevation. There is a valley between the airfield and Soweto which drops steadily past the Bara Hospital, past the Vick' Viking Garage and then drops into the Klip River Valley, precisely where the present day N1 Highway cuts through the ridge to the west of the Joburg prison.

The 'new' but rapidly learning tug pilot, points the nose of the tug down the valley to maintain flying speed. By now they are a couple of hundred feet below runway elevation and barely clearing the tree tops.



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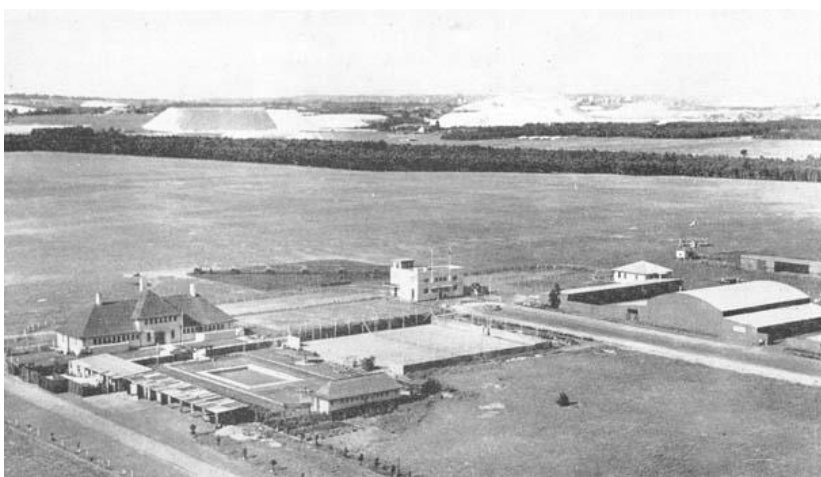
"I kud not understand vot ziss tug pilot is trying to do!" says Heli. "Ve are going down, zere is rocks und trees all around us und zere iz no place to land! I think perhaps he has engine problems zo I decide I will release and fly back to ze airfield." Heli continues .... "But before I kud release, the rope suddenly comes flying past the canopy und I realize ze tug pilot has pulled the tow-hook release. I zee ze tug plane zooming up without me and my glider comes to a complete stop and just falls out of the sky into an open field". And in typical Heli understated fashion he says "I was completely taken by surprise! I had 'crashed again' on the test flight! But it was my fault!" he says with a shrug of his shoulders.

**The Tug Pilot's Version .....** (Note:- The tug pilot involved had a 'dry' sense of humour that was legendary).

"I really did not want to fly that tug plane" Vic told me, "but Heli pestered me until I relented. I had never flown a tug plane before and was not familiar with the procedures. Heli said that being a Com pilot and an instructor I should not have any difficulty. In those days a 'Com' pilot could fly a tug plane without a special rating."

Vic continues ..... "We get everything hooked up, I line up and open the throttle. I expected the plane to be very sluggish, but we accelerate quite quickly, I get the tail up and I can see in the rear-view mirror that the glider is up. As I rotate and start to climb away I feel as if I've hit a wall. Suddenly the aircraft slows and I am struggling to keep the plane from stalling. We have run out of runway, there are trees and high ground in front of me. My only escape is to turn to the west and fly down the valley past the hospital towards the lower ground in the Klip River Valley.

I realise there is something seriously wrong with this aircraft. But the revs are there; oil pressure is good; the engine sounds fine! What can be the problem? I don't really have time to find out. We are barely clearing the trees and the rocks along the ridge are above us. I head towards the Klip River Valley. As soon as we reach the relatively flat farmlands along the river I pull the tow-rope release hoping that the glider pilot will be able to make a safe landing.



At that instant the tug plane lurches forward and immediately climbs away like a rocket! I am climbing at over a 1000 ft/min. I throttle back, level out and turn back to look for the glider. And then I see the problem! The glider is lying in a field and there, streaming out behind it .... **is the glider's drag chute!** . I could see that the glider pilot was OK so I headed back to Baragee. **That was the first ... and last ... glider I have ever tugged!"**

This is one of my all-time favourite aviation stories! Heli Lasch and Vic Dobson at their very best!

Noel Otten



## Ron's "Airknocker" at Barra

A few issues ago the existence of my Chief at Barra was discussed in the Barometer and it is possibly time for an update for those who are interested. Theuns Van Vuuren has been working hard on getting her finished in the opening weeks of 2013 and the good news is that progress is now very swift and it looks like she might take to the air in the first half of the year. Apparently many in the USA call Aeroncas "airknockers" which sound suitably odd to appeal to me.

This has been a comprehensive rebuild, starting with the NDT inspection of the bare airframe, rebuild of the wing structure (one new spar, several new ribs), new lift struts, new windscreen, complete re-cover, upgrade to C-85 Continental, new floor boards, new trim tab, new tail wheel and a whole lot of refurbishing. It was great helping Theuns fit the new windscreen which really went a long way toward making it look like an aircraft again.



As the first flight slowly draws into view, it has been interesting finding out more about these relatively little known aircraft, apparently there are presently only 4 in South Africa (so half of them are at Barra!). They are part of the crop of 65 hp affordable tail draggers which were made

available immediately after World War 2 and mainly powered by the ubiquitous Continental A-65. The Chief in 1946 was a refinement of the pre-war Chief and aimed at giving car like comfort and seating in an aircraft. There were a number of pre-war Chiefs in South Africa which were used in the SAAF and one distinction the Chief can claim is that it was the first light aircraft to fly non-stop from Los Angeles to New York City. Nevertheless, the tandem Champ was always the more popular (like the Piper J-3 Cub was more popular than the side by side J-4) outselling the Chief by about 8 to 1 and has been developed into the Citabria and Bellanca Decathlon and Scout, while the Chief, structurally virtually identical, did not prosper, going out of production in 1949.

As a J-3 Cub owner, I have been fascinated as to why the Cub has become the icon of this genus of aircraft. Certainly, it is pleasant to fly and it is great to fly with the door open on a summer's evening wafting along at 300' agl, but flying the Cub any distance is trying to say the least. It is slow and the maximum baggage capacity is 20 lbs, if both crew are fairly light, if not...well, toothbrush and spare underwear is about capacity. The Chief has a 70 lb baggage allowance and comes standard with an 8 gallon auxiliary tank. It is comfortable with reasonable leg room and cruises at a respectable 83 knots, at least 10 knots faster than the J-3. On the other hand it is quite claustrophobic with its car doors and lack of upward vision. I suppose the Chief, the J-4, The Taylorcraft and the Luscombe are really victims of the

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success of the Cessna 150 with its nosewheel and all metal construction which made it a better practical aircraft than they could ever be. With “practical” sewn up, all that was left was “charm”, and somehow the Cub has always had that *je ne sais quoi* which has made it more charming.

The charm of the Chief, now, is that it is different.

Ron Wheeldon

(Pictures from the 1999 Best in Class winner at Oshkosh)



## Recent Events

What follows are a collection of photographs thanks to the photographers of Avcom (the artwork on the advertising posters done by Kelly McAuley)...

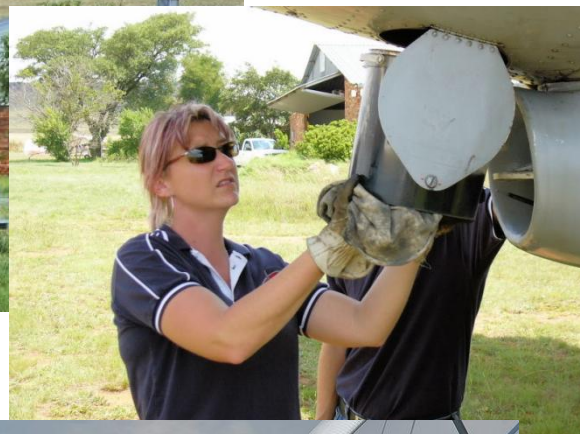




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Photographs by Anton Nel



## Chairman's Message



### 2012-2013 Committee

Frank Pearsons; Alan Haynes; Ron Wheeldon; Paul Roberts; Courtney Watson; Mike Gill  
Denise Patterson; Dave Gill (Chairman); Ian Popplewell

We are almost at the end of the second month of 2013 and well into one of the hottest summers of recent times. The Flying weather on the Highveld has nevertheless been excellent – if a bit bumpy at times and yet very few of our

members can be seen taking advantage of the excellent conditions. Where is everybody?

The current economic climate can no doubt be blamed for the low activity levels but even if you are not going to fly, please come and visit your club and say hello to those who are there every weekend.

We have recently successfully hosted two Aerobatic contests at Bara and it was great to have the Sport Aerobatic Club back on what used to be Home Turf. Our Committee Members, wives and other helpers did a great job on the organising and catering side and other similar events are planned for later in the year.

The Airfield is in superb condition and the new hanger project is back on track. We are aware that some of the "T" hangers are showing their age and need some serious attention. Commercial contractors approached to carry out the remedial work have either quoted way above affordability levels or have simply not appeared to carry out the work as agreed. There will shortly be a plan in place to deal with these repairs and the total re-vamp of some of the worst hangers will be undertaken.

The usual year end break-ins occurred with luckily not too much going missing or any substantial damage. Razor Wire has been put in place to the south and east of the field where we are most vulnerable. An alarm system at a very minimal cost will soon be available to all hanger renters. This will be supported by Armed Response. Details will be circulated as soon as the first phase has been installed.

The nocturnal visitors seem mainly to be looking for Steel and Aluminium scrap so please remove anything from your hanger that causes temptation.

Member participation is again encouraged for all of our planned projects and I would love to hear from anyone that can contribute ideas or help in any form.

Happy and Safe Flying, Dave Gill



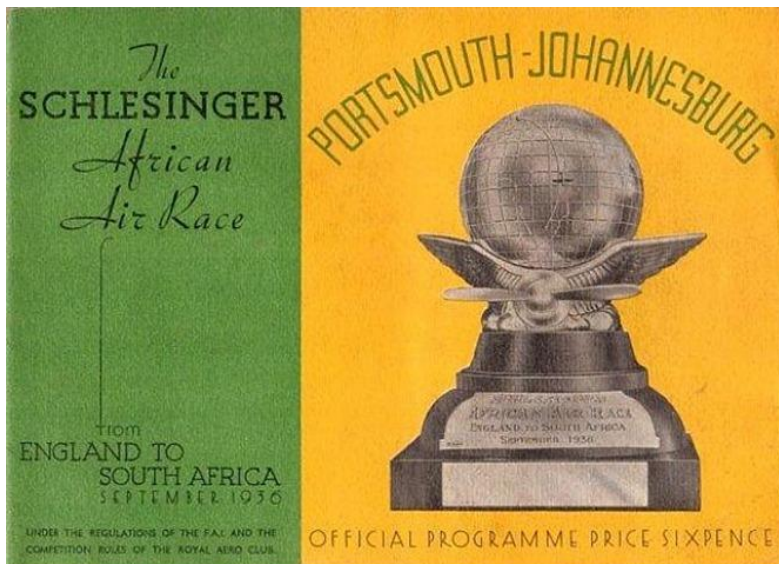


## Letters

Hello Courtney,

It will be very interesting to see what names you find on the mugs/trophies, so look forward to hearing when you have the time from your busy life to check.

One thing that I have often pondered about, is what became of all the clubs many wonderful and important historical trophies. In the main entrance to the club house was a large glass display cabinet chock-a-block full of cups and other trophies going right back to the Schlesinger Portsmouth to Johannesburg race of 1936. I cannot say whether it was the original or a copy.



There was also a bowler hat that Boet Michael took to the 1954 world gliding championships in England and the leading pilots of the time all signed the inside of the hat. Boet owned the Masonic Hotel in Standerton and was a staunch supporter of flying in general and of gliding in particular. He was a great character.

My brother John resides in England these days and I always forward the Barometer on to him as he is still interested in the club and it's activities. He has an original

invitation to the 25th anniversary party and had it signed by all and sundry in attendance. Naturally he would never part with it, but has promised to scan it and send to you. I gave him your e-mail address.

He also has one of the brass ashtrays especially produced as mementos for the occasion. He is something of a pack rat which often has its advantages!

All the best,

Bill Teague.





The Hornet Moth ZS-APD belonged at that time to Jim Williams who was a club stalwart & committee member. It was owned subsequently by John Loretto. In the lower left of the pic is the club's Tiger Moth ZS-APE, naturally always referred to as the "ape". I flew many banner and gliding tows in her.



## *Parting Shot*



This photograph was taken at the recent Regional Aerobatic Championships held at Baragwanath