

*Baragwanath*

*Barometer*



*Issue 18*

*July 2014*



*From the Editor*

It's funny how life always manages to get in the way, and what seems like a blink of an eye, a year has passed.

Yip, it has taken a year for me to get around to another Baragwanath Barometer, so to the avid readers of our newsletter, my apologies.

The AGM is upon us on 13 July, and this year has been brimming full of a range of different events and developments at our beloved BaraG.

Starting from mid-year in 2013, we flew to Nylstroom, held Round 2 of the Cub Day, hosted Tracy Curtis-Taylor for part of her Cape Town to Goodwood Flight, held a Christmas Party...and the highlight for me, our 95<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fly in. Phew...

The kitchen run by Pradeep Makan has gone from strength to strength and we have a range of regulars who fly through to enjoy his world class burgers and to die for curry.

We also now have fuel on the airfield and a flight school is in operation.

The pages of our newsletter will provide some background to these events, and it includes some comments from our members and committee.

To all of you who are an integral part of BaraG, thanks for your enthusiasm and for your role in making our little airfield the hub of grassroots aviation.

*Courtney Watson*

Editor



*The air up there in the clouds is very pure and fine, bracing and delicious. And why shouldn't it be? —it is the same the angels breathe.*

— Mark Twain





## *Nylstroom Fly Away*

*19 – 21 July 2013*

In 2010 Stefan Coetzee from Kitplanes suggested a Taildragger Fly-in. A venue was sought and Nylstroom was chosen as the ideal venue. "We decided to have a practice run in November 2010. We didn't believe we'd have more than 20 aircraft taking part and were pleasantly surprised with 60. The event was here to stay. One of the main reasons being that we have no air show and no flying restrictions. You are encouraged to enjoy flying. Take your friends for flips and get flips from friends. 2011 and 2012 had more than 100 aircraft on each occasion."

A gaggle of Johannesburg Light Plane Club (JLPC) aircraft flew across to Nylstroom on a cold Saturday morning. Four aircraft departed for the flight north, the coldest being the pilot and passenger in the open Tiger Moth.

Skirting Krugersdorp and heading via Hartebeespoort Dam to Nylstroom, we flew in loose formation over a brown winter landscape that embodied a real South African beauty. At our destination, we contributed to the more than 140 aircraft that had flown in.

Suffice to say that the weekend was very well attended and the safety record for the event was untarnished. The two Super Cubs, a Sports Star, a Cessna 150, a Comanche, Tiger Moth and Sinus all took to the skies during various stages of the day.

After swapping war stories, a number of pilots pitched their tents to sleep under the wings of their aircraft, and after the bushveld kuier that was punctuated by more hangar flying.

Afterwards, we slept with the informal aviation estate (settlement)'s party music, township dogs and insomniac roosters as our night time soundtrack. Nevertheless, it was a

A flyer for a taildragger fly-in event. At the top is the logo of the Johannesburg Light Plane Club (JLPC), featuring a blue diamond with a white 'JLPC' inside, flanked by white wings. Below the logo, the text reads: 'JLPC FLY-AWAY TO NYLSTROOM', 'TAILDRAGGER GET TOGETHER AT NYLSTROOM', and 'BE AT BARAGWANATH AERODROME ON SATURDAY, 20 JULY 2013 DEPARTURE 08H00 sharp!'. The central image is a black and white photograph of a biplane, likely a Tiger Moth, in flight. In the bottom right corner, there is a circular logo with a white border containing a silhouette of a taildragger and the text: 'TAILDRAGGERS NYLSTROOM FLY-IN 19-21 JULY 2013'. At the very bottom, in small white text, it says: 'CONTACT COURTNEY WATSON IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN US | CWatson@stuhlan.com | www.jlpc.co.za'.



restful slumber.

This sort of flying event is really what grassroots aviation is all about. It is a chance to meet new people, find out about new flying destinations, and pick up those pearls of wisdom that no flying school teaches. Many thanks must go to Richard Nicholson and his team for putting together another hugely successful event that built aviation camaraderie that is sometime in short supply.



JLPC aircraft that attended were:

- ZS-GYV Sinus Richard Bickel
- ZS-IDB Cessna 150 John Reeder
- ZS-IOU Piper Super Cub Frank Persson
- ZS-LHL Piper Super Cub Tim Kearton and Rob Mackinson
- ZS-SMF Beechcraft Bonanza Janet Reeder and George Spencer
- ZS-UKW Tiger Moth Roy and Courtney Watson
- ZU-EIJ Sports Star Peter Skellern and Kelley McAuley





## Piper Cub Day

13 October 2013

by Gus Brown

up and takeoff procedures on the downward sloped taxiway.

A promotional poster for 'CUB DAY' featuring a blue sky with several vintage biplanes flying over a hilly landscape. The text on the poster includes: 'CUB DAY', 'ANNUAL CUBBY MIGRATION to BARAGWANATH AERODROME for FLOUR BOMBING | BALLOON BUSTING and SPOT LANDING COMPETITION SUNDAY 13 OCTOBER 2013 ARRIVALS 08:00 - 09:00'. At the bottom, it says 'CUBS | SUPERCUBS | CUBBIES | SIMILAR VINTAGE AIRCRAFT ARE ALL INVITED' and provides contact information: 'www.jlpc.co.za | cwatson@stithian.com | FASY | S 26 20' 47" E 27 46' 31" | RWY 31/13'. There is also an 'INFO' icon in a circle on the left side of the poster.

I was at Baragwanath Airfield for a different reason other than to attend the second attempt at the annual Cub Migration hosted by the Johannesburg Light Plane Club, so it was a pleasant surprise to observe the antics of the day. I was surprised that there were not more aircraft visiting, but apparently strong morning winds and possibly the tragic events of the previous day kept a few aircraft in their hangars. Nevertheless, the action was fun to watch and, I am told, even more fun to participate in.

The variety of aircraft taking part made for some excellent plane spotting opportunities. I saw some fine examples of Piper Cubs, Super Cubs, Cubbys and a Tiger Moth with no wheel brakes making for some unusual rolling run-

This is the first year this event is being held, but the second attempt at holding the flying activities this year. The previous attempt was in June and although well supported, with more than 20 aircraft counted, the winds on the day were too strong to hold the various flying activities and so it was decided to reschedule those for another day, this being that day with only half that number of aircraft visible this time but most of them competing in the balloon busting, flour bombing and spot landing. The idea came from the Woburn Abby UK de Havilland Rally attended by the convener, Courtney Watson, where Tiger Moths performed balloon busting. The flour bombing is a revival of the old EAA Sun 'n Fun pastime. The balloon popping, I suspect, was more difficult than it appeared with only two



attempts each and no one pilot scoring two hits. One balloon managed to get stuck

will be a whole lot more interest next year. I for one will definitely try to be there even if it



spinning in a wingtip vortex and hung around for some time after the plane passed amusing the spectators. The flour bombing looked like the most fun, but it helps if you have a door that stays open in flight. Interestingly the overall winner was Brian Davidson in a Cessna 140, I guess the Piper pilots are going to have to do something to improve their performance next year.



The action certainly looked like a lot of fun for the participants and with as many as 90 Cubs listed by the Piper Cub Association and possibly 30 Cubbys flying I expect that there

means buying some sort of Cubby aircraft, which of course was why I was there in the first place.



Top Balloon Busters:

- 1. C140: Brian Davidson
- 2. PA11: Ian Popplewell
- Supercub: Alan Haynes
- C140: Patrick Watson

Top Spot Landings:

- 1. C140: Brian Davidson
- 2. J3: Ron Wheeldon
- 3. Dh82: Courtney Watson

Top Flour Bombers:

- 1. J4: Theunis van Vuuren
- 2. Supercub: Alan Haynes
- 3. DH82: Courtney Watson



*Cape to Goodwood*

*4 November 2013*

*Tracey Curtis-Taylor following the route first flown by Mary Heath in 1928. Tracey stopped over at Johannesburg Light Plane Club, Baragwanath Airfield, on 4 November 2013. In 1928, Mary Heath - the first woman to hold a commercial flying licence in Britain - made front page news around the world as the first pilot, male or female, to fly a small, open-cockpit biplane from Cape Town to London's Croydon Airport.*

succession of pioneering firsts.

Having spent two years as a dispatch rider and an ambulance driver during the First World War, Heath pioneered women's athletics in Britain (setting records in the javelin and the high jump in the process) and helped introduce women's track and field to the Olympics.



**MARY HEATH**

Largely forgotten today, Mary Heath, born Sophie Catherine Theresa Mary Pierce-Evans on 10 November 1896, was for a few years at the end of the 1920s one of the most famous women in the world, whose life was a

Switching her attention to flying, she became the first woman in Britain to receive a commercial pilot's licence; the first woman in the world to parachute from a plane and to become an airline pilot; and, in 1928, the first person, male or female, to fly solo from South Africa to the UK.



Her aircraft was a 1927 Avro 594 Avian III, c/n R3/AV/412, registered G-EBUG, and she began her journey in Cape Town on 5 January 1928 and arrived at Croydon on 17 May 1928.

"When we are very young, we look for adventure and long for it, but it is generally only when we are grown up that we are able to have it, and often then do not make use of our opportunities"

Flying in an open cockpit, exposed to the elements, is not for the faint hearted, the flight representing a formidable physical and logistical challenge - in a plane designed in the 1930s, with a top speed of 95 mph, an operating ceiling of 10,000 feet and a range of only 450 miles.

But this sort of extreme flying is what Curtis-Taylor, one of the Shuttleworth Collection display pilots, has been doing all her life.



#### TRACY CURTIS-TAYLOR

On the 2nd of November 2013, to commemorate Lady Heath's Solo Flight and to highlight some of the historic "firsts" being set by women today all across the African continent, pilot Tracey Curtis-Taylor embarked on a journey to fly her own open-cockpit Boeing Stearman biplane from Cape Town to Goodwood Aerodrome. Goodwood/Chichester Airport is approximately 90km South of London.

Tracey's route follows Mary Heath's. From South Africa to Zimbabwe, Zambia and Tanzania, then on through Kenya, Uganda and the Sudan to Egypt and along the coast through Libya and Tunisia before she turns for Sicily and home. In all she will cover approximately 7,000 miles in over six weeks.

Tracey, flying solo in her Boeing Stearman, registered N56200, began her flight in Cape Town on 2 November 2013. One of her





stopovers was at Baragwanath Airfield, home of the Johannesburg Light Plane Club, on Monday 4 November. Mary Heath stopped over at the original Baragwanath Airfield in 1928, 85 years ago!

flypasts and gently touched down.

While Courtney Watson put chocks on the wheels, his father, Roy, welcomed Tracey to Baragwanath. Members of the Johannesburg



#### VISIT TO BARAGWANATH

Unfortunately Tracey Curtis-Taylor's planned arrival at Baragwanath on Sunday 3 November did not materialise due to the departure from Cape Town being delayed a day as a result of unfavourable weather conditions.

So, on Monday 4 November, well-wishers began arriving at Baragwanath Airfield at around 14h00 for the expected 15h15 arrival of Tracey and her steed. A message over the radio announced an earlier than expected arrival and the Cessna 208B Grand Caravan, 5Y-MJA, with Camera Crew and Stearman Technical Crew on board touched down at 14h53. As the Cessna turned off the runway the Stearman gave the awaiting group two

Light Plane Club were introduced to Tracey and immediately began to chat about her experience so far. Tracey, with her delightful character, was most accommodating and, facing a barrage of questions, was only too pleased to share her story with the pilots and enthusiasts present.

A while later and a stroll over to the Watson's beloved de Havilland DH.82A Tiger Moth, ZS-UKW, saw Courtney proudly showing Tracey the aircraft. On the walk up to the clubhouse Tracey encountered two 44-gallon drums with the wording Amelia Earhart on them, remnants of the filming of "Amelia" starring Hilary Swank and Richard Gere that took place in 2008 at Rand Airport. These drums are significant because the trip that Tracey is



replicating was achieved in 1928 by Mary Heath in an Avro Avian, which was later sold to Amelia Earhart.

Once inside the clubhouse Tracey was shown the many interesting photographs and memorabilia from a bygone era of aviation. The Solo Mugs, the photographs of Mary Heath and her Avian as well as many other fascinating items which are on display.

Over refreshments Tracey was shown some interesting old strip maps detailing a 1941 route from Cape Town to Cairo. She settled down to continue the discussions about her adventure as well as being presented with a book, 'Bush Pilots do it in Fours' by Roy Watson. Lady Heath claimed to have read a novel while flying the length of the Nile, so

Tracey is now armed with some reading material for her own flight over the river! Tracey was also given a specially prepared South African flag with the Johannesburg Light Plane Club emblem embroidered in the centre. The flag was signed by those present and handed to Tracey.

All too quickly, it seemed, Tracey had to depart for her night stop at Lanseria Airport. After cheerful goodbyes Tracey and her Boeing took to the air at 16h47 accompanied by Tiger Moth ZS-UKW and Cessna 140 ZU-ECP. After ten minutes Tracey waved goodbye and the Boeing set course for Lanseria and the Tiger and 140 returned to Baragwanath.

It was a most enjoyable afternoon spent with a wonderful aviatrix, one that will be remembered for many years to come.

After several delays along the way, due to poor weather, Tracey landed at Goodwood at 11h45 on Tuesday 31st December 2013.





## *Christmas Party*

*1 December 2013*

As has been the trend for most of the events this year, the weather was not very kind to us on 1 December with a howling crosswind that thankfully became more of a breeze as the day progressed.

Our year end function was catered for by Pradeep, and he really pulled out all of the stops. We ate from a sumptuous buffet that included Karoo lamb, pumpkin, spinach, fresh rolls, salad and a home-made cheesecake that was absolutely decadent. A number of the JLPC members also pushed out their aircraft to be on show in front of the clubhouse, and I saw some of the pilots swapping rides with each other after lunch.

Before then, though, we (and more importantly the kids) were treated to an appearance by Santa Claus! He had asked if Baragwanath could be the venue for a practice skydive in preparation for his Christmas jumps down the chimneys of thousands of good little boys and girls. He used a Tiger Moth for this purpose (not quite the reindeer-drawn sleigh that he is used to), and even gave out a handful of presents to the kids who were present!

So, we all know now that Santa has proved his accuracy at skydiving, and hopefully he'll be visiting each of us again on 25 December. To all of the JLPC members, have a wonderful Christmas and we will catch up in the New Year.

Courtney Watson





95<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

1 June 2014

now, and back then, the area was called Baragwanath.



On 1 June 2014, Baragwanath celebrated the 95th Anniversary of the original Baragwanath Aerodrome and the Johannesburg Light Plane Club.

The origins of this story are attributed to two World War One pilots, Allister Miller and Tommy Thompson, who formed the South African Aerial Transport Company in 1919 and graded a strip of dirt on the unused land above one of the Crown Mines, which they would use as an airfield. The piece of ground was in the vicinity of where we find Nasrec

Subsequently, the Johannesburg Light Plane



Club was formed thanks to a chance meeting at a once-famous Johannesburg landmark called Uncle Charlie's. Uncle Charlie's was a hotel run by a World War One pilot called Rod



continually running flying clubs in the world. The day was spent watching aerobatics courtesy of the Sport Aerobatic Club of South Africa, ogling at the twelve models who were posing as 1930s

Douglas. Over drinks at the bar, Douglas met one Stan Halse, another World War One pilot. They got talking, and agreed on the idea of forming a flying club up on the reef. At the inaugural meeting of 1926, a significant gathering of aviation-bent individuals came together and formed the Johannesburg Light Plane Club.

So, on a clear winter's day, a number of enthusiastic pilots, and aircraft lovers got together, in period dress, and celebrated what is considered to be one of the longest





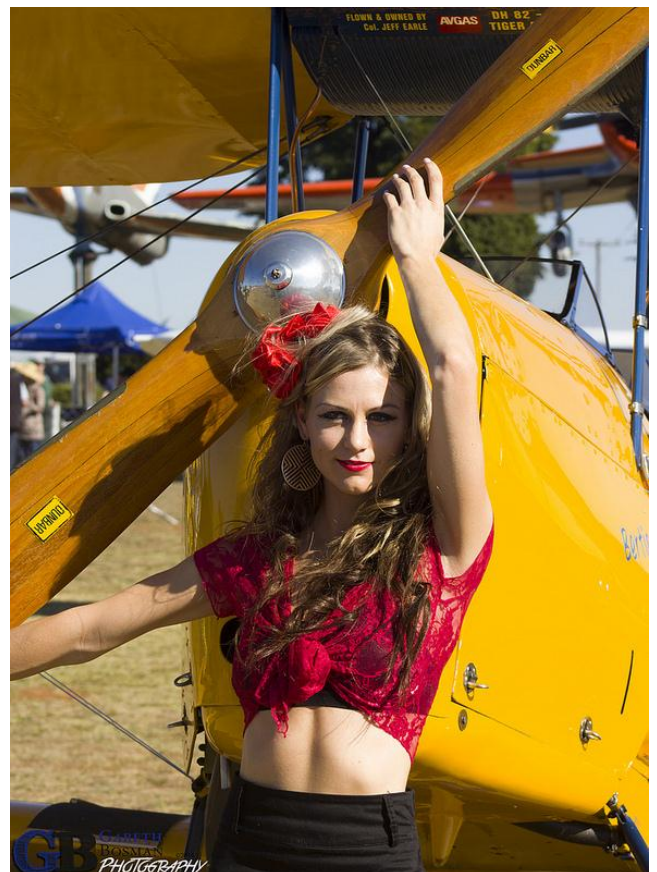
Tasha's Photos



pin-up girls amongst the aircraft, appreciating the classic cars that came along for the day, and of course, swapping stories about flying. The highlight for the day, however, was an art exhibition of Alan Hindle's paintings which were displayed in the clubhouse. We even enjoyed a 95th Birthday cake, and the atmosphere was enhanced by the St Stithians Jazz band as well as vintage records that played throughout the day.

The event is something that is not replicated anywhere in South Africa, and the gathering of old and new aircraft to celebrate anything that is aviation related is something which we would like to continue as an annual event. It was well supported this year, and hopefully 2015 will see even more aircraft and aviation minded individuals who will come together to support grassroots aviation in this country.

Courtney Watson





## Forthcoming Events

Watch this space for details of the following:

18-20 July

Fly-away to Nylstroom Taildraggers

*Please email [cwatson@stithian.com](mailto:cwatson@stithian.com) if you would like to join us as part of the JLPC gaggle leaving on Saturday morning.*

TBC

Baragwanath Spot Landing, Balloon Busting and Flour Bombing Day

*Details to follow on our website [www.jlpc.co.za](http://www.jlpc.co.za)*

TBC

Christmas Party

*Details to follow on our website [www.jlpc.co.za](http://www.jlpc.co.za)*

TBC

Various Barastormers Fly-Aways

*Details to follow on our website [www.jlpc.co.za](http://www.jlpc.co.za) and see Frank Persson's article later on in the newsletter*



Info frequency is 120.2 MHZ and ground frequency is 118.25MHZ from early Saturday morning. Friday and Sunday 124.8 MHZ.

Nice places to stay:

Waterberg Guest Home-Lizelle 076 236 7646

Modimolle road lodge (close to airfield)-

Sunelle 072 437 6133

Lekkerbly Guesthouse - Blacky/ Heleen 014

717 3702

Boshoff straat gastehuis- Gert/ Trienie 014

717 4432

7th Hole Guest Lodge- Erika 072 928 4631

Korro Creek Guesthouse- Magda 082 465

0186

Die Pappot- 081 7071811/071 658 6877

Transfers from airfield to B&B's or town sponsored by Waterberg Toyota.

Tower for info service manned by Bob Allison







*Welcome New Members*

JLPC would like to welcome the following members to the club:

Jonty Caplan

Demetre Kotsonis

Daniel Von Heynitz

Richard Cook

Join us at the bar for a beer, and great to have you on board!

*Dedicated to All Those Who  
Flew Behind Round Engines*

*Unknown*

We gotta get rid of those turbines, they're ruining aviation and our hearing...

A turbine is too simple minded, it has no mystery. The air travels through it in a straight line and doesn't pick up any of the pungent fragrance of engine oil or pilot sweat.

Anybody can start a turbine. You just need to move a switch from "OFF" to "START" and then remember to move it back to "ON" after a while. My PC is harder to start.

Cranking a round engine requires skill, finesse and style. You have to seduce it into starting. It's like waking up a horny mistress. On some planes, the pilots aren't even allowed to do it...

Turbines start by whining for a while, then give a lady-like poof and start whining a little louder.

Round engines give a satisfying rattle-rattle, click-click, BANG, more rattles, another BANG, a big macho FART or two, more clicks, a lot more smoke and finally a serious low pitched roar. We like that. It's a GUY thing...

When you start a round engine, your mind is engaged and you can concentrate on the flight ahead. Starting a turbine is like flicking on a ceiling fan: Useful, but, hardly exciting.

When you have started his round engine successfully your Crew Chief looks up at you like he'd let you kiss his girl, too!

Turbines don't break or catch fire often enough, which leads to aircrew boredom, complacency and inattention. A round engine at speed looks and sounds like it's going to blow any minute. This helps concentrate the mind !

Turbines don't have enough control levers or gauges to keep a pilot's attention. There's nothing to fiddle with during long flights.

Turbines smell like a Boy Scout camp full of Coleman Lanterns. Round engines smell like God intended machines to smell.





## *Preparing for Nylstroom*

The Nylstroom fly-in is just around the corner, and if you are planning on camping at the airfield, here are five tips that will ward off the cold!

### **1. Pack light**

Rather arrive in one piece than meet more than your maximum all-up weight on take off

### **2. Take a Hot Water Bottle**

It sounds a bit girly, but aren't we old enough to have proved our machoness already?

### **3. Use the Newspaper**

Put it under your tent to insulate from the cold – it really works!

### **4. Use an inner**

Instead of buying a winter sleeping bag, just buy some polar fleece from a fabric shop. Fold it over and sew two of the ends closed – it will form a warm inner.

### **5. Lose the mattress**

Blow-up mattresses hold in the cold air, so rather use some foam to keep you off the ground.

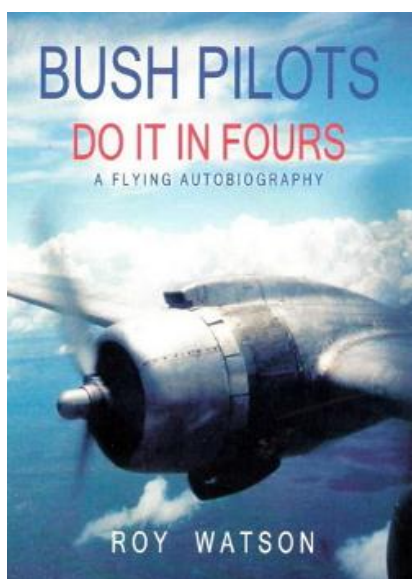




## *Gift Shop*

The club has a gift shop with a selection of books, DVDs, Alan Hindle (aviation artist) prints and JLPC badge. Listed below are some of the items for sale.

To order please contact [Courtney Watson](#) Cell +27 (0) 83 642-3565.



### **BUSH PILOTS DO IT IN FOURS - A flying autobiography by Roy Watson**

Bush Pilots do it in Fours follows Roy Watson's flying career and his fascination with all things airborne, from the very first steps through the restoration of a Tiger Moth, Aeronca and Zlin and some exposure to aerobatics in these 'older' flying machines. Thereafter, it moves towards larger aircraft, with his experiences maintaining Hawker Siddeley 748s. Roy was heavily involved in establishing an airline, specifically aimed at supplying food, to impoverished Africa and a close involvement with Russian Aircraft and Douglas DC-4s. What follows is his first taste of true 'bush flying', which evoked a distinct passion and love for the DC-4 (which inspired the title of the novel itself). The novel finally ends up with the challenging repair and subsequent conversion onto the Boeing 707. The flying exploits vary from humorous undertakings and happenings with his elderly light aircraft up to major expeditions in commercial airliners stretching from the Antarctic as far as the Northernmost Parts of Africa. Roy describes many incidents in the air, on the ground, and with the local population in a light-hearted and entertaining light that is sure to evoke a smile or two.

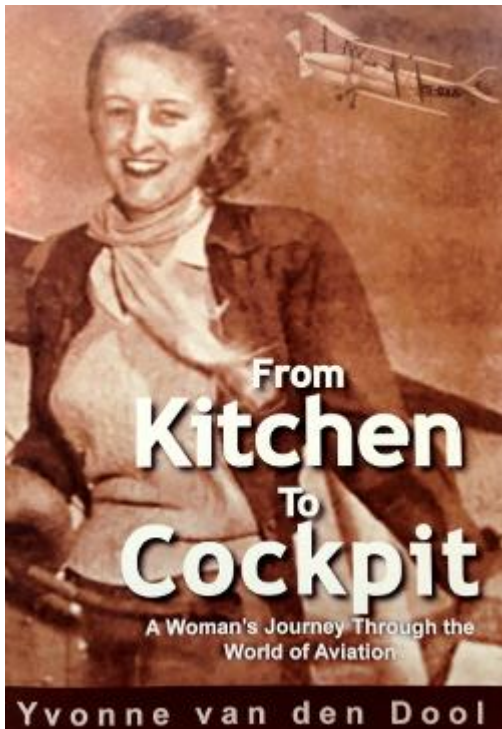
R150.00 each



### **The 95 Year History of Baragwanath Airfield - 1919 to 2014 by Courtney Jeffs Watson**

Baragwanath Aerodrome has a rich aviation history since its inception in 1919. Thanks to the vision of Tommy Thompson and Allister Miller, who secured some unused Crown Mines land and established the original airfield, we continue to celebrate the legacy of grassroots flying today. Similarly, the Johannesburg Light Plane Club, whose base is situated at the airfield, is lauded as one of the longest continuously running flying clubs in the world. This book captures a visual history of BaraG (as it is affectionately known), its members and the memories that form a significant portion of South Africa's Aviation History. It is thanks to the men and women whose dedication and passion for all things airborne that we are able to continue to enjoy Baragwanath to this day. This book is dedicated to them.

R150.00 each



**From Kitchen to Cockpit A Woman's Journey through the World of Aviation by Yvonne van den Dool**

A sincere, colourful account of the ongoing challenges that faced a young South African woman whose dream it was to fly - a woman, whose fierce determination and love of flying, combined with integrity, excellence and a keen sense of humour, has influenced women in aviation, both in South Africa and abroad. Yvonne van den Dool paints a rich picture of the scenario of women aviators around the world from the 1950's through to the 1980's, highlighting their incredible achievements. Within this broader context of women in aviation, Yvonne shares the story of her life as South Africa's first woman to hold a Senior Commercial Pilot's Licence. With a strong, fear less spirit, Yvonne embarked on a journey that would not only lead her to fly Tiger Moths at tree-top level whilst spraying Tsetse flies at Kariba Dam, establish altitude records, represent South Africa in Washington DC as their first Governor of the Ninety-Nines and navigate the treacherous Basutoland Mountains, but also become a great role-model and mentor to her two daughters and three grand-daughters.

R250.00 each



**International Tiger Moth Botswana Safari - DVD**

After more than a year of planning, seven de Havilland aircraft from all over the world flew some 1500 nautical miles from South Africa through to Botswana and Zambia.

These 70 year old aircraft from Botswana, South Africa and England, completed an epic journey that took them to the Makgadikgadi Salt Pans, the Okavango Delta, the Chobe River and Victoria Falls.

Participants came from all over the world, Australia, Botswana, England, France, Holland and South Africa; all of them brought together by the inspiration of flying open cockpit aircraft over some of Africa's last unspoilt wilderness.

Produced by Courtney Watson

R150.00 each



Club Badge

R20.00 each



*Alan Hindle Prints*

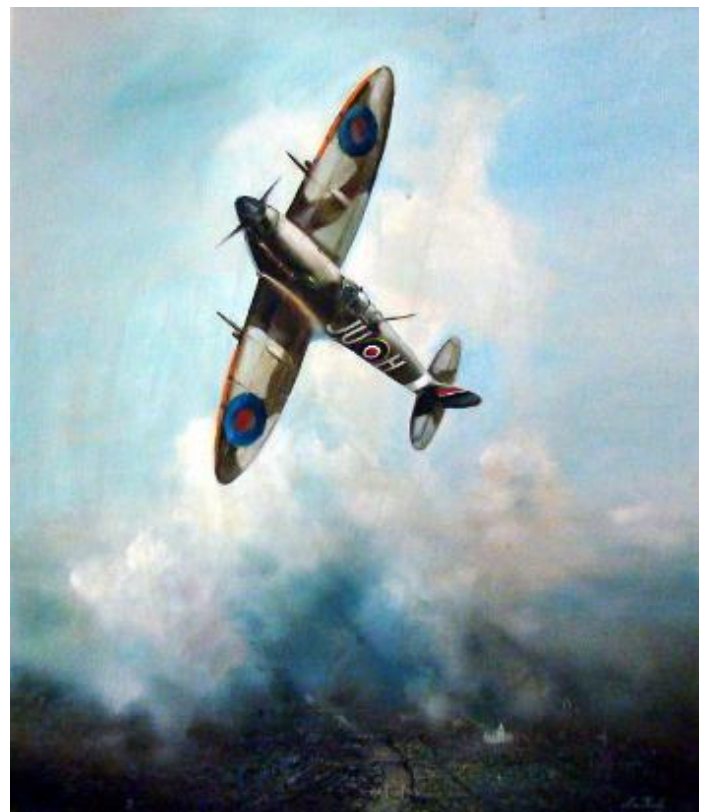
Alan Hindle was an aviation artist through the 1950s to 1980s. Many considered him to have been an underrated talent. His passion was aircraft, especially biplanes of the 1920s and 1930s, and WW2 aircraft. However, he was often commissioned to paint many "modern" types as well. In his later years he even turned his brushes to painting maritime scenes.

Alan owned and flew a de Havilland DH.82A Tiger Moth, ZS-DNP, and for many years he was particularly good at painting "Tigers".

Below are copies of his paintings that are for sale. The prints of the paintings are all printed on synthetic cloth so they really look good. They are approximately A3 size and are ready for framing.

See [www.jlpc.co.za](http://www.jlpc.co.za) for details of available prints.

R250.00 each





## *Alan Hindle Biography*

The Intriguing Story of the Painting ... 'The Point of No Return'

by Noel Otten

The story of the first ever aviation painting by Alan Hindle, 'The Point of No Return', does not end with its presentation to the JLPC in 1963!

The painting depicts, with dramatic effect, the flight by Alcock and Brown on 14th June 1919 across the North Atlantic in a Vickers Vimy. It hung in a prominent place above the fireplace in the JLPC clubhouse for 20 years.

When the club departed the 'old' Baragwanath Airfield in 1982 the committee had to find alternative accommodation for its many heirlooms and artefacts. The new site at Syferfontein had no facilities other than hangars and a rudimentary clubhouse structure. Various committee members took the club's trophies, photos and artefacts to their own homes for safe keeping. When an inventory was made a year or so later it was realised that some items did not make the journey to a safe location. The 'PONR' was one such item. Brian Zeederberg told me of this at the time. I was upset at this loss but put it out of my mind as I had other issues to deal with.

At the time of the club's relocation I had already dropped out of aviation and played no part in the moving of the club to the new site.

Wind the clock forward 26 years to 2009...I was again active in aviation, thanks to one of my daughters having chosen an aviation career, and had become active once again in the building and restoration of aircraft. I renewed my membership of JLPC and after Brian Zeederberg emigrated to Australia I took over the chairmanship of the club. We had reopened the investigation into the disappearance of the club's heirlooms some

years before and had recovered some trophies and mugs .... but there was no sign of the Alan Hindle painting.

I also renewed my membership of the Experimental Aircraft Association and one evening in 2009 I attended an EAA talk-show at Rand Airport. As I walked into the auditorium I saw the painting 'PONR' on a chair at the front of the hall with a 'for sale' sign on it. I approached the 'owner' and questioned him about the painting. He informed me that he was emigrating and that he had decided to sell the painting. When I told him that the painting actually belonged to the JLPC and that it went 'missing' during the move some 26 years before he became quite incensed and proclaimed quite loudly that he was "not a thief" and had paid R 5 000,- for it .... But would not tell me from whom he had acquired it. He assured me he could show 'proof-of-payment'. He wanted R 8 000,- for the painting.

I said to him ... "I'll make a deal with you!" My offer was .... R 5 000,- for the painting, which I would pay the following day; and the painting ... "goes home with me that same evening and in return .... I don't take the matter any further!" He accepted my offer!

So! 'The Point Of No Return' now hangs in my home ..... but the club now knows where it is!





## ZS-IOU *Humanitarian Hero.*

Willie Bodenstern

In 1956 a Piper PA-18 Super Cub construction number 18/5248 left the Piper factory configured as a Crop-duster. Little did the little Super Cub know that it would end up in a humanitarian role if far of Africa.

Its first owner was the International Red Locust Control Service that was headquartered in Abercorn, Northern Rhodesia. Registered as VP- YOU in the then Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland it was crated and shipped to Placo's workshops at a dusty Wonderboom Airport Pretoria where it was de-crated and inspected in its dismantled state before assembly began. Signal strips and the name plate was fitted and in accordance to Piper's service bulletins the fuel and hydraulic lines were repositioned and longeron reinforced and the wing root cuffs were secured with speednuts.

On 19 November 1956 she was signed out and flown to Abercorn on the southern tip of Lake Tanganyika and the most northerly town in



the federation. From Abercorn to the to the top of Lake Tanganyika a twenty year war was being waged against the Red Locust that was then decimating crops. The Red Locusts bred in their millions in the swamp and plains of Southern Tangayika and the marshlands of Northern Rhodesia. The infected area covered almost 3,000,000 square miles. Swarms varied in size from two square miles to monsters of destruction more than a hundred square miles big. Initially men were used to exterminate the young hoppers and although some 20,000 were so employed in the 1930s it proved fruitless until aircraft were introduced.

The main areas of infestation were to the east of the lake at Chocha in Northern Rhodesia (later Zambia) as well as to the east at Muze with some as far north as Iku, Kabanga and Wembere in northern Tanganyika. Base camps were established at these villages.

Aircraft were first used in 1954 when a swarm numbering some 40,000,000 insects was spotted and two aircraft, one from Pretoria and one from Nairobi were dispatched and so successful was the operation that it was decided to use them not only permanently against the swarms but also against the

hoppers as well. Despite the successes breeding pockets remain and since each female was able to lay more than a 100 eggs a year the war was not yet won and exterminating these colonies was to be the responsibility of the Super Cub and Crosse-Upcott. When she left Pretoria VP-YOU had 3 hours 35 minutes on the clock.



The ferry flight up north started on 7 December and she arrived at Abercorn six days and 23 hours later on the 13<sup>th</sup>. It was here that Robin Crosse-Upcott an anthropologist with a doctorate who preferred flying and VP-YOU first became acquainted. In her first month fighting the pesky locusts she flew approximately seven hours. Most flights were short hops, land, getting filled with pesticide, take off and repeat, up to six times a day. Ferry flights between the bases took longer.

It was the middle of summer and Africa was hot and wild, the Savanah

still teeming with game and flying low to spray presented problems of their own. Once, Bill Breytenbach one of the other pilots was spraying when a Buffalo that was lying in the grass got up as he approached, the wheel hit the animal and was knocked off. Breytenbach managed to keep control and later did a perfect one wheel landing.

Unfortunately not much more is known about her service with the locust control operation although the success of it cannot be in doubt as the Red Locust has almost completely exterminated in the southern regions of Africa.. She must have been sold or re-registered for when Mark Schroenn found her in Zambia in the 1970s she was registered as

9J-ROU. She was still licensed but in need of a full restoration. A consortium comprising of Mark Schroenn, Mike Mc Aluly, Hein Venter and Brian Roach made an offer of roughly R120, 000 that was accepted. Brian volunteered to fetch the Super Cub and since she was judged not safe to fly it was decided that she would be partially dismantled and trailered back. The trip up north took a



number of days of was not without incidents but at last she was left at Mike's house where she was completely stripped and readied for the restoration. The crop spraying equipment was removed and sold the fuselage sandblasted and X-rayed.

As with most projects it took longer than envisaged. Parts sourcing was one the biggest problems, when not locally available new parts were bought from Piper. The wing ribs were damaged during transport and originals were difficult to obtain so special tools were made and where possible the old ribs were repaired or new ones were made. Working in Mike spacious double garage the restoration took almost ten years and at last everything





was moved to Tom Willows hangar at Rand Airport where assembly took place. Tom was also the AMO that eventually signed her out.

They wanted to register her as ZS-ROU, keeping as much of her original identity as possible but that was unfortunately already taken and since IOU was still available that was settled for. The distinctive enlarged rubber stamp of the Red Locust Control Service on the fuselage was faithfully reproduced from the original documents as a reminder of the small part the Super Cub had played in eradicating the source of the locusts that had led to famine in large parts of the continent.

Dr Frank Persson , a glider pilot who also owned a Piper Cub was looking for something with slightly more power and endurance that he could use at a tug and in June 2010 he bought Mike's quarter share in IOU. When Brian and Hein's shares became available he bought those and in November 2013 when Mark decided to sell Frank became the sole owner.

Frank has a love affair with Taildraggers and the fact she is a classic and probably the nicest Super Cub in the country made her the ideal aircraft for him. IOU might in the not too distant future visit her old stomping grounds. Frank has plans for a safari into Africa and the Super Cub's approach speed with full flaps of 50 mph and landing run of 200 metres makes her the ideal aircraft. A bonus is the fact she can flown with the doors off would allow him to fly low level over the same plains where she years before did her bit in the eradication of the Red Locust.





*Bara Scenes*

Thanks to Curtis Gallon for these great images in and around the airfield. If you'd like him to take some ground shots of your aircraft, please contact the editor.





## *Frank Persson Report Back*

Frank Persson

As a committee member, my portfolio is amongst others fuel.

I am proud to say that we do presently have the state of the art 2500 litre fuel bowser.

We have recently installed the latest electronic fuel flow meter in which will ensure very accurate volumes.



I was fortunate recently to come across Skeerpoort Verspreiders (SV) fuel distributors in the latest SA Flyer. I contacted Clive and we had our first AVGAS delivered by truck to our doorstep last week.

This is a remarkable achievement as it ensures we will always have fuel on the field.

Many people are not aware that we dispense fuel. I will kindly ask you to advertise our facility nationwide. At this stage Johan and all the workers are capable of dispensing thus allowing an almost 24 hour service with no penalty should we need to help a fellow aviator after hours. Ideally we try to stick to office hours.

Johan Maritz cell number 082 822 3179

Hannes cell number 084 879 1695

Please note that cell phone reception is POOR, so SMS if unable to get through. They do both reply promptly

Remember we regard three days payment as cash. Please do an EFT within those 3 days . Confirmation to be sent to both Johan and our secretary Denise for reconciliation.

If you are in default, you will pay the higher price penalty and NO FURTHER FUEL may be dispensed to you.

Should this problem be ongoing we will unfortunately blackball you and you will no longer be able to get fuel from us. Hopefully this situation will never arises. To date there is a 100% payment within the three days with absolutely no problems. Thank you.

Johan Maritz's email [johanjpc@gmail.com](mailto:johanjpc@gmail.com)

Denise [dixip@mweb.co.za](mailto:dixip@mweb.co.za)



Recently, I also had the privilege of meeting Essie Esterhuysen (HELI avatar on Avcom). He presented his trip last year to Tanzania at our last EAA322 chapter meeting. One of our members, Don Lucas, joined in this trip.

His organizational abilities are phenomenal. 23000

After another tough day at the office (lots of flying at BARA) on one Sunday evening, John Rheeder, Alan Evan-Hayes and myself were chatting.

Consensus is that we have expensive aeroplanes and we don't use them. Flying to Parys for breakfast does not qualify.

Therefore, we have decided to start the BARASTORMERS.

The aim is once a month to arrange a fly away somewhere in RSA. Camp under the wings. Braai and fly back the next morning.

There are so many beautiful places in the country. It also has the endorsement from the EAA 322 (Karl Jensen - Chairman) Chapter.

There are many of us who would love to do this. John Rheeder, with his expertise and being a Grade III instructor, will be called chief and hopefully lead us.

Give us feedback of where you have flown to or suggestions where you would like to fly to and let's do it.

liters of AVGAS was secured for this trip in various odd locations.

The good news is that he will again be arranging a trip into Africa next year June. This time he will accommodate planes that are slower and most likely only travel to Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Angola and Namibia. A wonderful opportunity if you, like me, have never left our borders. I strongly urge you to consider this trip as it will be a trip of a lifetime. Typically it will be two weeks in length. Contact me if you are interested

Lastly Alan Stewart from Panorama has kindly contacted me and asked that we possibly become sister/brother clubs. The idea is to share information on what we are doing and what our flying activities are. Panorama is extremely active and we will forward you their newsletter, as it is available.

Why not land at Panorama when an opportunity allows. There always is a soft



drink and a chat and tell them you are from Baragwanath.

They recently had their land lease secured for 7 years and I joined them on a Friday night for a chat and a braai. They are wonderful people. They fly Slings, J3s , helicopters , micro-lights, RV's etc. They even have a flight school.

Alan Stewarts e mail should you want to contact him [alan.stewart@cheetahtech.co.za](mailto:alan.stewart@cheetahtech.co.za)

Please feel free to contact any committee member or me if you have anything you'd like to discuss about BaraG.

My contact details 0824144183

[fpersson@oncology-sa.co.za](mailto:fpersson@oncology-sa.co.za)

Appreciate all feedback.

And if you moan enough, you will be elected onto the committee!





*Have bush plane — will travel.*

Michael Gill



Spring airfield in the east of JHB is home to the SkyReach factory – the manufacturer of the BushCat light sport Aircraft. It is a great little “bush” airplane that is at its happiest operating of short unprepared strips in the middle of nowhere. For this reason, a hand full of American business men chose the BushCat as their mount for the trip of a lifetime. A two week flying adventure exploring the length and breadth of Namibia.



The BushCat is a little different to the types these adventures can usually be found flying over weekends back home in the US. In their collective ownership can be found such items as a P51 Mustang, L39 jet, Aerostar, Cirrus SR22, Super Decathlon etc. The BushCat

however, suited the mission just perfectly as any large and fast aircraft just would not be able to operate out of the back country “strips” they intended on exploring. Also, getting from point A to B at several hundred mile per hour at 10 000 foot + totally defeated the object of the trip. This was back to roots flying – real stick n rudder stuff!

It would be absolutely impossible for me to do the trip any justice with a few words and some accompanying pictures but I hope this wets the appetite - and if it convinces at least one person to get in their bush plane and head out across the border or at least well out of town, then my work is done. This is what flying is all about - Seeing new places and making new friends along the way.

Below is a condensed photo essay of the trip starting from Fish river canyon. While this was 3 days into the trip, this was intended to be a tour of Namibia so I will exclude info on the South African legs. Once you have gone through the essay, I urge you to get out your maps and call your flying buddies – there is no better time to start putting together an adventure than right now!

The text in *blue italics* found throughout this photo essay are direct quotes from Ismael Ghalimi’s blog that he kept of the trip. (Reproduced here with his kind permission) All of the photos were also taken by Ismael Ghalimi

While I did say I would start the story from when the gaggle crossed into Namibia, there are a few quotes from Ismael’s blog, penned during their overnight stay in Kimberly that I thought were worth sharing:

*“If you visit the Big Hole museum, you can skip the part about explosives.... But if you happen to work in an underground mine, make sure to*



*join a team working with explosives, because it's a lot of fun....."*

*"Explosives themselves have another practical use: political activism. The mine I worked at was located in Gardanne, half way between Marseille and Aix-en-Provence. Not far from it is Corsica, where activists like to blow things up"*

**Day 3 – Arrival at Fish River Canyon:**



After buzzing the Fish River lodge to let them know they had arrived, the aircraft were landed and being secured as the lodge vehicle pulled up to collect them. The Fish River Lodge is definitely something quite special, not least because it is positioned right on the edge of the canyon and the canyon in its self is breath-taking. After a few days of hard flying, the lodge comforts were well received by the adventures but after a few gin & tonics it was time to take in the sights of which there are no shortage here.

*"Meet Pasquale, explorer extraordinaire, adventurer indefatigable, and trained geologist, explaining to our group how the Fish River Canyon was formed about 650 million years ago. Between him, Paul, and Richard, the stories we're getting at dinner time are beyond belief, yet most of them are actually true. And if they're not, they're definitely entertaining"*



*"You can think of it as a slightly smaller version of Grand Canyon, with not a single tourist in sight."*

**Day 4. Fish River Canyon to Luderitz & Kolmanskop (132 miles)**

The flight was uneventful and the short "hop" was most welcome as the previous longer legs were starting to take their toll. The travellers were a little weary by this point but the excitement and adrenalin was keeping them going. The aircraft were performing well and the Rotax 912s motors had not missed a beat.





deserted and falling to ruin that even the ghosts have left. The town was abandoned in the mid 50's when diamond fields were all but depleted. The town is now severely over run by sand dunes:



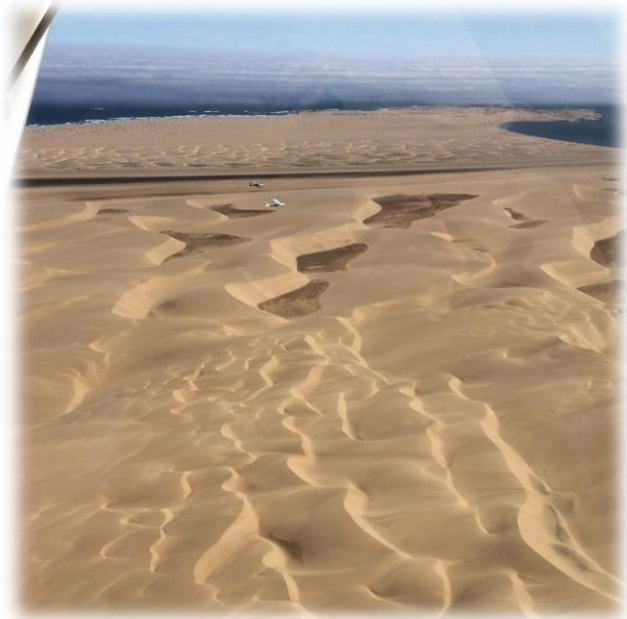
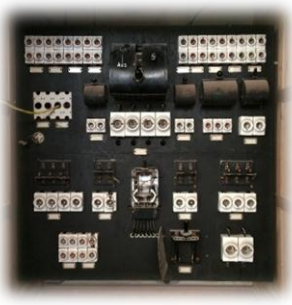
With a population of about 13 000 almost stuck in somewhat of a time capsule, the harbour town of Luderitz no longer receives many modern ships due to its shallow harbour, however the town is home to many fishing vesels. The main trade is now from tourism.

**Day 5. Luderitz to Neuras wine farm (68 miles)**

As todays flight was just a quick jump to Neuras, it allowed for a late departure thus giving time for the adventures to spend a few hours pre take off, exploring Kolmanskop just a mile or so away from Luderitz. This is no ordinary town but a genuine ghost town – so







*“I love machines, computing machines, flying machines, all kinds of machines. But what I love even more is broken machines, because unlike working ones, they have a rich story to tell”*

Getting back to the flying part of this adventure. On some legs of the trip, the BushCats were joined by a Cessna 206 and/or a Cessna 182. The following shots were taken while flying up the coast from Luderitz before heading inland to Neuras winery. This destination was not part of the original game plan so does not feature on the map at the start of this essay. There were a few changes to the master plan as the tour went on .... Wine seemed like a good reason to divert!

*“For over 50 nautical miles, all we had underneath were sand dunes after sand dunes.”*

Neuras Wine and Wildlife estate on the edge of the desert also offers rustic camp facilities with all meals on offer and .... Wine. Known as





being the world's driest wine farm, they have two red wine offerings – a Shiraz and their Namib Red Blend.

They also have some very very big crickets:

Wine making in the middle of the Namibian desert is made possible by a complex irrigation system made of four natural springs, wind-powered pumps, reservoirs etc..





**Day 6. Neuras to Solitaire (128 miles)**



Solitaire was to be a 3 day stop over to use as a base to explore places such as [Sossusvlei](#) etc..

Solitaire is a tiny settlement based at the junction of the C14 ([Walvis Bay - Bethanie](#)), and C24 ([Rehoboth - Sossusvlei](#)) so sees surprising amounts of tourism. It has the only post office, petrol station and general dealer between Windhoek and Walvis bay . A distance of some 160 miles. And talking of petrol stations, how do you refuel a BushCat in Solitaire:

And they know how to look after their guests:





The folk of Solitaire obviously have a good sense of humour as can be seen by their use of rusting old car wrecks as decoration. I like it! One of the tour group dubbed Solitaire as the real “Radiator Springs” Those that are familiar with the movie “Cars” will understand. Some more sights of Solitaire:





While visiting Namibia, you do not have to worry about too many infectious diseases, but a relatively innocuous one seems to have affected our crew: [The Most Interesting Man In The World meme](#). Our fearless commander is now spoofing the infamous Dos Equis campaign with his own variations. For example:

*I do not always need civilization,  
but when I do,  
I stay in Solitaire.  
Do not remain thirsty my friend.*



**Day 9. Solitaire to Cape Cross Via fuel stop and leg stretch at Swakopmund. (171 miles)**

*“The flight to [Cape Cross](#) was quite amazing. We went from hot to cold in the span of three hours, while flying over all kinds of barren and flat landscapes. For the later part of the flight, the ceiling was 800 feet AGL, which meant that we had to fly pretty low, while making sure to avoid the power lines we would cross along the way.”*



The flight to Cape Cross was for a greater part along the Skeleton Coast. “Littered” with

shipwrecks, it makes for interesting site seeing. The BushCats allowed the adventures to get low and slow over the sites – something you just can’t do in a fast people mover.

Cape Cross is mostly known for its Seal Colony – one of the largest in the world.

Arrival at Cape Cross:



*“Before dinner, I took a long walk on the beach. Along the way, I stumbled upon the remnants of dead whales, seals, and machines, but with the fresh air and the rumbling sound of breaking waves, I could not feel more alive.”*



**Day 10. Cape Cross to [Twyfelfontein](#)  
(77miles)**

Another short hop! Heading inland brought with it another radical change of scenery and some unpleasant windy conditions. Due to the turbulence, the BushCats broke formation as it was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain visual watch on the other and still try fly the aircraft.



to find elephant. The game vehicle is a Mercedes Unimog which if you have ever driven in a Unimog, you will know it was never built for comfort.

After a bone rattling 3 hour drive, they gave up on the idea of finding elephant and headed back to the lodge, only to find a large herd of elephant right outside the lodge perimeter..... Bret, who had stayed behind in the comfort of the lodge found this very amusing as he had continued to sip gin & tonics and watch the elephant from the lodge veranda.

Twyfelfontein is “known” for its ancient rock art from the Khoikhoi people. The art is estimated to date back 2000 to 2500 years. Another destination in the “middle of nowhere” yet the lodge is absolutely spectacular.

After a few G&T's, all but one of the team decided that they should go on a game drive





One of the BushCats had developed a slight fuel leak around one of the tank drains. It was decided that while it was a very minor leak, they should fix it in Twyfelfontein as the next few destinations were even more remote and the chances of finding the right tools were slim. The job took only a few minutes, a shifting spanner and some PTFE tape .



Day 11. Twyfelfontein to Purros (136 miles)

*“After having fixed our fuel leak, we’re back in the air with a vengeance, flying to the [Purros Community Campsite](#). Mountains and sand dunes are on the menu again, but the flight is rather smooth. Tonight will be our first (and only) one camping out.”*

Back on the ground in Purros:

*“We’ve landed in Purros. While overflying the field, everything looked yellow, as if covered by sand. But from the ground, everything looked green, because of some grass covering the entire landscape. This type of grass is so thin and sparse that you can’t see it from the air. This is a perfect example of what traveling with a low and slow airplane really is: you get to see the same place, on the same day, through two very different angles. What an awesome privilege!”*







For the night stopover in Purros, the team were going to be “roughing it” and camping the night. This particular stop was one of the better game viewing spots with elephant and giraffe wandering almost right through the camp. Ismael decided to sleep under the many stars that night listening to music on his laptop ... at least for a short while:



*“Enthralled by these thoughts and buzzed by one too many gin tonics, I decided to sleep outside tonight, on the dry river banks. I took my sleeping bag, my second fleece, and my laptop, and watched with wonder the foamy sky. The laptop played some Schubert lieder interpreted by [Dietrick Fischer-Dieskau](#), the famous German baritone, with lyrics from Goethe. For me, the juxtaposition of raw nature with fine music is the utmost form of human sophistication.*

*I slept there for a few hours, then realized that I could be standing on the path of elephants. Around 2am, the sandy grounds also started to get a bit cold, so I decided to make it back to the safety and comfort of my tent.”*

Some sights of Purros:





**Day 12. Purros to Epupa (103 miles)**





Now at the most Northern part of the whole tour. Epupa is on the Namibian/Angolan border - the Kunene river, from which the falls are fed, makes up part of the border. The falls are made up of several drops spanning about 1.5 km of the river. The noise from the falls is deafening and with the lodge being right on the falls, it won't be a peaceful night sleep.

*"Just before dinner, the whole group hiked up a small hill overlooking the falls. From there, we had a couple of gin tonics and some light snacks, while taking a few pictures of our now well-worn crew. Life is hard..."*

The following day, before leaving Epupa, the team visited the local Himba tribe. While historically nomads, this tribe is now very settled yet very detached from what most of us will consider a normal existence.





The team as a whole could not pass up the opportunity to do a game drive that night and the mission was to spot lion – however this was just not meant to be. Elephant and Zebra however were abundant.

**Day 13. Epupa to Okaukuejo (202miles)**

The longest single leg of the trip from a time point of view and now the team find themselves in the Etosha National Park. Due to some serious headwinds, the 202 mile trip took over 3 hours. Luckily the team were filling up the fule tank before each flight and the BushCat has over 5.5 hours endurance thanks to its 95 liter fuel tank.





The team had become very attached to the BushCats. Besides a small fuel leak, the aircraft had performed absolutely flawlessly and the little bush plane had won over many hearts.

Some of the team including Ismael flew back to Johannesburg in the C206 as they had catch flights back home to the USA. Ismael had this to say of his flight from Windhoek in the C206:



*“Flying in the comfort of a Cessna 206 is quite nice, but it’s really not the same as the low and slow flying that we enjoyed for two weeks with the good old BushCats. I can safely say that I am now totally addicted to this mode of traveling, and totally in love with these little planes...”*



As mentioned in the beginning of this essay, I hope this will have given you the reader, some motivation to go and visit somewhere a little off the beaten track. Somewhere you have never been before. Africa has so many of these amazing places on offer – get planning and go use your aircraft for what it was intended. Go places – meet people – fly safe!

**Day 14. [Okaukuejo to Windhoek \(210 miles\)](#)**

After a total distance of around 2900 miles and 58 hours of flying time, the final flight of the trip had been made and the adventure of a lifetime had come to a close.



*First flights*

I had to include this in the newsletter because if, like me, you are a parent, you'll understand how special a moment this is.

Bella is my 2 ½ year old daughter. She has grown up around the airfield, and her first flight was on my wife's lap at 6 months old. Her REAL first flight, though, happened a few weeks ago. What I mean by her REAL first flight was that this was the first time that she sat on her own in the seat next to me, and went for a ride of any real length. And she loved it!

I hope that you enjoyed the first 2014 newsletter and I hope to have the next one out sooner than this one has taken.

Blue skies and smooth landings

*Courtney*





*Parting Shot*

Thanks to for this one...taken in front of tiger moth ZS-DNP, the photograph was taken by

Natasha Hugo and the model is Gayle McGuiness.

