



# SAAF Association Port Alfred News



P.O. Box 296, Port Alfred, 6170 Tel: 073 231 1773

Email: [waldee@border.co.za](mailto:waldee@border.co.za) Website: [www.saafa.co.za](http://www.saafa.co.za)

NPO: 083-072 PBO: 18/11/13/4374

Volume 29 Issue 7

## TALE DRAGGER

July 2016

### NEXT GENERAL MEETING AND LUNCH, RIVER AND SKI-BOAT CLUB, 12h00 FOR 12h30 JULY 4<sup>TH</sup> 2016

Look forward to see you! Please call Hugh at 046 624 1589 or Wally at 046 624 1861, because we have a need to know, who is attending, or who is unable to be present, or who is a sickbay case vac? Whoever they are, get better soon! Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

### BRAINS, AGE AND MEMORY

Brains of older people are slow because they know so much.

People do not decline mentally with age, it just takes them longer to recall facts because they have more information in their brains; much like the PC struggles as the hard drive fills up.

Researchers say this slowing down process is not the same as cognitive decline; the human brain works slower in old age.

I have more friends I should send this to, but right now I can't remember their names!?

So let'S TRY .....

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY WISHES FOR JULY

Dudley Emslie – 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Rodney Keet – 5<sup>th</sup>  
Diane Emslie – 6<sup>th</sup>  
Barrie Bradie & Roy Wilkins – 7<sup>th</sup>  
James Hoyle – 10<sup>th</sup>  
Peter Metcalf – 11<sup>th</sup>  
Jackie Minter – 15<sup>th</sup>  
Ollie Davis – 17<sup>th</sup>  
Audrey Geyer – 19<sup>th</sup>  
Val Human – 20<sup>th</sup>

Brenda Spilken – 24<sup>th</sup>  
Les Cock & Sydney Fryer – 25<sup>th</sup>  
Myrna Keet – 28<sup>th</sup>  
Lee Botma – 30<sup>th</sup>

Have a great day and stay well and happy for the rest of your year until 2017! Let's hope your brains are fully operational and not over loaded with wisdom?

There are two ladies strong at over 90, well done and please. Keep going.

### THE WORLD IS MINE - AUTHOR UNKNOWN (From Ivan Erasmus)

Today on a bus, I saw a very beautiful woman and wished I were as beautiful.

When suddenly she rose to leave, I saw her hobble down the aisle. She had one leg and used a crutch. But as she passed, she passed a smile.

Oh, God, forgive me when I whine. I have two legs; the world is mine.

I stopped to buy some candy. The lad who sold it had such charm. I talked with him, he seemed so glad. If I were late, it'd do no harm.

And as I left, he said to me, "I thank you, you've been so kind. It's nice to talk with folks like you. You see," he said, "I'm blind."

Oh, God, forgive me when I whine. I have two eyes; the world is mine.

Later while walking down the street, I saw a child I knew. He stood and watched the others play, but he did not know what to do. I stopped a moment and then I said, "Why don't you join them dear?" He looked ahead without a word. I forgot, he couldn't hear.

Oh, God, forgive me when I whine. I have two ears; the world is mine.

With feet to take me where I'd go...

With eyes to see the sunset's glow.

With ears to her what I'd know.

Oh, God, forgive me when I whine. I've been blessed indeed, the world is mine.

*If this poem makes you feel thankful, just forward it to your friends.*

*After all, it's just a simple reminder that we have so much to be thankful for!*

Give the gift of love. It never comes back empty! I have been truly blessed with AWESOME FRIENDS!

## **EDITOR, SECRETARY, TYPIST PORTFOLIO - TALE DRAGGER**

---

"Father Time" has wielded the scythe and rearranged the editors portfolio: Wally's "OBE status" has necessitated that he hand over newsletter draft time to someone younger, efficient and interested in assisting with spreading Port Alfred Branch news covering the purpose and objectives of the South African Air Force Association, thereby keeping our members abreast of SAAFA activities, projects, parades, meetings, camaraderie, care of the aged, fund raising and building team spirit through member participation, commitment and dedication to the ideals of SAAFA.

We are grateful that Mrs Elisabeth Anderson has volunteered for the task and Wally will support her as a start.

Unfortunately, our volunteer secretary and typist who has been heavily involved with "Tale Dragger" for over 15 years, has moved to Cape Town, therefore SAAFA Port Alfred is going to lose two excellent members, Sydney and Marianne, who have done us proud. We wish her, Marianne, and family, all the very best in their new environment and thank her most sincerely, and whole heartedly, for her superb contribution – we will miss you!

## **MEMORIAL SERVICE 43AS 15<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2016**

---

Sunday opened as a typical sunshine coast morning, "sunshine and roses", champagne, windless, warm and peaceful, for our special day which commenced 11 am at the Wall of Remembrance, all seated under car port shade cover.

Chairman Hugh Holmes welcomed all family, friends and colleagues present, explaining that we gather every year at this time, curtesy of 43 AS, in Remembrance of our airmen, and ladies, who gave their lives in defence of their countries during world wars, and beyond.

They have risen up as on the wings of an Eagle, put out their hand and touched the Face of God; they shall grow not old as we who are left grow old, age shall not weary them or the years condemn, at the going down of the sun, and in the morning, WE WILL REMEMBER THEM – REST IN PEACE.

Wally then recited the Airman's Prayer, after which RSM, Richard Francis, Battle Axe Shell Hole, played the Last Post and Reveille on DVD, followed by wreath laying for SAAFA (Wally), RAFA (Hugh), MOTH (Mark Shroder, Old Bill, Battle Axe Shell Hole) and the public, during which Piper Chris Terry played the Lament (Bag Pipes).

We all then moved to the Wright Place for General Des Lynch to cover on Video all the SAAF airmen who had answered the Sun Set Call during the last 12 months. WE WILL REMEMBER THEM.

Where after we enjoyed a delicious lunch. We are indeed greatly indebted to the generosity of Attie Nieman, Des Lynch and all involved for their wonderful participation and support in our endeavours!! Grateful thanks and appreciation.

Editor.

## **FLYING STORIES - THE HILTON BARBERS**

---

Hello Wally,

Thank you for your kind remarks in the recent Tale Dragger about Moira and me. Generous indeed of you.

Your mention of the "Flying Barbers" reminds me of my Dad's three flying cousins - Maurice, Roger and Geoffrey Hilton-Barber - who were brothers and flew Spitfires during W.W.2 in three separate air forces, The R.A.F., The South African Air Force and the Royal Rhodesian Air Force. All three were awarded D.F.C's.

After the war Maurice became the Rhodesia Director of Civil Aviation, Roger commanded a Rhodesian Military Air Force Base but Geoffrey was shot down and killed towards the end of hostilities during what was described as a "daring encounter". Their sister, Joan, was also

an accomplished pilot who had a Tiger Moth on her licence and occupied a high profile administrative position as a commissioned officer in the Rhodesian Air-Force H.Q.

Strangely, although Maurice and his wife, Moira, were perfectly "sighted" parents, their two sons, Geoff and Miles, both became blind over the ten-year period from their respective ages of twenty to thirty! Apparently some "deep recessive genetic" throw-back was responsible.

This disability didn't hinder them in their pursuit of physical challenges - in fact Miles told me that had they been normally "sighted" they wouldn't have accomplished their "kaleidoscope" of incredible series of challenges! They have each earned their Comrades' Marathon "personal numbers", they have run every major marathon including the "New York" and the "London". They have climbed to some giddy height on Everest, endured both the coldest camps in the Artie and Antarctic, survived a visit to the hottest place in the Tropics. Their various accomplishments were done both together or separately, but usually, obviously, with the support of sighted friends.

Geoff, with the aid of cabinet-maker pal, built a yacht which, at then middle-aged he sailed solo (probably illegally) from Durban to Freemantle, (North of Perth) — it took him 7 weeks! Miles was so impressed with his boet that, with a licenced pilot-colleague riding pillion-style (i.e. unable to reach the controls) flew from Heathrow (London) to Sydney (Australia) which flight involved 28 landings across Southern Europe, parts of Africa and Northern Australia! Doubtless the various "manned" aerodromes were unaware that the pilot was sightless otherwise the flight would have been stopped! If I've mentioned this all before, please accept my apologies - I'm being "stalked" by senility.

One interesting flight that I may have overlooked when submitting various stories to the "Tale Dragger" was a short flip of a couple of hours from our ranch in Southern Matabeleland to a bush strip on the Botswana border. This was on the banks of the giant Shashi river and adjacent to an historic police grave-yard over on the Botswana side which, with my Dad and son, we wanted to visit. Very low cloud was soon encountered on the flight and as I was about to abort the trip, a manicured airfield suddenly appeared directly below us. (As it wasn't registered on

my official aeronautical map I presumed it was somebody's private facility, or very new.

Anyway we landed, intending to await the cloud to lift with the increase of the morning's temperature, and alighted from the aircraft to "stretch our legs". Then suddenly, out of the morning mist, came a white-clad fellow with a "Colonial" red fez carrying a tray of tea! We could not have been more astonished - it turned out that this was District Commissioner's personal aerodrome and base-camp used for his regular tours of administrative duty to this remote area under his jurisdiction! Understandably, the good "askari" thought we were his boss with accompanying V.I.P.'s whose immediate "tray of tea" on arrival was routine! (And biscuits, too!)

Anyway, to end the "Tale", after duly tipping the obedient waiter, we continued the flight in clear skies to the appointed airstrip. At this point the Shashi had ankle- deep water over it's couple of hundred metre width and a commemorative photograph show my smiling son piggy-backing his ("I don't want to get my feet wet") grandfather across this great divide!

The graves were in reasonable condition and had interesting names and dates to remind us, the rare visitors, of the forlorn passing of young Englishmen doing duty in this lonely backwater of the British Empire so long ago.

Sorry, that this has been so lengthy.

Your nostalgic scribe,

Guy.

*Thank you Guy; I wonder if the three flying cousins ever came across my cousin, Keith Kemsley, CRRAF and ADC to Ian Smith? If I have already asked you this question, please ignore. Keith has retired to the East Rand after he landed under black cloud for "stealing aircraft from the ZAF" for the museum; so now they have no trainers to teach the new pilots; such as for the SAAF as well!? (as per news media)*

## QUESTION TIME

---

Hillary Clinton goes to a gifted-student primary school in New York to talk about the world. After her talk she offers question time.

One little boy puts up his hand. Hillary asks his name. The boy says it is Kenny.

"And what is your question, Kenny?"

"I have three questions:

*First* - whatever happened in Benghazi?

*Second* - why would you run for President after your husband shamed the office.

*Third* - what happened to the missing 6 billion dollars while you were Secretary of State?"

Just then the bell rings for recess.

Hillary Clinton informs the kiddies that they will continue after recess. When they resume Hillary says, "Okay where were we? Oh, that's right, question time. Who has a question?"

A different boy-little Johnny—puts his hand up; Hillary points to him and asks him what his name is.

The boy says, Johnny.

"And what is your question, Johnny?"

"I have five questions:

*First* - whatever happened in Benghazi?

*Second* - why would you run for President after your husband shamed the office?

*Third* - what happened to the missing 6 billion dollars while you were Secretary of State?

*Fourth* - why did the recess bell go off 20 minutes early?

*Fifth* - where's Kenny?

## **OBITUARY: KEN HUMPHREYS**

We are sad to report the Call to Higher Office of Ken Humphreys during the month of June after a long period of deteriorating, painful and uncomfortable health in and out of Frail Care at Settlers Park Retirement Home.

The demand on Ken's reason to want to "soldier on" was getting weaker and weaker as time went on, adversely affecting his health and placing a heavy drain on Lyn's ability to look after him as she knew was necessary, but Lyn did a great job in trying and longing to achieve more and improved results.

Ken was a private flier with his late wife, and they both operated their private Flying Club in Nelspruit until his co-pilot and wife was killed in a flying accident.

Ken and Lyn attended our SAAFA Branch meetings and get-togethers on a regular basis and were always ready to assist with any help when required; Lyn was the Branch treasurer which made her duty as nurse and EXCO member more difficult, but Lyn was able to "soldier on" in positive mode, but sad and demanding.

Our sincere condolences to Lyn and members of Kens' family;

MAY HE REST IN PEACE, AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN AND IN THE MORNING, WE WILL REMEMBER HIM.

## **CLOSURE**

It's a strange, strange world we live in Master Jack..... What a shame, how many important areas have deteriorated!?

4 months to Christmas and then 2017; the Lord be with us and keep us safe and healthy.

Editor Wally Vandermeulen

### **NOTE**

The Editor extends his thanks for all contributions received. Opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor or SAAFA National Executive. The Editor reserves the right to amend or reject any editorial matter submitted for publication.