



SAAF Association Port Alfred News



P.O.Box 664, Port Alfred, 6170 Tel:
082 903 7619

Email: pa@saafa.co.za

Website: www.saafa.co.za

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

TALE DRAGGER

July 2018

NEXT MEETING AND LUNCH—AT THE SKI BOAT CLUB ON 2nd JULY 12.00 FOR 12.30

We look forward to seeing you. Please contact either Hugh on 046 624 1589 or Lyn on 046 604 0493 for your bookings or apologies.

The caterer requires numbers on the Friday before the lunch so please advise by 12 noon on 29th June.

WELFARE OF MEMBERS

Sick Bay: Denzil Goosen, Gavin Kendall, Rev. James Hoyle.

We are remembering you in our prayers and hope that you soon on the road to recovery.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY WISHES FOR JULY

2nd Dudley Emslie ; 4th James Hitchcock; 5th Rodney Keet; 6th Dianne Emslie ; 7th Roy Wilkens; 10th James Hoyle ; 11th Peter Metcalf ; 17th Oliver Davis; 19th Audrey Geyer; 20th Val Human; 25th Sydney Fryer; 30th Lee Botma; **16th June** Ivan Erasmus – (detail not available at time of June issue.)

We hope that you have a very Happy Birthday And that the year that lies ahead is full of sunshine and roses.

ABOUT GROWING OLD

You know when you are getting old when everything either dries up or leaks.

One must wait until evening to see how splendid the day has been.

(Contd.)

Long ago, when men cursed and beat the ground with sticks, it was called witchcraft. Today it's called golf!

FLEW TO WITBANK FROM ENGLAND – 22ND NOVEMBER 1935



(Mr. McPhee's flying helmet)

Mr. George McPhee landed safely at the Witbank aerodrome amid cheers of about 1000 people yesterday afternoon, at 4 o'clock at the end of his flight from England. He was flying in a Miles Hawk Major. Five planes from the Rand Airport met him at Rhenosterkop and accompanied him to the aerodrome. His mother was the first to greet him. He was looking the picture of health and very sunburnt.

Mr. Soar, Chairman of the Witbank Flying Club, and the Mayor of Witbank, Mr. Markels, welcomed Mr. McPhee, and congratulated him on his flight from England to South Africa.

Mr. McPhee said that apart from bad weather he had had no trouble. He encountered bad weather from the outset, but fortunately the weather was clear over the Channel.

From Brussels to Frankfort, visibility was so bad that he had to follow the Rhine Valley. At Nuremburg again weather conditions were anything but ideal, but from there to Turkey it was exceptionally good.

At Sophia he met a man who was flying with his wife to Kenya, and they flew together to Cairo. Low clouds prevented his departure from Constantinople for three days and when the flight was eventually resumed he landed at Konia, numb with cold. Here he flew at 9,000 feet to clear the snow-covered mountains. Owing to the intense cold, this was probably the worst stage of his flight.

After visiting a friend in Alexandria, he went on to spend a few days with friends in Nairobi. He experienced some difficulty in taking off in Nairobi owing to the high altitude of the aerodrome.

His first greeting at Witbank was the large "Welcome Home" carved on the Transvaal and Delagoa Bay Colliery mine dump in flames.

A reception and dance were given in his honour in the recreation hall of the Transvaal and Delagoa Bay Colliery last night.

(Courtesy of Mirelle McPhee-daughter-in-law)

(Article taken from a newspaper clipping dated November 4, 1935)

AIRMAN'S PRAYER

My God this night I have to fly, and ere I leave the ground,

I come with reverence to Thy throne, where perfect peace is found.

Come with me now into the air, be with me as I fly,

Guide Thou each move that I shall make, way up there in the sky.

Be with me at the target, Lord, when danger
is at its height,
Be with me as I drop my load and on the
homeward flight.

(Lt. Eric Impy)

(Courtesy of Wally)



VISIT TO SAAF MUSEUM PORT ELIZABETH

“As you are well aware, some of SAAFA Port Alfred members recently embarked on a day trip by bus, with much singing led by Lorna Els, to the SAAF Museum and what a day it was. The PE Branch went out of their way to welcome us as well as the OC of the SAAF Museum, Major Mark Kelbrick. Major Kelbrick gave us a short video and talk on the Museum. This was followed by a tour of the establishment and we could take our time walking between the aircraft. For me, the highlight was seeing the completed re-constructed Spitfire.

This was followed by a braai that was arranged by PE Branch and the bar was run by the Chairman of the Friends of the Museum, Shaun Ruth.

Much fun and comradeship was had by all until we had to leave for home at about 3pm.”

(Courtesy of Hugh Holmes)

The museum has many interesting exhibits including a re-constructed, full scale

WW2 Supermarine MK-1V fighter Spitfire, (As mentioned by Hugh in the above article)

In about March 2010 the former curator of the museum, Lt. Col. Tinus Janse van Rensburg initiated building a full size Supermarine Spitfire to be constructed out of wood.

He had a set of 1/9 scale plans and arranged with the Nelson Mandela Municipal University to enlarge the fuselage formers to full size. These were printed on paper and laid out on sheets of five ply plywood. These were then cut out with a jig saw and mounted on a plastic pole at the correct spacing.

The next procedure was to follow the 1/9 plans, making the necessary changes required to fit a person seated in the cockpit.

In 2011, Fred Muller joined Lt. Col. Janse van Rensburg and together they proceeded to construct the fuselage with whatever timber materials they could lay their hands on. This consisted of shutter board, 3 ply plywood and pine planking sawn to the correct widths for the ribs and main spars.

The cockpit was constructed as realistic as possible using spare gauges and made-up parts from WW2. They had to rebuild some of the gauges and make up others and match and position all the gauges as close as possible to the real aircraft.

The fuselage took shape and they progressed to the wing section. This element was problematic as they had to design and manufacture the undercarriage frame with steel tubing obtained from Peter Boshoff the AMO. (Aircraft Maintenance Officer)

Together with Col. John van Rooyen's assistance, they welded up a frame and fitted undercarriage legs and installed these into the timber wing section. Peter Boshoff then donated two Yak Oleo legs which, with some lathe work, were fitted.

Finally, they obtained two Vampire wheels and tyres from Pretoria, but these were without tubes. They then purchased two passenger car tubes and made up two valves to fit.

The undercarriage was finally fitted to the wing section and ready to be attached to the fuselage which was being completed in between this work.

50L of Polyurethane liquid for foam was kindly donated by BASF enabling them to cast parts to then carve and shape out Spitfire air scoops.

The exhaust outlet stubs were donated by E.P. Mufflers, a local exhaust manufacturing company.

The aircraft received its undercarriage control, throttle and pitch control constructed to match the Spitfire as closely as possible. The tail wheel assembly was re-modelled as the weight of the aircraft was too great for the initial parts constructed.

The wing ribs were cut and assembled by Wally Viljoen, who recently joined the team, with timber donated by Penny Pinchers.

The next part consisted of planning the spars and commencing with the construction of the two wing sections.

The RAF Officers' Club made a donation towards the aluminium structure for the main wings. The four blade propeller with a diameter of 3.2 m (10' 9") was manufactured thanks to assistance by Plastics By Graymaur which filled up a much needed technical gap for the propeller's moulding.

The aircraft is painted in the standard camouflage Ocean grey/green with a light sea grey underside and has Sailor Malan's markings.

SAAFA NATIONAL CONGRESS

"The week following the Museum visit, saw the Holmes's and Goff's off to the SAAFA National Congress which was held at the 4 Star Krystal Beach Hotel, Harbour Island, from Friday morning (25th June) ending with the Formal Banquet where awards were presented and I am happy to say that our editor, Lyn Lapham was awarded the Presidents Merit Award for her hard work and dedication to SAAFA.

Our next year's Congress is going to be in Bloemfontein and I would like to see more of our branch's members attending."

(Courtesy of Hugh Holmes)

HUMOUR

Two elderly women were in a hair salon getting their hair done, when a young woman wearing a low cut blouse walks in.

The blouse was cut very low and revealed a beautiful tattoo of a rose on one of her breasts.

One of the old women leaned over to the other and whispered, "She doesn't know it, but in 50 years she'll be wearing a long-stemmed rose in a hanging basket."

EL SHADDAI PUPILS TAKE TO THE SKIES

At the beginning of the year the El Shaddai Christian Academy launched a training programme to introduce young pupils wishing to become pilots one day, to the world of aviation.

Using the Microsoft Flight Simulator Accelerator package and a Logitech joystick the pupils are able to select an aircraft type, a geographical location, choose the time and desired weather conditions and then take off and fly.

The software was developed in consultation with more than 400 pilots and aviation engineers and the attention to aircraft instrumentation, flight characteristics and sound is remarkable.

The programme is being co-ordinated by a teacher, Piers Steenekamp, who has a background in military aviation. Microsoft have developed simulator software that accurately imitates the flight characteristics of each aircraft and they have loaded the entire world geography using satellite technology.

There are about 4000 airports and airfields on the system and pupils can fly from one airfield to another in real time.

Pupils start with a basic training aircraft and their hours and the exercises they complete are recorded on a log sheet. After they have shown sufficient confidence on a particular aircraft they can progress to a more advanced type.

They learn to do circuits and landings, night flying, aerobatics and cross-country flying. They also learn, among other interesting things, basic aerodynamics, navigation, meteorology and aircraft engines.

After about one year the successful pupils, who have advanced sufficiently, will be flying Boeing 737/747 and Airbus 320 aircraft. Pupils will receive a certificate of attendance and with their log sheet and their matric certificate, they will be well placed to approach a flight school, or the SAAF to commence formal pilot training.

Those pupils who wish to (once they have completed the initial programme) can also enrol for the Combat Flight programme. They will commence training on P51 Mustang and then progress to F18 Hornet aircraft. Once sufficiently competent in flying fighter aircraft they progress to the Ubisoft Combat software and learn to do interceptions in F15 Eagles and close air support in the Grunman A10 Warthog aircraft.

The first four pupils are doing very well and are about to progress to flying the Bombardier Learjet 45 aircraft.

(For those Members who do not live in the Port Alfred area, El Shaddai Christian Academy is one of our local schools)

LUNCH VENUE

We have been hearing a few grumbles about our lunch venue. The biggest gripe is the fact that we only have access to the bar upstairs and, where initially, there were waitrons to climb the stairs and bring the drinks to us

downstairs, this service is no longer available. The reason for this is that the upstairs bar belongs to Harry B's (the restaurant caterers) so proceeds obviously go to Harry B's. The downstairs pub belongs to the Ski Boat Club to which Ski Boat Members have access. (Some of our SAAFA Members are also Ski Boat Club Members)

Also, although the cost of the lunch has not been increased, the quality of the food has not really been up to the standard that we have been used to. (Graham spoilt us!!)

If you feel that we should change our lunch venue, please either advise Lyn at our next lunch or contact me on 046 604 0493, 082 577 8389 (text or What's App).

A decision will be made according members' wishes. If a change is needed, ideas as to a future venue will also be welcomed.

I think that I have done enough damage for this edition. Please take care, wrap up warmly and we look forward to seeing you at lunch on 2nd July.

Editor: Lyn

The Editors extend their thanks for all contributions received. Opinions expressed in this Newsletter do

not necessarily reflect those of the Editors or SAAFA National Executive. The Editors reserve the right to amend or reject any editorial matter submitted for publication.