



# BRAKES ON ... THROTTLE SET... CONTACT!



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September 2016



*Piper L4 'Grasshopper' at MISASA's Showcase and Toys for Boys, Tedderfield.  
Thanks to Willie Bodenstein from Pilots Post.*

## Whassup!

Wed 07 September  
Chapter 322 Meeting  
Dickie Fritz MOTH Hall, Edenvale

Sat 10 September  
Chapter 575 Breakfast Fly-in  
Springs Airfield

Sun 11 September  
Chapter 1502  
Wartburg - Air Scouts  
Air Experience flights

Wed 14 - Sun 18 September  
AAD Waterkloof AFB  
EAA table at the Aero Club stand

Thur 15 September  
EAA Flying Legends Talk Show  
EAA Auditorium, Rand Airport  
Guest: 'Horse' Sweeney

Sat 01 - Sun 02 October  
Chapter 1502  
Ladysmith Fly-away

Sat 29 October  
Chapter 322  
Year-end Dinner  
The Wanderers

**Weekend 11, 12 & 13 November, EAA Sun n Fun, hosted by Brits Flying Club, Brits Airfield.**

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# *A Historic Aircraft Engine Comes To Light*



- John Illsley, Chapter 322

A few months back, while looking at options to replace the propeller damaged on my Aeronca C3, I was given a lead to someone who had a two cylinder aircraft engine and its wooden propeller. Although I doubted that the prop was likely to fit my engine, my interest was sufficiently piqued for me to phone the owner and make further enquiries. It transpired that the engine was a Praga B engine, a two-cylinder, horizontally opposed engine of about 40hp manufactured in Czechoslovakia in the 1930s to power an all-wood two seat aircraft known as a Praga Baby (or sometimes Air Baby to distinguish it from a small car made by the same manufacturer). Surviving examples of the engine are very rare, but this particular example (and prop) have a greater claim to fame in that they were used in a Praga Baby which was flown to South Africa in 1936 by one HL Brook, of which more later.

The owner of the engine had fielded a few enquiries from a museum in America and so there was some danger of the items leaving the country. Because I fly the oldest flying aircraft in SA, Aeronca C3 (ZU -FRL), itself a veteran of a flight from Britain in 1936, I thought it would be a good idea to secure this engine to at least display alongside the Aeronca and maybe to serve as the basis for a future replica. Incidentally, among several coincidences, is the fact that these two aircraft were the lowest powered aircraft ever to have flown across the continent and that the engines used (JAP J99 and Praga B) were both copied, to a greater or lesser extent, from the original American EC -113 engine produced by Aeronca to power its C3 light aircraft. I duly purchased the items and have placed them in the hangar at Petit for future use. The engine is something of a time capsule as it still has its original spark plugs. The prop is coated in the original blue paint.

A beautifully rebuilt example of a Praga Baby flew in Czechoslovakia last year powered by one of the original engines, and another example using a Continental four cylinder engine flies in Switzerland. I have yet to establish the availability of the original factory plans which would make a replica feasible.

For those not familiar with the aircraft, the pilot and this trans-Africa flight, additional details may be of interest. The Praga Baby was designed and built in Czechoslovakia and a small number were built in that country and under licence in Britain by Hillson before World War Two. It uses spruce and plywood glued construction, typical of the period and was unusual for that period in that the wing is a one-piece cantilever structure, which makes for a very clean airframe. The two seat cabin is forward of the wing and was accessed via a hinged canopy. Meant as an economical training, touring and sport aircraft, its potential was not fulfilled, mainly because of the Depression years and because the war interrupted production. Nevertheless the soundness of the design seems to have been shown by the fact that examples were again built in Switzerland, after the war.





The example of a Praga Baby that was flown to SA, although registered in Britain (G-ADXL) and promoted along the way as a 'Hillson' Praga, was in fact a Czech-built example, and the flight was meant to show the economy and ability of the type through a long distance flight – something which the makers of the Sling continue to do today in a rather more extreme fashion!

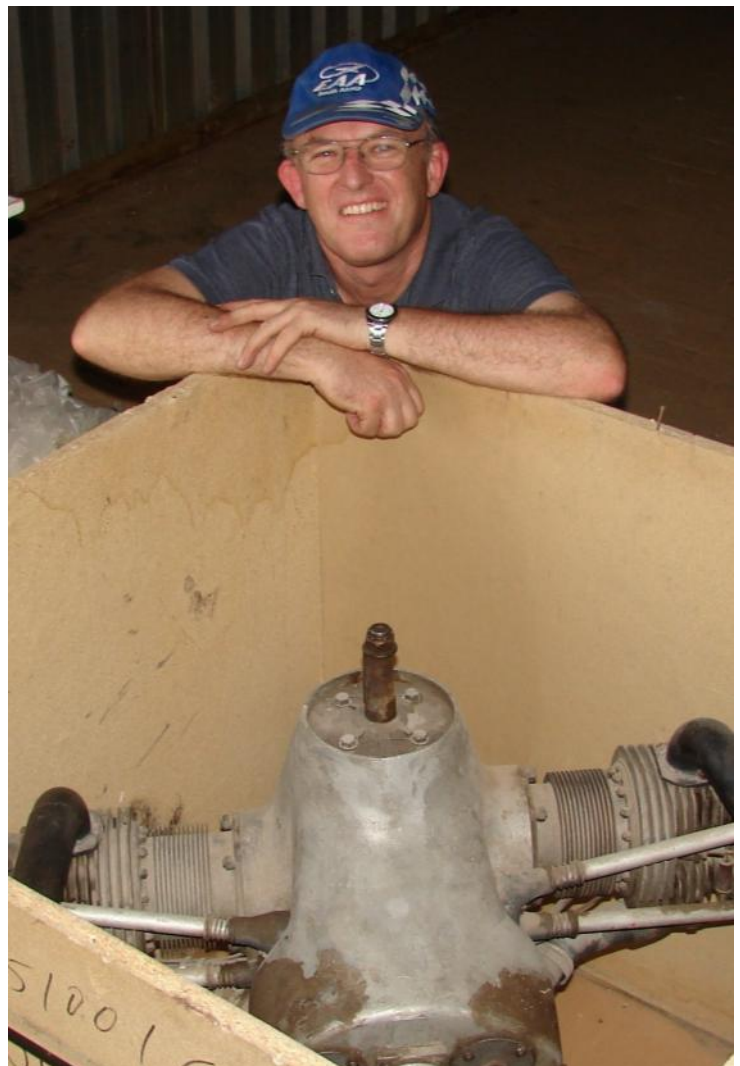
As mentioned earlier, the Praga was flown to this country by HL Brook. He was a Yorkshireman who was already well known in aviation circles at the time, for having participated in the 1934 England to Australia air race in a Miles Falcon (with a female paying passenger, a Miss EM Ley) and had set a new record of seven days and nineteen hours on the return flight in the same aircraft, beating Jim Mollison's record by more than a day. The flight to SA took about 150 flying hours spread over two weeks (averaging 650 miles per day) and saw Brook and his yellow flying machine successfully reaching Cape Town (whereas the Aeronca C3 flight of David Llewellyn ended in Johannesburg).

Looking at newspaper cuttings of the period, one is struck by how much publicity these flights received, and also the dress code of the pilots: Brook arrived at Baragwanath in a jacket and tie! Being essentially a sales tour, the salient details of the flight were trotted out for the benefit of the press en route, and included the cost of the aircraft (£385, which was ten pounds cheaper than the Aeronca C3); a weight of 580 pounds (or around 290 kg in metric terms); with a fuel consumption of about 30 miles to the gallon and a third of a pint per hour. The entire flight cost only about £50!

The Praga Baby used by Brook appears for the most part to have been a standard example, although photos reveal the addition of navigation lights and a pipe from the cabin to allow oil to be topped up while in flight. It is likely that a second fuel tank was added for the flight.

Although trans-Africa flights in the 1930s were far simpler in terms of red tape, he did end up in jail for a few days in Italy, accused of being a spy after he landed unannounced at night in Palermo. Italy was then under Mussolini's fascist government and in the midst of invading Abyssinia (today Ethiopia), a move which Britain opposed (albeit ineffectually).

As a veteran of two flights to Australia and back, it is revealing that Brook said of his flight to Cape Town in the Praga Baby that it was by far the worst he had undertaken and that he would rather do two more Australia flights than repeat the Africa flight! He didn't elaborate, but one can safely speculate that the slow cruise speed and the limited ceiling the small plane could achieve over the tropics had a lot to do with that assessment. Crossing Tanganyika (now Tanzania) he was forced to fly around 9000 ft mountains which took him through lower lying and tsetse fly infested areas.



Brook went on to do another flight to Cape Town and back to England in a Vega Gull in 1937. During the war he added another 350 hours to his log book, delivering RAF aircraft as an ATA pilot – the Air Transport Auxiliary, which was nicknamed ‘anything to anywhere’. Brook later settled in South Africa and ended up farming in the Eastern Cape, where his son Chris still lives. Some years ago, after publishing a book on early aviation in southern Africa, Chris kindly contacted me and offered me access to his late father's papers. You can imagine his surprise when I phoned him to tell him that I had secured the engine that had powered one of the aircraft used by his father on a trans-Africa flight eighty years ago!

And what became of the aircraft? After being registered locally as ZS- AHL, the Praga survived the war and was then converted into a glider and flown in the Cape Peninsula for some years before being broken up as late as the 1970s. Supposedly it was stored on its nose at Cape Town airport for some years. It is not impossible that some parts have survived, although an appeal to the Cape Gliding Club (now at Worcester) has not yielded any items. Obviously the author would be very keen to learn of anything that may have survived.



Whether a replica Praga Baby will be built locally as a proper tribute to HL Brook's 1936 flight remains to be seen. If only I had bought up more of the stock of Plywood Suppliers in Johannesburg a few years ago when they had piles of aircraft quality Birch ply, that undertaking might have been far more viable. In the meantime, the engine remains as a modest reminder of one of the daring long distance flights undertaken in that era.





# EAA members' training

- Tony Kent

*(Please excuse the use of poetic licence and kindly accept my interpretation of facts that may be a bit twisted.)*

Archie Kemp, who has been flying since just after the Wright brothers, spawned a fine young Son (with the help of Mrs Kemp of course). He was named Donovan, and usually just referred to as 'Don'. Young Don was not walking yet when he was strapped into the backseat of various aeroplanes owned/flown by Dad, drooling from the mouth as he surveyed the passing landscape below. Naturally, once Don was able to reach the controls and 'manipulate' them, he was soon flying said machines. In his early teens, Don was confidently taking off and landing, mostly with those nasty tail-dragger types.

Still a scholar, Don went solo in June 1984. Two years of National Service interrupted his PPL training, but he passed the test in August 1986. He then flew various types, logging around 160 hours over the following 9 years. He hung up his goggles in April 1995, when wine, women and work started to impinge on his flying time.

The flying bug kept nibbling, and last year, Don acquired a C182 – a very sensible choice (not that I'm biased in any way, having owned one for 10 years) and logged around 1,500 hrs on the 182.

This 1973 182 had some wear and tear not acceptable to Don, and he has poured some hard-earned cash into that big aluminium hole in the sky, and is now the proud owner of a pristine, well-equipped 182 which flies like a dream! Small issue – got a plane, got no licence!

Some well-meaning EAA member guided Don to reinstate his long-lost licence with me at ATA (Aviator Training Academy) at Springs Airfield, where I have been instructing for the past 5 years. Fortunately, about 3 years ago, CAA changed the rule that if your licence was stale by more than 5 years, you had to rewrite all the subjects and fly the full training syllabus of 45 hours. Now, you only need to rewrite Air Law (and if prior to 2008, Human Performance as well), then cover all aspects of the training syllabus to ensure proficiency, including a long dual nav going into Controlled airspaces and Airfields. This exercise must then be repeated solo. Then TEST as for an initial PPL licence!

Don started training on 25 June, and has been an 'interesting' student – his abilities far exceed his expectations. I have had to cajole him into progressing faster than he wants to. He has demonstrated great airmanship, and never once displayed a 'gung-ho, been there, got the T-shirt' attitude. (The 2 previous 'mature' gents whose licences I helped get back recently were exactly that.) Instead, he is obviously acutely aware how quickly our love of flying can 'bite' us. From the very first lesson, I have not once had to intervene on the controls, only a bit of tweaking verbally. Clearly, Archie and other mentors had done what needed to be done...



Donovan Kemp and Tony Kent.

Don has one more subject to write (and we know he will pass!) and just the nav to do, then it's test-prep, followed by the test. Then he is released to fly free without a twit chirping in the right seat!

I would like to thank Don for allowing me to use his plane to give our other 2 instructors their rating on the C182 so that I'm not doing all of his training.

My other EAA 'victim' is none other than 2013 Junior indoor aerobatic world champion, Roston Dugmore. Roston recently completed his PPL at Grand Central, but has now decided to venture out to the 'Far East' to complete his CPL Multi-engine Instrument rating. Welcome to Springs, young man! We hope you will be happy with your choice...

Roston needed to convert onto the Piper Cherokee after doing his PPL on the Cessna 172, and the transition went very smoothly. His immediate goals are to complete the night rating, slave through the CPL subjects, and possibly do our 'abbreviated' bush-flying course as part of his hour-building. I will try and update you on his progress over the forthcoming months.



Roston Dugmore.



# *Stars of Sandstone 2017*



- Eugene Couzyn, Chapter 322

Not to be missed from 30 March to 08 April 2017 is the biennial 'Stars of Sandstone' event in Ficksburg, on the banks of the Caledon River. The time of year ensures that the Cosmos is out and the countryside is absolutely beautiful.

The Sandstone Heritage Trust is the brainchild of Wilfred Mole, who has put together the most amazing collection of steam engines, vintage tractors and agricultural implements, vintage cars and static engines to be found anywhere in the world. Wilf opens the doors to the public on alternate years

for a steam extravaganza, which draws enthusiasts from around the globe to indulge their passions with nostalgia from a bygone era.

To give one some idea of the scale of the operation, in addition to his huge collection of steam locomotives, he has some 750 tractors of every conceivable type and vintage, and he has an arrangement with the SANDF Armour Museum in Bloemfontein to stage daily shows of tanks and armour in simulated battle conditions.







In 2015, I provided air support to simulated tank charges using my Alouette II, ZU-ALO, as well as my Gazelle, ZU-HHP. The noise, dust and action were a spectacle to behold, and created huge excitement amongst the many visitors to the estate.

Suitably qualified operators are given the opportunity to drive some of the 30-odd steam locomotives which Wilf has restored to original condition and enthusiasts dress up in period costume to play at being conductor/guard/driver/stoker, etc., in the many operating vehicles moving around the farm. Visitors can take rides on the trains and other forms of historical transport (including a magnificent team of 18 Afrikaner oxen) which do scenic trips on the 26 km private narrow gauge railway line and roads around the farm.

The Harvard Club as well as other Vintage aircraft are on hand to display their aircraft and offer flips.

I will most certainly be visiting Sandstone again next year, and can promise like-minded people a trip to be remembered.





# Update On The Comper Swift Project



- John Illsley, Chapter 322

I receive an encouraging number of questions about how things are going on the project to put a Comper Swift back in South African skies. So, what follows is a brief update on progress to date.

For those who didn't read the earlier article in this newsletter, the Swift is a 1930s British sporting and racing aircraft that was used in a number of long distance flights. (Note: the design should not be confused with the Globe Swift which is a post WW2 all-metal American aircraft.) Among the exploits of the original Swifts was a record attempt by Victor Smith and my replica, on completion, will be a tribute to him and will be finished in the same colour scheme as his aircraft. It will be powered by an authentic Pobjoy radial engine and built according to the original factory plans, but will not be having folding wings.

At the time of the previous article, the main emphasis was on stripping down the engine and building all of the wing ribs from spruce. The latter parts are now complete and have been sealed. The bulk of the fuselage and nose ribs can be made on a single jig for each type, but because of the wing shape, special jigs are needed for making those ribs fitted towards the wing tip, and you have to put up with making only two ribs per jig in these cases.

The engine is fully stripped down and replacement bearings have been purchased. Several challenges lie ahead including making replacement valve springs. This is probably going to have to be done overseas. Unless someone can prove otherwise, local spring-making companies cannot make valve springs, because none of the special steel is imported to this country. Any alternative views out there? The ancient BTH magnetos will need to be rewound and have their bearings replaced. Some missing bits of the engine have been kindly machined by my good friend George Armstrong and so we are almost up to a full parts count on the baby radial engine.

The spruce timber for the project arrived late last year and is now known officially in our house as 'the most expensive box of wood in the world'! Aircraft Spruce cuts wood to

convenient imperial sizes and this saves some time when it comes to making individual pieces, but you still have to swallow hard and try to ignore how many Rands' worth is ending up as sawdust on the workshop floor!

With the timber for the airframe in hand, I chose to start with smaller and more manageable items in the form of the ailerons. Unfortunately the original drawings for these have not survived, and I had to rely on a comprehensive set of photos of parts from an original aircraft which were used in conjunction with the general arrangement drawing for the wing and the detailed drawing of the rear spar. Needs must, as they say, and it is amazing how much you can figure out when you have no option but to use what reference material is available. Apart from the curved trailing edge, the ailerons are relatively straightforward and provide one with practise on the laminating of shaped edges, which was handy for when I moved on to the next two sub assemblies, namely the tailplane and the elevator, which are built up as single-piece structures in each case. Jigs to achieve matching shapes on each side of these items were essential. The other necessity is plenty of small plastic clamps to secure each glue joint. Fortunately, a range of different sizes is currently available and at a very affordable price, so I stocked up and got glueing. Although the original ailerons, elevator and tailplane only seemed to use Spruce on the leading or trailing edges, I included at least one layer of Ash in the laminates as a stiffener.

The only substantial parts of the Swift airframe that are made of steel are the fin and rudder. All of the steel fittings had been cut by laser and so the ribs for these two assemblies only required bending, as did the tubular steel for the leading and trailing edge margins. Our dear local currency collapsed again during the completion of these sub assemblies and so the cost of the 4130 tubular steel for the fin and rudder posts came as a bit of a shock. Apart from that the items went together reasonably easily and were pop-riveted as a temporary measure before welding, although the rudder also required a welding jig to ensure that the control horn stayed square while being welded. Suitably impressed with my own efforts



up to this point, I thought it was now simply a matter of calling up a good welder and making an appointment for tig welding. Not so simple, it seems, as I discover that my favourite highly experienced ex-SAA welding wizard has not renewed his aviation welding ticket and is refusing to take on any jobs relating to things that fly, even non-type certified homebuilt jobs. That meant having to find another suitable welder, which I duly did, and the parts are now ready to be spayed. With that, all the control surfaces will be structurally complete, which represents, I suppose, some kind of milestone in the project.

Welded at the same time as the fin and rudder was the stern post assembly, in anticipation of tackling the frames for the rear fuselage. One of the advantages of this project, despite (or partly because of) its complexity, is that the fuselage is built in three sections: front, middle and rear. This allows work to be focused exclusively on each section and for each to be stored without occupying too much space. The most recent work on the project has been building the side frames of the forward (engine bearers) and middle fuselage. The woodwork for these was easily accomplished on flat jigs. These sections don't obviously look as if they belong to an aircraft and they could just as well be very wacky and expensive towel racks. Consequently, this homebuilder isn't quite at the stage where he is sitting in the cockpit, calling 'contact' and imitating engine noises! Before then many complicated metal brackets need to be bolted to the woodwork to complete the fuselage frames. That is all part of the challenge of building an aircraft from this era.

All things proceeding to plan, by the time I next report, there may be something resembling an aeroplane coming together – watch this space!





# *Zebula Breakfast with Lt. John Martin*

- Gordon Dyne, Chapter 322

Lt. John Henry Joseph (500 hours on Spitfires) Martin, 4 Squadron SAAF (retired) graces Zebula Lodge with his awe-inspiring presence - *by Gordon Dyne, Chapter 322*

Saturday 13 August was a glorious morning. Perfect for flying. Not a breath of wind and stunning blue skies. As I drove through the gates of the Brakpan Flying Club, I could not help wondering how many such perfect days John Martin and his fellow Spitfire pilots encountered on their early morning sorties from their Italian bases from 1943 to 1945 particularly in the winter months of grey, wet, overcast days? Very few I imagine. How did they manage to fly in those ghastly conditions and, more important, how on earth did those young fearless intrepid pilots ever find their way back to their bases for those eggs and bacon promised to them as they departed? Incredible.

Well, no such problems as John Martin and son Kevin strapped themselves into my trusty steed of 16 years – my 1968 old faithful Arrow 200. First turn of the key and she fired up right away. A gentle taxi to runway 18, down the slope, nose up gently and away we went. A smooth turn past the Casino. A radio call to Springs and then to TMA East and a bearing of 360 degrees or so to Cullinan Dam staying out of Wonderboom's airspace and the GPS fixed on Zebula Lodge. How did those old timers fly without a GPS? I couldn't today, but I guess I must have done when I began flying all those years ago. I just love those words "Go to"!

John took the controls and under his skilled flying the aircraft never gained or lost a foot for the next 50 minutes. What skill!



*John Martin, Alex Groen, Ricardo De Bonis, Gordon Dyne, Trixie Heron, Neal Dowling and William Woods.*





What experience! John gave me back the controls and we landed uphill at Zebula which I always prefer. Not a perfect landing, but there not too many bounces either! We parked on the apron at Zebula and joined our fellow aviators who had kindly flown to Zebula to join us for the Martin fly-in. Who can remember the US TV programme 'Rowan Martin Laugh In' of the 60s? A very amusing, light- hearted TV series.

Ricardo De Bonis flew in from his wonderful toybox at Krugersdorp in his 1950s Super Cub PA18 and he was accompanied by his elder son's father-in-law, Alex Groen. William Woods, Jeremy Woods' son, borrowed Dad's stunning 1950s single Comanche and brought with him fellow pilot Neal Dowling and EAA 322's secret weapon and PR superstar Trixie Heron, who never misses an opportunity to fly with anyone, anytime. Trixie's enthusiasm is infectious.

So, after the greetings were dispensed with, I hailed the Lodge and it sent a Land Cruiser for us. I must say the service from Zebula Lodge for carrying pilots and passengers to and from the airfield is quite outstanding and there is no charge. A five minute ride to the Lodge was followed by a hearty

breakfast enjoyed by all. After breakfast, a beautiful walk was enjoyed in the glorious sunshine and we then made our way back to the airfield. Fond farewells were made and we all boarded our planes for the trip home. By now it was noonish and it was very bumpy. However, nothing could disturb John Martin's demeanour and I could see his mind 10,000 miles away as he took off in his Spitfire, not knowing if that was to be his last flight. One never knows when flying if the following flight will be one's last! A daunting thought!

Anyway! Perish the thought! We arrived home safely and, after I kissed my beautiful baby goodnight, we put her away and John, Kevin and I said our 'au revours'.

So ended another lovely flight and morning in the company of my hero Lt. John Henry Joseph (500 hours on Spitfires) Martin 4 Squadron SAAF (retired). What a pleasure it has been for me to know John these past six years. I so wish we had met earlier.

John, live forever, my dear friend. The world is a far better place for having you around.

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## *Is it a bird? Is it a plane? Is it Superman?*

**No! It is Mark Clulow pushing his Cheetah, and I do not mean the upgraded version of the Dassault Mirage III presently flown by the Ecuadorian Air Force! Mark was pushing his Rainbow Cheetah at Brakpan Airfield to the DYNEAMIC BEARINGS airplane-washing plant, prior to our flying my Nanchang Dragon on Saturday 30 July! - Gordon Dyne**

It was indeed a pleasure to at last get Captain Mark Clulow, 1 Squadron SAAF (retired) to come to Brakpan Airfield and fly my Nanchang Dragon CJ6A with me. Mark is normally too busy instructing students on his Rainbow Cheetah at Circus Airfield to come to Brakpan, but eventually I persuaded him to come and fly with me.



I was exceptionally nervous for it is not every day one is privileged to be accompanied by a 2,000 hour Dassault Mirage F1 pilot, particularly one who is a hero of 'The Angolan Bush War'.

As I briefed Mark, who was sitting in the back seat, I found myself continually apologising to him for teaching him 'to suck eggs', but Mark was his usual modest self and absorbed my briefing with a broad grin! We taxied out and once airborne and I had completed my usual two trademark low-level field inspections, I gave the controls to Mark who must have found this old Chinese 'bird' a bit tame, but was far too polite to say so! Mark flew my 'baby' beautifully, and stalls and steep turns were handled with ease. Well, what did you expect? Panic attacks in the back seat?

It was not long before we were back at Brakpan and I dropped Mark off at his now shining Cheetah and said I would accompany him back to Circus in case he became lost! We taxied out to the holding point for Runway 18 where Mark 'entered' and took off in about 20 yards. I meanwhile 'back tracked' for 100 metres before 'putting foot' and one kilometre later I was in the air. By this time Mark was out of sight, but I quickly caught him and had to perform several 360 degree orbits just to stay behind him. I said, "Come on Mark, put foot!" He replied, "I am. I'm doing 90kph!" I eventually tired of this game, bade Mark farewell, returned to Brakpan and after kissing my 'baby' goodnight, I went home.

About four hours later, Mark rang me and I could not resist saying, "Have you landed at Circus yet?" I guess that was a bit below the belt! However, Mark did see the funny side of that remark!

Mark, it was a huge privilege for me to fly with someone of your experience. Thank you for finding time to come and fly with me. All you 'Vlammies' are my heroes. I salute you all and so wish I had been bright enough to join your ranks all those years ago.



# Chapter 322 Meeting

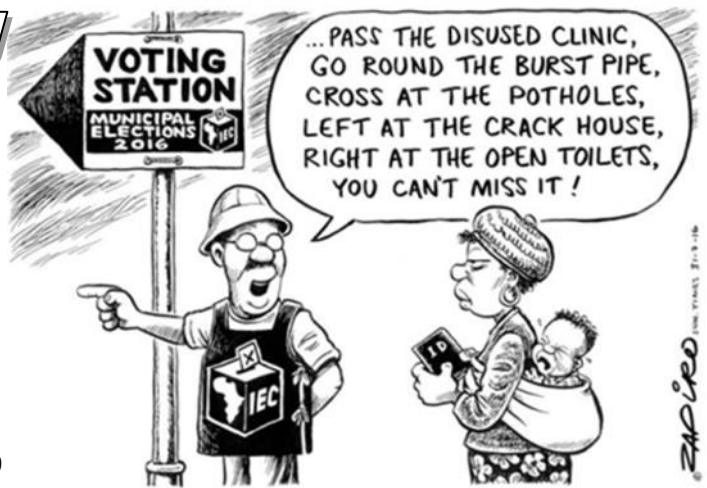
**A great attendance at August's EAA 322 meeting, despite the public holiday for the municipal election - Gordon Dyne**

Some 90 or so members/aviation nut-cases and one or two normal people came together at the Dickie Fritz MOTH Hall on Wednesday evening 03 August for the monthly meeting of EAA Chapter 322. Delicious hamburgers were devoured by hungry aviators from the kitchen of Ann Ferreira, washed down by liquid refreshments from the slick service from behind the bar by Eddie and Jean. Thank you Ann, Jean and Eddie, for brightening up our evening.

Chairman Dr Mike Brown called the meeting to order at 19h00 and almost immediately called EAA National Chairman Paul Lastrucci, who was accompanied this evening by his lovely wife Beverley, to the microphone. Paul advised the meeting that, due to some serious hard work behind the scenes by certain EAA members such as Neil Bowden (and Paul who was too modest to mention himself), EAA 322 Johannesburg has now been fully integrated into the EAA of the USA. This is a tremendous breakthrough as South Africa's Chapter 322 is the oldest EAA Chapter outside the USA. Well done to Paul, Neil and everyone who was involved.

The Chairman spent a good few minutes making a eulogy to the late great aviator, Bill Keil, who flew to the big hangar in the sky two weeks ago, aged 87. Bill had been a founding member of EAA 322, along with Mike Spence and the late Woody Woods. Their first meeting was in 1964. Bill was a tremendous character, a great pilot, a great friend and mentor to all. I always enjoyed Bill's company. I attended his memorial service last week and the packed chapel at Fourways was a tribute to Bill's popularity. RIP Bill. May pretty angels accompany you to your rest.

Mike moved on to more mundane topics, such as 'minutes', Teddy build, finance, activities past and present, membership, yearly dinner, Young Eagles and so much more. Mike always manages to make every subject humorous by continually bombarding us with great cartoons (such as the one shown here)! The safety feature was covered by 'General' Brian Stableford. I don't think I was alone in struggling to follow Brian, but I believe the subject will be printed in our CONTACT!



newsletter in the near future. I think the topic of Vx and Vy, etc., will be easier to follow in writing. Mike expressed thanks to Gus Brown and Trixie Heron for their great work in publishing CONTACT! However, more articles are required, so jump to it, all you budding Lewis Carrolls!

After a break to recharge our glasses, we settled back in our seats to listen to former EAA 322 Chairman and retired SAA Captain Karl Jensen 'flap his gums' on subjects such as the demise of Concorde, the continuing mystery of the missing Malaysian flight MH370 and the recent hi-jack false alarm at Wonderboom. It has been a while since this icon of aviation has been let loose on an audience at a 322 meeting and we could tell very quickly that the months of absenteeism have not dampened Karl's enthusiasm for aviation, nor his oratory skills, nor his ability to create a marvellous Powerpoint presentation. Thank you, Karl, for a most interesting talk. The draw for the swindle was done by the legendary helicopter pilot, Slade Healey (who will soon be relocating to Australia) and with that the evening wound down.

Thank you, as usual, to Dr Mike Brown for your brilliant leadership as Chairman of this vibrant Chapter. Your presentations get better every month.

Our next Chapter 322 meeting will be on Wednesday 07 September. Same time. Same place. Hope to see you there. For more information on EAA Chapter 322, South Africa's biggest, busiest and best Chapter, please visit the website [www.eaa.org.za](http://www.eaa.org.za)

## Forthcoming EAA Flying Legends Talk Show - James 'Horse' Sweeney



Aviation Legends Talk Show –  
Thursday 15 September 2016

James 'Horse' Sweeney is a genuine 'unsung hero', having seen action in three or more theatres of war, WWII, Korean War, and the Rhodesian War. At the age of 92 Horse is still as sharp as a pin and old friend of General Dennis Earp, who will also be at the show.

During his career he has flown many historic types of aircraft including Spitfires, P51 Mustangs, DH85s, Hawker Harts, Miles Masters, Avro Ansons, Harvards, P36 Mohawks, Tomahawks, Kittyhawks, Vampires, DC 3s, DC 7s, C185s and Boeing 720s.

He must have a very busy guardian angel, because he has survived a number of forced landings and numerous

crashes, including being hit, in his P51, by enemy fire in Korea and, wounded, only just making it back to a friendly base.

This story, together with others that he will be relating to us, should really be put into a book. They will also include much of the 'cloak & dagger' stuff involved in sanctions busting during the Rhodesian War.

There are not many of these heroes still left, so we are privileged to be able get him up here from Margate to hear him talk, in person, of his experiences. There is no one better than the flying doctor, Mike Brown, to extract these precious memories for us in the short time available.

For more information or to book your seat for this fascinating Talk Show, please email [auditorium@eaa.org.za](mailto:auditorium@eaa.org.za)

# ***Flying Legend - Petri van Zyl***

**Another genuine Flying Legend graces the stage at the EAA Flying Legends Talk Show on Thursday 11 August**

- Gordon Dyne

Back in May of this year, I had the pleasure of attending the EAA Convention at Mossel Bay. There were many things to do and see during the two days I was there, but what caught my attention in the programme was a talk in Hangar 22 on the Saturday morning at 10h00 by Petri van Zyl – Test Pilot. Those two last words did it for me! Test Pilot! What a job! I grew up in England reading all I could on two great Test Pilots, Eric ‘Winkle’ Brown and Brian Trubshaw, and of course all the great American test Pilots such as Jim Lovell, Alan Shephard, Gus Grissom and perhaps the most famous of them all – Neil Armstrong. Talk about hero worship. I wanted to be a Test Pilot! Sadly, it was not to be, as I was too deaf and too stupid even to become a pilot. However, when I met Brian Trubshaw on Concorde (Brian made the first test flight of Concorde in 1969) at Farnborough in 1972, I realised that being a Test Pilot was not all glamour. Brian described to me the rigours and dangers of being a test Pilot, which were confirmed by Petri van Zyl. I imagined it must be the greatest job on earth and ‘chicks’ would come running, but alas, that was not the case!

So sorry... I digressed! Anyway, I was the first person in Hangar 22 at Mossel Bay Airfield, sitting on a seat right at the front so I could catch every word of Petri van Zyl’s talk. It was, summed up in two words – absolutely terrific! Later that day I spoke with the Flying Legends Talk Show coordinator Jeremy Woods and said to him, “Jeremy, we have to get Petri to Jo’burg for a Talk Show.” Jeremy concurred, as he too had been in Hangar 22. That evening at the Awards’ Dinner I approached Petri and discussed the talk show with him. Petri, in the usual relaxed style of a test pilot, happily agreed to be our guest.

Fast forward to 11 August... A packed auditorium at Rand Airport greeted Major Petri van Zyl SAAF (retired). Thanks to great marketing by Jeremy Woods and the fact that the smooth operator and Master of Ceremonies Dr Mike Brown was in the ‘hot seat’, there was not an empty seat in the house. The audience was a mixture of pilots and aviation enthusiasts, including a number of former fast jet pilots namely Geoff Fish who flew the English Electric Lightnings with the Royal Air Force and Jeff Earle and Mark Clulow who flew Impalas and Mirages with the South African Air Force (SAAF). If I have missed anybody else, then please accept my apologies. ‘Vlammies’ as these pilots were known from the word ‘Vlamgat’! Smoking arse – after-burner! Do read Brig. Gen. Dick Lord’s wonderful book ‘Vlamgat’, the story of the Mirage in the SAAF, published in 2008.

Petri held the ‘floor’ for almost 2 ½ hours. The attentive audience was mesmerised! Tales from when Petri first fell in love with aviation at the age of five, his joining the SAAF, his flying on Harvards, Impalas and Mirages. Amazing. Petri’s years of instructing, which he loved. His opportunity to fly

helicopters and his skirmishes during the Border War, flying the Oryx, Puma and Alouette helicopters. Petri is a Grade II Flying Instructor and Class I Test Pilot for both Rotary and Fixed Wing Aircraft. During his military career Petri attended 14 months at the National Test Pilot School in Mojave in the USA.



Petri left the SAAF in 1997 and joined Denel, where he was deeply involved with the continuing development of the Rooivalk attack helicopter, along with many others, including EAA 322’s resident rocket scientist and aeronautical engineer Rob Jonkers. Petri became Chief Instructor for Rooivalk operational training. Petri told some wonderful stories of his helicopter flying, including training Chinese pilots to fly their Chinese H410 in Tibet at +40 degrees Celsius at maximum humidity and in Mongolia at -40 degrees Celsius! So cold one could hardly speak. China wished to buy just one Rooivalk, obviously to reverse-engineer it, but Denel said, ‘no’! These exciting times were interspersed with the not-so-glamorous side of being a test pilot when Petri experienced several serious crashes in which he expected to die. Fortunately, Petri is still with us and expects to carry on flying for a few more years yet.

Petri van Zyl is a real living hero, unlike those pampered, over-paid, pathetic people we see every day on reality TV. Petri is an unsung hero, whose exploits are known to only a few and his rewards will be scant. However, we amongst the aviation fraternity know the true worth of men such as Petri van Zyl and we salute you.

So ended another wonderful evening. Thank you so much Petri for your time, and Mike Brown for your preparation and for extracting so many great stories from our guest. Thank you Jeremy and Anne-Louise Woods for organising the whole evening so splendidly and most gracious thanks to Anne-Louise who spent her 65<sup>th</sup> birthday selling entrance and raffle tickets! We were all going to sing ‘Happy Birthday’ to you, Anne-Louise, but you had gone home! Some birthday! We all wish you a belated happy birthday and we will make sure that next year Jeremy is not allowed to organise a talk show on your birthday!

Please diarise the next talk show, which will be on Thursday 08 September when the guest is World War II Spitfire pilot and Korean War P51 Mustang and F-86 Sabre pilot ‘Horse’ Sweeney. This nonagenarian former SAAF pilot lives in Margate and will journey to Johannesburg especially for this talk show. It will be another cracker of an evening. As usual Mike Brown will be the eloquent MC.



# SAPS Training

- Karl Jensen, Chapter 322

Kitty Hawk allowed us to host the 2nd Aviation and Security Policing training programme at their airfield on 19 August. After the success of the 1st training session we held at Kitty Hawk in March, the SAPS again approached me to hold a training day there. Frank van Heerden, chairman of the board of trustees at Kitty Hawk, generously sponsored sandwiches and drinks for all. The restaurant was set up for us as a lecture hall and made a huge difference to the way I could present the lecture part of the day.

As the training day had to be held on a Friday, it was difficult to get aircraft lined up for the inspection and search training. However, Nigel Musgrave, Dawie Pretorius, Andrew Evans and

Mike Beekman all pitched in to assist. We had visitors, Theo Truter and Piet Botha who were also there to help, as well as fellow EAA members Nick Brits, Duncan McKellar, Rob Jonkers and Mike Hoffman. Grateful thanks to everyone for their willingness to assist.

There was a line-up of an RV-8, 2 Tri-Pacers, a Cessna 170, a Cessna 182, a Jabiru and a Challenger on the ramp, despite the event taking place on a weekday.

After the training ended, many of the police trainees were given short flights in the aircraft. This was not planned, but it certainly was appreciated by all, and I thank those of you who so generously stepped forward to help with this fine effort.

I do believe that, in assisting with the Aviation and Security Policing training programme, we improve relations with the police in their essential work and also provide an insight for their members into the sensitivity of ramp inspections. I would like everyone to know that I have no ties with the SAPS and carry out their request for practical training strictly voluntarily without any financial reward. There are a lot of infrastructure shortfalls in our country, and I believe we should all put our shoulders to the wheel and try and help fix them.



## Chapter 322 Year-end Dinner 2016

- Karl Jensen

Our Chapter 322 Year-end Dinner venue has been booked for Saturday 29 October. We have been fortunate to get a reservation at The Wanderers for this event. Detailed negotiations are in progress, but we have been advised that we will be accommodated in the Gala A & B room on the 1st floor. Many of our members also belong to the RAF Officers' Club, where we have frequently used this elegant venue. It is a good idea to plan your attendance for the function, or to at least work out an acceptable excuse for not being there – only kidding! Everybody will be welcome and we also invite members from other Chapters to attend. Apart from honouring our Chairman, Dr Mike Brown, at the dinner, it is also a great opportunity to show our appreciation to our spouses and partners for allowing our involvement in EAA which sometimes takes us away from home for fly-aways to distant places. Space is finite and reservations will be on a first come basis. Booking and other details will be communicated

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as soon as possible. We encourage everyone to grab the opportunity for a wonderful evening with friends in an upmarket environment which is accessible by a short Uber ride, or the Gautrain, if required.



# Chapter 322 Breakfast

**EAA 322 breakfast at the EAA Auditorium at Rand Airport**  
- Gordon Dyne

Some fifty members and friends of EAA Chapter 322 came together at the EAA Auditorium on Saturday morning 03 September for a wonderful breakfast. It was a beautiful warm Spring morning without a hint of wind, and the smell of eggs, bacon, sausages and toast permeated the air! Quite delicious!

This initiative was arranged by our Chairman Dr Mike Brown to bring everyone together, and a dozen or so members flew their planes to Rand and parked up by the Auditorium. One or two members just taxied from their hangars a few hundred yards away! Well done.

African Pilot's owner Athol Franz, a photographer of note, joined us with his fiancée Christine Brits and I am indebted to him for the photos attached. All in all, a great morning with loads of hangar talk. Thank you to Mike, Trixie, Clive, Pottie, Coen, Conre, Chris, Jeremy, Alson and Piet, who cooked, cleaned up and left the auditorium spotless. I look forward to the next fly-in/drive-in breakfast.

All the best.



Richard Becker (right) and his Grob 109.





# EAA Airmail



The other night Captain Karl Jensen and I were discussing our enthusiastic aviation friend Irene Naude who attends every EAA 322 function possible and whose enthusiasm is infectious. In short, we agreed 'Irene is a smasher'!

I knew that Irene had been a stewardess with SAA (SAL) many years ago, but I had no idea what a beauty she was, although I was not surprised when Karl forwarded to me this attached picture. Gee! What a cracker! Lucky cockpit crews and a few red-blooded male passengers to be met by this stunning apparition! Irene is a good example of 'prettiness fades, but real beauty never dies'!

- Gordon Dyne, Chapter 322



I have been a fan and supporter of the MISASA Showcase for the last few years. This year it was held at Tedderfield as part of the Toys for Boys Show, and again I decided to support it and visit by car. While there was a great selection of light aircraft to see, I found the Toys for Boys side to be disappointing, with a totally disproportionate entrance fee. Apparently EAA members were offered complimentary entrance, but I did not know that. Let's hope that the MISASA crew decide to keep their showcase separate in future.

- Gus Brown, Chapter 322



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Baragwanath. Extras: zero time P de Necker prop and other spares. Half Share R310k / Full Sale R600k.

- Brian Poulton, poultonb@iafrica.com



Normally we only advertise GA aircraft related items here. However, Lt. James Harris RAF was interviewed as a Flying Legends guest back in May and has now returned to England to resume his RAF career. He needed his Toyota Prado until his departure, but left his SUV with one of our members and asked if he could sell it for him. - Ed

2008 White Toyota Prado VX 4.0 Automatic. Grey leather interior. Condition good. Mileage 317,650 km. Car available for viewing at my home in Bedfordview. Price R220,000 or ONO. The car needs to be sold so make me an offer please. - Gordon Dyne, 082 444 6947



CONTACT! Is the official newsletter of EAA of SA. This edition was compiled by Gus and edited with love and kisses by Trixie Heron. All material is gratefully received from Chapters, members and non-members alike. Remember that this is your newsletter, so please submit material as it happens to Gus ([news@eaa.org.za](mailto:news@eaa.org.za)). We want your flying news! Our grateful thanks to all those who regularly support our newsletter and our EAA organisation.