

therefore able to snaffle L2,500 out of the subsidy, and this fund was available for the purchase of equipment by clubs, through loans on the never-never system.

The policy followed was to establish one soaring centre at each of the four provinces—one each at Cape Town, Durban, Bloemfontein, and the Rand. Subsidiary clubs were to be branches of these central sites. These were to be completely equipped as their directors developed enough savvy not to wreck equipment. This programme was still in progress when the ban was put upon us.

The financing was done sparingly, to prevent clubs from losing the proper spirit of sturdy independence, only obtainable here by keeping alive the twin flames of enthusiasm and efficiency. Loans were, in fact, a form of pump-priming.

Otherwise we seem to be much the same as you people—all crazy. We wear the same Gawdelpus clothes, the same expressions, have the same horrid experiences, answer the same dampfool questions about where is the propellor and are we lost. Our instructors are the same disillusioned overburdened souls, operating among rugged individualists. We even have the same sort of parties. You people have a thing called a "fish-bake." Here it is a "braaivleis"—literally, a meat-roasting, over a roaring fire followed by the jovial consumption of scorched products thereof.

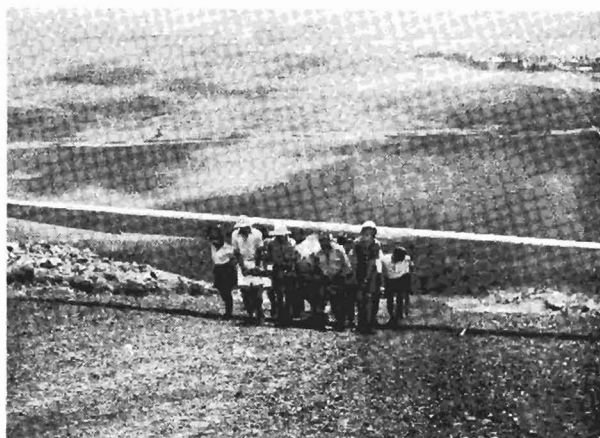
Our outstanding flights here are the Altitude Flight by Dommissie, referred to a moment ago; and a cross-country flight of 215 miles by both Bartaune and Hermann Winter, who flew from Johannesburg towards the East Coast. Bartaune landed in Swaziland, after flying for 80 miles over bush country in which a landing would have resulted in a certain crash in desolate game-infested country. Winter landed in northern Zululand.

Our duration record is 8 hours 45 minutes, by Lieutenant Harvey of the S A Air Force. It has not been attacked as none of us have tails hard enough to contemplate a sailplane seat for that length of time.

One of our outstanding flights was that made by 18-year-old Geoffrey Peirce who went 113 miles in a Grunau Baby at altitudes of 6,000 to 7,000 feet. He did it in about 90 minutes. We later discovered that he had a tailwind at 6,000 feet of 59 m.p.h. He traveled in a pair of running shorts, and was extremely cold. He has also made several thermal flights without instruments; and Domisse once reached 7,000 feet in 5½ minutes from the moment the machine moved in the winch-launch, utilizing the upcurrents off an enormous veld fire.

Aero-tows are uncommon here. I have done the most, usually for demonstration purposes at flying displays. Our best aero-tow was a cross-country of 900 miles from Cape Town to Johannesburg.

And another thing. South Africans are not black, nor are they habitually engirdled with cartridge belts and festooned with rifles and/or revolvers. Most of us have only seen lions in the Zoo or in the Kruger National Park. We wear sun-helmets against the terrific glare, and because on the veld it gets so darned hot. We always wear helmets because in the 1938 competitions three men, your humble correspondent included, were struck down by sun-stroke while in flight. Our towns, though smaller than yours, have tarmac roads, radios, robots, traffic cops and every modern inconvenience. The streets swarm with American cars, and the hoardings with American ads. There are electric trains and



Manhandling a Grunau Baby II up the slope of Quaggapoor

trolley busses, and a gold mining industry whose shafts sink from 4,000 to 7,000 feet and which digs up \$300,000,000 a year for you people to bury again.

Finally, if anybody wants to talk about soaring or Africa with a stranger, they need only write to me c/o Box 1014, Johannesburg, South Africa. I shall be delighted to reply, for it will be a substitute to the fact that my new sailplane was in the air a week before the ban fell, and I have only had an hour's flying in her. There will be no more soaring until a certain Austrian paper-hanger is put in his place—or we are.

So write to us, somebody!

"SNOWBIRD" Contest

(Continued from page 3)

Milton Girton, CAA Inspector and loyal friend of soaring, was on hand as usual throughout the Contest, contributing his official services with a smile but declining to go for a flight in a glider because it was "too cold." Nobody could blame Milt since the incentive to fly was hardly greater than the beckoning warmth of the roaring fire in the administration building fireplace. Besides he was kept extremely busy renewing licenses.

Much credit for the successful conduct of the Meet goes to Maurice Waters, General Manager of the Elmira Area Soaring Corporation, and his staff of assistants.

The barograph calibration was in the hands of Professor Cy Terry and Dr. Paul Kellogg, faculty members of Cornell University.

The highlight of the Meet was the Elmira Gliding Club party Saturday night which was under the able direction of Mrs. Joseph H. Koehler and other members of the Elmira Club.

Contributors This Month

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