

A brief description of the Experimental Aircraft Association of South Africa October 2014

If you like aircraft and the people who fly them, the EAA - the Experimental Aircraft Association - is for you. EAA offers something for all enthusiasts - pilots, designers, builders, dreamers, in other words anyone who enjoys the unique experience and total freedom of flight. Everyone is most welcome.

The Experimental Aircraft Association of SA is one of the aviation sections affiliated to the Aero Club of SA, the controlling body of recreational and competitive aviation.

To give you some insight into the EAA and how it all started in South Africa, we need to take you back to the very beginning, with the founding of the Experimental Aircraft Association in the USA in 1953.


Experimental Aircraft Association - USA

The first meeting of the EAA in USA was held on 26 January 1953. On that cold evening about three dozen aeroplane enthusiasts met in Gran-Aire's facilities at Curtiss-Wright Airport in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The meeting included some long-time aircraft builders as well as the 31-year old Korean War veteran named Paul Poberezny, who had just recently returned to his home town. That group had no idea of the influence they would have on aviation history around the world for the next 60-plus years. From this group would grow the Experimental Aircraft Association, which now has more than 160,000 members in over 100 countries, approximately 1,000 EAA Chapters and one of world's premier aviation events in the ever-popular EAA AirVenture Oshkosh.

How it all started in SA

Mike Spence became the founding member of the EAA in South Africa, following a visit to the EAA summer fly-in to Oshkosh, Wisconsin, which is now known as EAA AirVenture. Mike Spence, the late Woody Woods and Bill Keil were major motivators in the early days of EAA in South Africa. The first EAA meeting was held in Edenvale in 1964, and the Charter for EAA Chapter 322 was issued in 1969 - it was the first EAA Chapter to be established outside the USA.

The name of the first EAA magazine in South Africa was appropriately named 'CONTACT'. One of our members still has a copy, which unfortunately is not dated, but it is thought to have been published in 1964 or thereabouts. The opening article of the original magazine was written by the first EAA Chapter 322 Chairman, Mike Spence, who turned 84 on 15 February 2014. Bill Keil, who will be celebrating his 85th birthday on 30 November 2014, remembers fondly that the

very first air show organised by the EAA in SA took place at Springs Airfield on Saturday, 04 February 1973. The Charter for EAA Chapter 575 East Rand was issued in 1976. 

What does the EAA of SA stand for?

The ideals of the EAA of SA are to foster recreational aviation, the building of aircraft and the Approved Persons (A/P) Scheme, education, aviation entertainment, sowing the seeds of enthusiasm for aviation among young people through the Young Eagles initiative, nurturing our members' building and flying activities, developing a flight safety culture and monitoring any threat to our freedom of the skies in South Africa. We do this by holding monthly meetings with regular presentations, forums, lectures, workshops, project visits, fly-ins, Young Eagles events, and the monthly Flying Legends Talk Shows at the EAA Auditorium at Rand Airport.

The year's activities culminate with our Annual EAA Convention/Fly-in and AGM where we try to emulate Oshkosh as best we can, and which has in past years attracted up to 450 aircraft from all over the country. In August 2011 the Annual Convention and Fly-in was held at Wings Airpark near East London. Our 2012 this event took place at Margate, and in 2013 we were hosted most graciously by the Brits Flying Club, with EAA members flying in from as far afield as East London. In 2014 we were back at Wings Park, with outstanding attendance from members from all the regional Chapters.

The second largest fly-in is the EAA Sun n Fun weekend. Looking back over the last few years, the 2011 Sun n Fun was organised by Chapter 322 and hosted at Volksrust, followed by the 2012 and 2013 events organised by Chapter 1503 and held at Tempe Airfield, Bloemfontein. The 2014 Sun n Fun event is again being organised by Chapter 322 in conjunction with SAPFA. This fly-in to Brits Airfield on 22 November, combined with the annual Peter Hengst memorial fly-in as well as a SAPFA Fun Rally, promises to be a popular event.

EAA of SA National Council

One of the main functions of the EAA of SA National Council is to coordinate and facilitate communication with the various EAA Chapters and also with the Aero Club of South Africa.

The current EAA of SA National Council consists of:

NATIONAL PRESIDENT: Paul Lastrucci

NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT: Mike Visagie

TREASURER: Mark Clulow

SECRETARY: Marie Reddy

AUDITORIUM CONVENOR: Jeremy Woods

NATIONAL PRO: Trixie Heron

NATIONAL YOUNG EAGLES COORDINATOR: Dr Mike Brown


NATIONAL SAFETY OFFICER: Walter Doubell

NATIONAL TECHNICAL OFFICER: Kevin Hopper

NATIONAL A/P REPRESENTATIVES: Hennie Roets, Peter Lastrucci

EAA WEBMASTER: Gus Brown

COMPILER OF EAA CONTACT! NEWSLETTER: Gus Brown


CHAIRMEN of each of the active EAA Chapters 

EAA Chapters

There are a total of 13 EAA Chapters in South Africa, of which two are inactive at present. Chapter numbers are allocated by the EAA parent organisation in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, USA. Each Chapter has its own Chairman and Committee. The main aim of every Chapter is to stimulate enthusiasm for recreational flying and aircraft building, as well as to provide for the needs of aviation enthusiasts in the main centres.

EAA Chapter 322, the oldest and largest Chapter in South Africa, chaired by Captain Karl Jensen, holds regular meetings on the first Wednesday evening of every month at the Dickie Fritz MOTH Hall in Edenvale. The meetings follow a structured but informal format, with the Chapter business dispensed with as speedily as possible, followed by an interesting forum or presentation by a guest speaker on an aviation related topic. Attendees arrive from 18h00 to enjoy a light meal and refreshments including coffee, tea and a cash bar. Visitors are most welcome. In addition, Chapter 322 organises regular aircraft build project visits, fly-aways for breakfast, exciting overnight stops and more. When possible, members without access to aircraft are accommodated as passengers.

CONTACT!

CONTACT! is the official newsletter of the EAA of SA. It is produced in electronic format on a monthly basis and emailed to all EAA Chapter Chairmen and EAA members, as well as being published on the EAA website, www.eaa.org.za. Members are encouraged to submit items of interest and notices about forthcoming events, as well as reports, and feedback on aircraft build projects, fly-ins, fly-aways, functions, events, etc., by the 26th of every month. 

EAA membership fees

National membership of EAA of SA is R400.

Website

For more information about the EAA of SA, regional Chapters and contact details, please visit our website www.eaa.org.za





Mike Spence



EAA Chapters in South Africa

Chapter	Location	Chairman
Chapter 322	Johannesburg	Karl Jensen
Chapter 575	East Rand	Byron Kirkland
Chapter 592	Cape Town	(inactive)
Chapter 778	Port Elizabeth	Niel Terblanche
Chapter 843	Nelspruit	(Inactive)
Chapter 870	Krugersdorp	Roy de Stadler
Chapter 1262	East London	Mike Wright
Chapter 1500	Bethlehem	Philip Jacobs
Chapter 1501	Volkstrust	Dirk van Deventer
Chapter 1502	South Coast	Gerald Maddams
Chapter 1503	Bloemfontein	Jack Onderstall



Chalkie Stobbart conquers the Henshaw Challenge



Wings Park