

# The SRAS Training Moths

By Dave Newnham



Tiger Moth VP-YBG pre-war, impressed into the SRAS as 201

Only six Tiger Moths were impressed into the Southern Rhodesia Air Services at the beginning of World War Two; 1 ex Southern Rhodesia Air Unit, 4 from the Rhodesian civil register and 1 displaying South African registration.

Two DH Moth Major's were also impressed from the civil register at the start of the war and both they and the Tigers were used for pilot training. During this training the pilot cadets also used an impressed DH.87B Hornet Moth for their air navigation exercises.

Whilst we know the basic facts, getting a history for these aircraft is difficult since any SRAS data that was stored in the Rhodesian National Archives was destroyed upon Zimbabwean independence. We know that they were used by RATG, but the flying record cards for RATG aircraft were destroyed when it was disbanded.

We are thus, left with data from individual pilots logbooks, RATG unit ORBs and other secondary sources.

Upon impressment into the SRAS, the aircraft were used by SRAF instructors, first, to convert qualified Rhodesian civil pilots to military flying. And after that they were used to train young Rhodesian volunteers in basic flying, to "Elementary" level; until the Rhodesian Air Training Group took over all training. We have evidence confirming that this is so.

After the establishment of RATG, it is thought that the Moths were allotted to various RATG Elementary Flying Training Schools and were then used as normal training aircraft by the EFTS. Again we have evidence that at least three were so used.

Dates "from" and "to" are extracted from pilots logbooks and it is certain that the aircraft were on the strength of the unit from before, until after the dates shown. The names in brackets at the end of

lines are the names of the pilots from whose logbooks I have extracted the data.

Herewith what data I have been able to discover: -

<b>SRAS 200</b> 21-Feb-38 Sep-39 15-Dec-39 to 31-Mar-40  16-Jan to 24-Feb-42	<b>DH.82A Tiger Moth</b> New aircraft delivered to SRAU as SR7 impressed into SRAS as 200 SRAF staff, training Rhodesian volunteers at Belvedere (Forder & Bowker) With RATG, training at 26 EFTS Guinea Fowl (Sidell)	<b>C/n 3653</b>
<b>SRAS 201</b> Aug-36 31-Jan-37 23-Sep-39 21-Dec-39 to 12-Jan-40	<b>DH.82A Tiger Moth</b> A new aircraft, regd VP-YBG to DH Aircraft Ltd, Salisbury at Bulawayo Light Plane Club, Kumalo; Brian Greensted Instructor. impressed into SRAS as 201 SRAF staff, training Rhodesian volunteers at Belvedere (Forder)	<b>C/n 3507</b>
<b>SRAS 202</b> Dec-36 23-Sep-39 2-Jan to 26-Mar-40  31-Mar to 21-May43	<b>DH.82A Tiger Moth</b> A new aircraft regd VP-YBH to DH Aircraft Ltd, Salisbury impressed into SRAS as 202 SRAF staff, training Rhodesian volunteers at Belvedere (Forder & Bowker) With RATG, training at 28 EFTS Mount Hampden (Williams)	<b>C/n 3519</b>
<b>SRAS 203</b> Sep-37 23-Sep-39 4-Dec-39	<b>DH.82A Tiger Moth</b> regd VP-YBO to Bulawayo Light Plane Club, Kumalo impressed into SRAS as 203 SRAF staff, training Rhodesian volunteers at Belvedere (Forder)	<b>C/n 3603</b>
<b>SRAS 204</b> Feb-37 Oct-39 6-Dec-39 to 27-Jan-40 13-Aug-43 Jun-44 Jan-47 28-Oct-56	<b>DH.82A Tiger Moth</b> regd in South Africa as ZS-AIO impressed into SRAS as 204 (flying in Rhodesia in its SA reg!) SRAF staff, training Rhodesian volunteers at Belvedere (Forder) With RATG, training at 28 EFTS Mount Hampden (Smerdon) transferred to SAAF as 4710 Demobilised and regd in South Africa as ZS-BJF Crashed and written off, Van Dyke Mine nr Brackpan	<b>C/n 3523</b>
<b>SRAS 230</b> 07-Apr-35 pre 1-Oct-36 23-Sep-39 24 to 26-Jan-40	<b>DH Moth Major</b> regd VP-YAV to DH Aircraft, Salisbury to Bulawayo Light Plane Club, Kumalo (Instructor Bryan Greensted) impressed into SRAS as 230 SRAF staff, training Rhodesian volunteers at Belvedere (Forder)	<b>C/n 5123</b>



Moth Major VP-YAW pre-war, impressed into the SRAS as 231

**SRAS 231**

09-Apr-35  
 1935  
 1936  
 23-Sep-39  
 9 to 22-Jan-40

**DH Moth Major**

**C/n 5124**

regd VP-YAW to DH Aircraft, Salisbury  
 to Bulawayo Light Plane Club, Kumalo  
 Flipped over during Air Rally  
 impressed into SRAS as 231  
 SRAF staff, training Rhodesian volunteers at Belvedere (Forder)

**SRAS 241**

01-Mar-38  
 Sep-39  
 06-Jan-40 to 12-Mar-40  
  
 14-May-45  
 22-Nov-56

**DH.87B Hornet Moth**

**C/n 8143**

regd VP-YBS to Bulawayo Light Plane Club, Kumalo  
 impressed into SRAS as 241  
 SRAF staff, training Rhodesian volunteers at Belvedere  
 (Forder & Bowker)  
 Demobilised and sold in Mozambique as CR-ABG  
 Written Off (no details known)



Hornet Moth VP-YBS pre-war, impressed into the SRAS as 241