

SENTINEL

Vol. 4, Issue 26 - Price: £1

"serving St Helena and her community worldwide"

Thursday 17 September 2015



**"no going back now...
this is the way forward"**

Miss St Helena, Sinead Green

TOUCHDOWN!
...and they said it would never happen



**"prosperity for all the
people on the island"**

Councillor Lawson Henry

ST HELENA SNIPPETS

HISTORY BEING MADE

No Looking Back Now **Jane Durnford, SAMS**

*"It was fantastic, really nice to see everybody come out and support it."
Jeremy Harris*



On a chilly Tuesday afternoon, standing among endemics at Millennium Forest, a crowd had gathered to watch a historic event happening on St Helena, many with packed lunches and blankets.

This event was the landing of the first airplane on the runway at Prosperous Bay Plain. The group I was with was in awe when the plane came into view and we could see lights. The airplane did two flyovers, when it came down

to land there was clapping and cheering from the crowd. The atmosphere was one of jubilation and celebration by all watching.

I spoke to various people who had watched this event and they were all excited about this. The younger generation had eagerly awaited the arrival of the plane, and once it had landed said, "It was very exciting."

We spoke to people as they were leaving Mil-

lennium Forest and they felt proud and emotional that they had witnessed this occasion. My granny used to tell us growing up as children that there would never be an airstrip on St Helena as there was often talk of the island getting one but it was always put on the back burner. If she was around today, she would have seen it for herself.



"It's fabulous to have the family and friends of the family here today to see this happen. It's a milestone for the island and it's a really good feeling to see the plane land." -Peter Young

"I was extremely proud and my heart was pumping when it came in to land. Very exciting time for us." - Anya Richards



ST HELENA SNIPPETS



"This has to be the most historic day on St Helena, I am so excited and I have seen a plane before, but never on St Helena. I think this is the most historic day since Napoleon arrived."
-Nicole Paulsen



"It's a new experience for the island. I have been on plane and have experienced flying. Its really exciting and will make a lot of money for the island." Nicole Paulsen



"It was wonderful, we have waited for so long for it and I am very excited about it and look forward to the plane landing." Ethel Yon



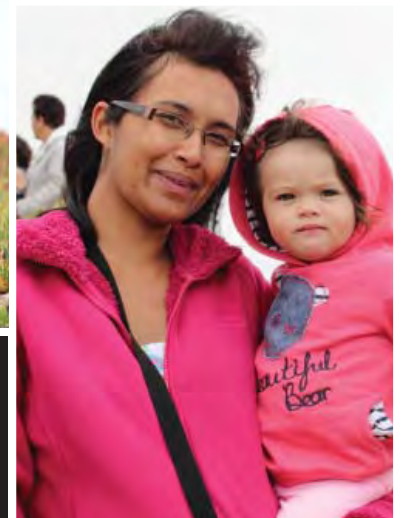
"It is a very exciting day to have my kids here and I was just telling them, that in a few years time, they could tell their children they were there when the plane landed for the first time." - Natalie Lawrence



"A brilliant day and a milestone which has been greatly achieved by the island. Hopefully all the test flights will go well in the future and in the next few days. I'm looking forward to the passenger plane to arrive."
-Anthony Thomas



"I feel excited and a little bit disappointed that I couldn't see it up close. I've been really looking forward to having an airport." - Nesta Yon



SENTINEL COMMENT

Liam Yon, SAMS

How time flies. It seems just yesterday I was boarding the RMS St Helena ready to head to the UK on holiday. Now here I am, back at work, writing my comment for The Sentinel. I really enjoyed my time away and I have so many stories to share, but I must admit it feels great to be home; there's certainly no place like it.

On Tuesday history was made as most of us witnessed the first ever aeroplane land at St Helena Airport. This, for me, was a magical moment and probably one of the best days I have, and ever will, experience as a journalist for SAMS. From my vantage point I could see the entire runway, which for me was exciting in itself; having not seen the airport site since dry gut fill had 50m left to go.

Out of our group, it was Richard (Wallis) who first sighted the small plane way out on the horizon. Then one by one, you could hear everybody's excited voices as they caught eye of the symbolic aircraft. The first fly-by was exciting as the Beechcraft King Air 200 shot past us at high speed. The second fly-by was more mesmerizing as it flew past at a lower speed, allowing us to get a good look. Then, on the third, it was a mixture of excitement that it was finally here, sad that St Helena is no longer isolated and fear of the island finally becoming independent, as the plane touched down on the runway.

In a whole different yarn, the local football league is now well into the second round, and the competition is definitely heating up. Rovers are currently sitting pretty five points clear at the top. Harts still have a game in hand which could see them move within two points of the top, and they are still to play Rovers in the second round. Though they have quite a lot of ground to make up, Wirebirds should not yet be counted out. My team, Fugees, seemed to have struggled of late, after starting the season strongly. Hopefully we can get it together for the knockout. I end my comment with some sad news for all Man United fans. At the time of going to print star left-back Luke Shaw was still in Holland, where he had to get emergency surgery, following a disastrous injury which saw him break his leg in two places. Shaw has been in great form this season and I hope he can recover quickly.

#GetBetterSoonShaw



Captain Grant Brighton

TOUCHDOWN!

... and they said it would never happen **Liam Yon, SAMS**

On Tuesday 15 September at 1:50pm history was made as a Beechcraft King Air 200 aircraft touched down at St Helena Airport; the first time an aeroplane has ever landed on St Helena.

Large crowds gathered at different vantage points to witness the small aircraft, piloted by Captain Grant Brighton and Co-Pilot Dillan Van Niekerk, do two pass overs before finally landing on the brand new runway at St Helena Airport.

"Coming through the clouds we got to see the island itself and it was really magnificent," said Co-Pilot Dillan. On the final approach there was, "quite a lot of work," for the pilots as there was some turbulence to deal with, but they were happy with the safe landing. Captain Grant felt, "privileged to be on the island," and said it was, "wonderful to be a part of the project." The rest of the crew consisted of Technical Director Nick Whitehouse, Chief Pilot Stuart Rawlinson, and Chief Aircraft Engineer Jeffrey McKenzie.

Once the plane had come to a standstill on

the apron, Governor Mark Capes, councillors, Miss St Helena Sinead Green and other selected parties were invited to greet the pilots. "Standing here today with the plane on the ground is an extraordinary thing," said Mr Capes, "it is a game changer for St Helena. The sense of excitement we can all feel around us today is just marvellous, it's so encouraging." Mr Capes' words were echoed by Councillor Lawson Henry, who said, "It was a very emotional moment."

Although there are many more milestones to come, with the airport scheduled to open next year and larger passenger flights to come in, there is no doubt that Tuesday 15 September will be remembered for a long time to come. "As islanders, we have waited a really long time for the moment," said Councillor Henry, "this is going to bring us the economic future that we all yearn for and prosperity to all the people of the island. It is history in the making."

The flight was the first of a series of calibration flights that will take place in the coming days as part of the airport certification process.

South Atlantic Media Services, Ltd.,
The Media Centre, Castle Gardens,
Jamestown, St Helena, South Atlantic
Ocean, STHL 1ZZ. Tel: 22727
E: news@sams.sh, W: www.sams.sh

ST HELENA SNIPPETS



An Exhilarating Journey

“It feels wonderful, we feel privileged to be on your island, it’s wonderful to be part of this project.” - Pilot, Grant Brighton



August Graham, SAMS

What a moment to be a part of, the roar of the plane’s engines bringing in the sound of the future! Sitting down in the office now five hours later the adrenaline is still pumping, my face is still red and I can’t do anything at a normal pace. Right now it’s hard to believe that I pretty much missed the plane. Me and Darrin Henry were at the top of a little hill just next to the runway in what was

later to prove the best spot to capture the plane landing. After sitting and chatting for an hour without any news on when it was due we tuned into the radio. We both had our earphones in and were listening for the announcement when I decided to take them out. It took a second to register the noise that seemed to be getting louder. I turned to Darrin and shouted “It’s the plane!” throwing my radio to the ground and getting to my film camera, but alas too late. Luckily that was just the first test run and the plane came around again before finally landing.

I’d spent most of the day thinking that this will be a great moment, but it will probably be a massive anticlimax. Boy was I wrong! The feeling of seeing that flight, and then of running around the office trying to get the news out for everyone was great and the feedback we got online and from listeners phoning in after the five o’clock news was just to die for.

A massive thank you and well done to Basil Read and everyone else involved in the project, they said it could never be done, you’ve proved them wrong so far, just a couple of steps left.



*“It’s amazing [...] it’s no going back now. This is the way forward. This is how it’s going to be.”
-Miss St Helena, Sinead Green*

“It’s another huge landmark day in St Helena’s history and always will be. Of course we are going to have more of this once we get certification and a large jet landing here, that’s going to be another big day for St Helena, but it is of course a turning point. I think it is the biggest thing that has happened to St Helena for a very long time.” - Governor Mark Capes



ST HELENA SNIPPETS

"When I first saw it touchdown, it was a very emotional moment for me because as islanders we have waited a long, long time for this moment. It's really history in the making and it's bringing us that much closer to air access and the bright economic future that we hope the airport will bring to the island. Well done to all the people who have been involved in this very momentous and historic occasion."
 -Lawson Henry



"Fantastic...it's history and it's been a remarkable day, something I can tell to the grandkids." -Nigel Macmicheal



"For me it's super exciting to see the first flight land. The reason im here on island is because of the airport. It's a big historical moment." -Delia Dupreez

"It's wonderful achievement for St Helena and especially for everybody who has worked on this project from start to finish. It's a fantastic achievement, having stood here where we are now [on runway] nearly four years ago, when I arrived in October 2011, standing here today with the plane on the ground seems an extraordinary thing. Of course this is a game changer for St Helena and I think that the sense of excitement we can all feel around us today is just marvellous."
 -Governor Mark Capes



"It's exciting and I've been listening to Anne and Julie this morning on the radio, so I am a bit hyped up." -Kylie Peters