

# The Mosquito Aircraft Association of Australia

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PATRON AIR VICE-MARSHAL J.C. JORDAN AO (RAAF-RETIRED)

## BULLETIN - No 13-AUGUST 1996

### 75th Anniversary of the Foundation of the RAAF

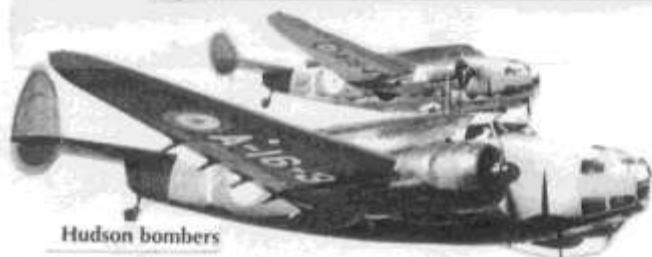
1921



1996

The DH9a—the first machine listed on the RAAF register of aircraft.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE RAAF



Hudson bombers

In 1911, Only 8 years after the Wright Brothers made their historic first flight at Kitty Hawk USA; our government, convinced of the need for our military Aviation Corps, took steps resulting in the formation of the Australian Flying Corps at Point Cook, Victoria in 1913.

The AFC took part in WW1 with Australian aviators operating in England, France & Middle East on Nos. 1, 2, 3 & 4 Squadrons, which were disbanded at war's end & the AFC replaced by The Australian Air Corps. A keen interest & demand by our defence forces & the public, that Australia should have a permanent aviation force, was confused for some time by the question of which service - the Army or the Navy would be the controlling service of the fledgeling Air Arm.

Following the decision of the British Government to form an independent air defence service, the Royal Air Force was formed in England on 1st April 1918. This, no doubt, was the influence that prompted the formation of the Australian Air Force on 31st March 1921, as a separate entity & new military service. King George V approved the prefix "Royal", and thus The Royal Australian Air Force came into being.

On formation, the RAAF's personnel strength was 21 officers & 130 other ranks, with, by coincidence the same number (151) of aircraft comprising Avro 504K trainers, DH9's, SE5a fighters, Sopwith Pup Scouts, and DH 9a bombers.

The years between the two World Wars were a slow development period for the RAAF - of slow growth, limited budgets & obsolete aircraft. During the 1930's the addition of Hawker Demon fighters, Supermarine Seagull V amphibians, Avro Anson bombers, Lockheed Hudson bombers together with 19 home defense Squadrons formed, provided the impetus needed to lift moral and give the RAAF some "bite!"

In 1939 The Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation commenced building aircraft in Australia, which developed into a dynamic industry, providing both training aircraft & frontline fighters & bombers, greatly influencing the growth of the RAAF from the early days of WW2.



The Tiger Moth,

The RAAF became a world recognised Fighting Force during WW2 with expansion to a strength of 20000 officers, 144000 airmen & 18000 airwomen. Aircraft strength of 3037 operational aircraft & 2808 trainers.



A further important factor in the development of the RAAF was the masterpiece of the Allies' planning, which produced the EMPIRE AIR TRAINING SCHEME (EATS), with their full cooperation & commitment. The EATS produced 50000 aircrew each year of the war, 22000 from Britain, 13000 from Canada, 11000 from Australia & 3300 from New Zealand. Training was in Canada, Australia, New Zealand & Rhodesia. Training pockets, particularly for OTU's were set up also in other countries.

17 Squadrons

Under the scheme, the RAAF alone, formed in the United Kingdom & Middle East, further providing many aircrews for RAF, RCAF & "Free" foreign squadrons. From the outset of the war in the Pacific, aircraft production in Australia (which had commenced in 1939), delivered Beauforts, Beaufighters, Wirraways, Boomerangs, Mustangs & Mosquitos. These supplies were increased by the availability of Spitfires from England & the Vultee Vengeance, Hudson, Kittyhawk, Catalina, Liberator & Mitchell from America.

Official casualty figures suffered by the RAAF in WW2 were : -

<u>Theatre</u>	<u>Killed, Died</u>	<u>Injured</u>	<u>Total</u>
Europe	5504	969	6473
S. & SW. Pacific	3527	706	4233
Middle East	1132	413	1545
India, Burma	247	89	336
Canada	145	54	199
Far East	138	46	184
Other Areas	61	13	74
	<u>10754</u>	<u>2290</u>	<u>13044</u>

Decorations - awarded to RAAF men were, Two VC's, 62 DSO's, (4 with Bars), 1880 DFC's, (118 with Bars) 126 AFC's, and 401 DEM's (2 with Bars).

The Womens' Auxiliary Australian Air Force - (WAAAF), (later becoming the WRAAF & now absorbed by the RAAF as an integral part of the Service), was formed in April 1941.

Thousands of men were released for operational service as WAAAF personnel became trained in many fields, previously only staffed by males.

The RAAF Air Training Corps, modelled on the the RAF ATC, came into being in August 1941, encouraging young people between 16 and 18 years to do pre entry training, for both air & ground musteringings.

Following the end of WW2, the RAAF played an active operational part in the Malayan emergency, Berlin air lift, Korean, Vietnam & Gulf wars, and taken part in exercises in Malta, Thailand, Malaysia, Cambodia, Somalia & Rwanda.

The RAAF is currently organised on a functional basis with four main components. Air Force Office- is responsible for higher policy & planning. Air Command- prepares for & conducts combat & related air operations. Logistic Command- Provides RAAF & some ADF logistic support, & Training Command- provides training for Australian air power.



Since inception in 1921, from humble beginnings & under difficult conditions, the Royal Australian Air Force has become a highly sophisticated, technologically advanced & indispensable arm of Australia's defence

From a very small force of 151 men & the same number of aircraft on 31st March 1921, when the Australian Air Force was formed, the RAAF has grown in 1996, through a major war & other operational engagements, to a highly effective third arm of our defences, equipped with strike and defensive aircraft and highly trained & dedicated personnel.

The Members of this Association congratulate The Royal Australian Air Force on attaining 75 years, in provision of effective air power for Australia's security. Our ties and allegiance to the RAAF are very real.



Catalina



Avro Lancaster bomber



Beaufighter



Wirraway



The Fairey III D seaplane, six of which were on order when the Australian Air Force was formed. These were for use in naval cooperation and coastal reconnaissance.



F 111



Sabre



The Lincoln bomber



Beaufort

# The Mosquito Aircraft Association of Australia

CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL REPORT for period ending the 30th June 1996. Given on 12th August 1996.

**MEMBERSHIP.** The established pattern of growth has been continued, with 37 new members admitted in 95/96. In the past two years only 9 and 7 members respectively, have not renewed membership, regrettably some through death. This is a very low percentage loss in our membership, indicating the great interest and support for this project.

Membership as at 1/1/95	218
New Members enrolled (adult)	37
Members who have not renewed	25
Forfeitures	7
Total as per Member's Register as at 30th June 1996	248

A number of these new members have come from new volunteers assisting with the restoration and their dedication to the project and willing support is gratefully acknowledged here.

A new corporate membership, involving 90 young members of 21 Flight, Air Training Corps, St Marys, NSW, is a most welcome addition to our Register. Membership extends over all states of Australia, New Zealand, England and Hongkong.

**THE RESTORATION.** Whilst the RAAF, the owner of Mosquito A52-600, looks on this aircraft as an important part of the RAAF Collection, no firm priority has yet been reached, or overall management and funding been committed to this project in the past year. However RAAF has ordered that a complete review of the options for restoration of A52-600 take place in 96/97.

In this year little progress has been made on the aircraft, although the number of volunteers has increased. Much is being done in preparing the project as a progressively growing exhibit. The setting up of computer records of parts and components held or required for the restoration, has been commenced. Mr. Fred Morgan has been appointed as project manager.

With the completion of the Boston restoration, it appears that now a Catalina will have the first priority, with the A52-600 project to gain momentum in 1997, when options for this task are hoped to be fully established by the RAAF.

Mosquito A52-600 was returned to RAAF strength at Point Cook in 1987, but work did not commence until 1989 when the aircraft was based at RAAF Base Richmond NSW. Since then considerable work has been done by contractors and volunteers, mainly on fuselage woodwork, but also on other sections, ie. rudder, tailcone, stripping of wing, cockpit canopy and other tasks. Progress has been made by the Association and volunteers in the tracing and acquisition of component parts, instruments etc.

However the extent of works completed over the 7 year period since 1989, is disappointing, having in mind the historic value of this Veteran aircraft, and the availability of an independently funded organisation such as ours, formed as a support group for the restoration of A52-600.

It is very clear that corporate assistance should be sought to complete this restoration and this Association is ready and waiting for the green light to solicit funds from individuals and the corporate sector to aid the RAAF in preservation of a historic and unique aircraft.

**PUBLIC RELATIONS.** Several releases have been printed in the media, four being in "WINGS", "RAAF NEWS", "AVIATION AUSTRALIA" and "THE MOSQUITO", the Bulletin of "THE MOSQUITO AIRCRAFT ASSOCIATION" of the UK. Making of pamphlets has been continued. As our numbers increase the restoration is receiving good PR through our membership. Members assistance in spreading the news is appreciated.

**ROBERT TAYLOR (aviation Artist UK)** The Vice President and the Secretary attended a presentation and signing of prints at Richmond VIC on 19/11/95, featuring the artist's most recent works of a Mosquito and a Beaufighter. Members who signed the prints, Fred Stevens, Andy Kellest and Peter Lake also attended.

The Bulletin. Three issues have been circulated this year keeping members in touch with each other and the project. Member co-operation in providing material is a great help to the Editor who says "thanks a lot and keep it up".

**FINANCE.** A worthwhile increase in the Operating Reserve and the A52-600 Restoration Fund in 1995/1996 is indicative of a relatively small number of our members and the public in making voluntary donations to the restoration, and

- 1) the continuing generous support of a relatively small number of our members and the public in making voluntary donations to the restoration;
- 2) the close control of operating costs.

Unfortunately the Association is still unable to mount a major fund raising scheme in the absence of details re estimates of cost, time frame of project, overall management plans and other necessary facts needed to attract large corporate support.

**DONORS.** Once again members and the public have opened their wallets in support of the restoration to the extent of \$2674.00. These donations are acceptable to the Tax Office as a deductible expense.

Members and public donors are gratefully thanked for this tangible support of \$2674.00. The whole amount is credited to the A52-600 Restoration Fund, so every dollar will be devoted to the project.

Hon. D. Adams, D.A. Dobson, "Red" Armour "Whip Around", R. Vassile, Wentworth Falls NSW, K. Rizzoli M.P., A. Middleton, J. Rowles, B.P. Mitchell, J. McDaniel, H. I. Young, R. Taylor H. Davies, R. Langford, C.J. Cook, C.H. Pease, D.V. Avery, B. Pulford, N. C. Amos, E.J. Morgan, C.H. Garrett, N. Sparrow, D. Jacob, J.P. Dempster, D. Ephgrave, S.F. Eurrell, No. 23 Flight ATO, D. Forrester, A. Holtham, H. Howard, B.M. Arns, C.L. Hargrave, D. Barrett, E.J. Brayne, Banner Books, D. Wemyss, M.B. Skinner, J. Bell, D. Searle, J. Fumble, A. Davies, M.I. Williams, K. Boss Walker, R. Salmon, K. Powell, D.R. Fowler

**THE COMMITTEE.** Three meetings have been held, all being well attended. Grateful thanks to Hon Vassile, the NSW State representative for his close liaison between committee and the project base at Richmond NSW; His photographs are often a feature of the Bulletin and he is indeed the invisible man on the Committee.

The Retiring Executive and Committee.

President. Max Ripper Vice President. Ken Johnston Hon Secretary/Treas. Allan Davies

Committee. John Bargees, Joe Graham, Col Ryan, Ron Skinner.

**FEES.** In view of the healthy financial operation in the year under review, the Committee considers Membership Fees increases unnecessary and recommends to members that they remain the same in 1996/1997.

**THE ASSOCIATION'S PART IN FUNDING RESTORATION COSTS.**

Apart from our purchase of technical drawings last year from British Aerospace and a small advance in 1993 to enable fuselage contract to continue, no further advances have been made towards restoration costs to date. This is due to the mechanism for the RAAF to receive donations from us, to expedite the restoration of A52-600, being complex. We are seeking RAAF's further advice on this matter.

In the meantime we should continue the support already so evident by many of our members in their donations over the past four years and continue to solicit the financial assistance of the public. Some time in the future it is hoped that a major fund raising effort involving members, the public and corporate financial sponsorship will make our contribution really worthwhile.

The Operating Reserve is made up of surplus of income over expenses, and this fund is intended to swell the advances to the project from the restoration fund, which is made up purely from donations. Therefore the total available for the restoration in our fifth year is Operating Reserve \$12174. So plus Restoration Fund \$2438.37.

ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS AS AT 30th; JUNE 1996.

Statement of Income and Expenditure.

<u>Expenditure.</u>		<u>Income.</u>	
Advertising	\$ 13.60	Joining Fees 37 @ \$10	\$ 370.00
Photo copying	780.21	Subscriptions	235 @ \$20
AGM Expenses	39.70	2 Junior @ \$12	24.00
Stationery	114.80	3 * unpaid	-
Postages	655.97	1 Aero Club	40.00
PR Advertising	92.40	1 ATC Flight	40.00
Office requisites	84.80	Arrears pd.	20.00
Telephone	57.00	6 @ Half cost	60.00
FID & Drs Fax	16.11		
		Badge Sales	175.00
Operating Reserve	\$3934.46	Less Cost	77.00
		Bank Interest	437.05
			\$5789.05

<u>Operating Reserve</u>		
Balance B/forward	\$ 8239.84	
Bal. Trs from Admin A/C	3934.46	
Balance C/forward	\$12174.30	

<u>A52-600 Restoration Fund.</u>		
Balance B/forward	\$ 4764.37	
Bal Trs from Donations A/C	2674.00	
Balance C/forward.	7438.37	

<u>Bank of Melbourne</u>		
Balance B/forward	\$12859.61	
Deposits for the year	8552.05	
Balance C/forward	\$21411.66	
Payments for the year	\$ 1903.99	
Balance B/down	19507.67	
Balance C/forward	\$19507.67	

<u>Bank Reconciliation as at the 30th; June 1996</u>		
Credit Balance as per Bank Statement	\$19507.67	
Credit Balance as per Cash Book	\$19507.67	

<u>(Assets)</u>		<u>BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30th; JUNE 1996. (Liabilities.)</u>	
Bank of Melbourne	\$19507.67	Operating Reserve	\$12174.30
Petty Cash	100.00	A52-600 Restoration Fund	7438.37
Badge Stocks	173.00	Advance Joining Fees	70.00
Card Stocks	144.00	Advance Subscriptions	262.00
Office Equipment	20.00		
	\$19944.67		\$19944.67

AUDITOR'S STATEMENT

The accounts of the Mosquito Aircraft Association of Australia for the year ended 30 June, 1996 have been audited.

In my opinion, the Balance Sheet and accompanying Operating Statements are properly drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the affairs of the Association as at 30 June, 1996 and results of the operations for the year.

Peter F Wood, JP  
Honorary Auditor  
13 July, 1996

MOSQUITO A52-600 NEWS

RESTORATION PROJECT POINT BRIEF NOTES

RICHMOND NSW - Jul 96

- Visits have continued in large numbers.
- The volunteers at Richmond have been working hard and have completed many information stands which make the aircraft more attractive as a museum piece.
- A sparse amount of restoration work has been undertaken since the last report.
- Funding

Further to the information passed on in the Mar 96 report, the funding issues within the RAAF have not been resolved.

It is known that the 'business plan' that was to be completed up by Training Command concerning the operations of the RAAF Museum- would be due soon. However, given the current funding allocations within the RAAF, there is some doubt as to whether the restoration of the Mosquito can take place in the near future.

The above may be a surprise to the public, as Defence was not targeted by the Government for funding cuts. However, there has been a rationalisation of the distribution of funding within the RAAF (and possibly Defence as a whole) to focus on Defence 'core' activities and objectives - an entirely understandable stance when one considers the RAAF's primary purpose. Even where work (within Air Lift Group Logistics Management Squadron, which supports the operation of the RAAF C-130, Boeing 707 and Caribou fleets) a large proportion of our logistics funding has been taken away. This is additional to the manpower cuts that have to be accommodated.

Clearly, in this financial climate, the Mosquito restoration project is not looking well. There is little available in terms of human resources to manage the project and there is not likely to be significant funding, if any, for skilled tradesmen work.

Unfortunately, the RAAF cannot accept the funding that may be available from the Mosquito Association, given the current RAAF guidelines. However, funding may be useful in other ways later. At this stage, there may be scope for a private trust to take over the restoration project, in which case I would expect the Mosquito Association to lobby for a significant role. Mind that this is purely speculative.

I hope the above does not raise too much alarm, but prompts some thought within your membership about the realities of some of the problems - perhaps there are some innovative commercial solutions that (as a civilian organisation) you may be able to suggest to an appropriate level in Government. However, the exact impact of the funding situation for the RAAF Museum should be revealed soon. Once this is known, the position regarding the Mosquito should be able to be made clearer.

Location

The location of the Mosquito is largely dependent on the resolution of the funding issues and whether the RAAF wishes to restore the aircraft at this stage. It is no longer certain that it will stay at Richmond, if it is argued that resources are more abundant elsewhere for its long term display, storage and/or restoration. (Pt Cook and Amberley are possibilities)

C.French  
Squadron Leader  
Aircraft Restoration Project

Restoration of Mosquito A52-600

Through our Patron Air Vice Marshal J.C. Jordan AO (RAAF Rtd), the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal L.B. Fisher AO has advised the Association of the recent reframing of policies for the preservation of vintage aircraft by the RAAF.

The details of the changes as they apply to Mosquito A52-600 have been advised since our Annual Report was printed and this addendum outlines the pertinent planning, which will have an almost immediate improved effect on the restoration.

CAS has initiated formation of a Heritage Aircraft Flight at the RAAF Museum which will undertake restorative work on aircraft of historical importance. Also a Heritage Restoration Committee is being formed, headed by AOCTC, AIRCDRE Brent Espeland. This Committee's task is to make recommendations to the CAS, regarding important restorative projects with their overall resource implications. These two steps will undoubtedly place the A52-600 restoration activities on a soundly based operating plan, rather than the somewhat day to day operation previously being followed of necessity.

The plan for Mosquito A52-600 over the next 12 months is : -

- 1) The aircraft will be moved from RAAF Base Richmond NSW to the newly formed Heritage Aircraft Flight at the RAAF Museum at Point Cook Vic;
- 2) The full restorative resources available to the RAAF will be directed to the aircraft in about March 1997, when the Catalina restoration at RAAF Base Amberley is expected to be completed.

Further, the objective stated at this stage is to completely restore A52-600 by the year 2001.

SQNLDR Gary Westley, the Commanding Officer of the RAAF Museum has telephoned our President, confirming these details as advised by our Patron, and the Executive and Committee hope to visit Point Cook to make direct contact with the Heritage Aircraft Flight, as soon as possible in the new fiscal year. Such matters as Pilots seat at Darwin, Cockpit canopy at Townsville, Spare parts and components at Canberra, our requirements of details required before we can formulate a plan to raise worthwhile funds from corporate sponsors and the public, and many other important matters, can be discussed.

This Addendum will provide a great ray of hope and promise for the future, and will most certainly offset the rather grim forecasts for the restoration in the consolidated and restoration Officers reports. We did however indicate our confidence that the slowing down of the project over the past 18 months, would "not continue for too much longer"

An aspect of these changes which causes great concern, is the sudden cessation of the activities of the service, and civilian volunteers working so willingly on the A52-600 project at Richmond. These plans will be a real shock to them as they were a surprise to the Association. The volunteers have worked on the restoration since 1989, with great diligence and their activities over the past 12 months, with the project apparently running down, must be greatly applauded. It is to be hoped that some continuation of their contribution to the project can be arranged in the future.

FINANCE.

The matter of funding has not yet been raised by the RAAF and it is assumed that in these times of tightened budgets and allocations, the RAAF will be limited in financial resources for this project. This Association was founded to support the combined RAAF and civilian restoration team, and our Constitution specifically includes assistance in funding.

Whilst acknowledging that donation to causes is a strictly private and personal decision, this project is of such particular interest to each and every member that financial support from our members forms a large part of the funds we are building up for the restoration, although these contributions are being made by a relatively few of our members.

With our membership strength, even small donations would rapidly swell the funds we are building up for the restoration, thus bringing closer to fruition the completion, if more members decided to make an annual contribution.

The Tax Office has designated the Association as a public museum and donations of \$2 upwards are acceptable as a deductible expense.

At a later date the Association plans to enter into a funding drive to attract substantial corporate and public sponsorships.

## MEMBERSHIP

Since our last Bulletin and to the date of this issue, the following new members are warmly welcomed to our ranks. Our current membership is 257 and this continued growth indicates the keen interest in the A52-600 Restoration project.

Lamble L.R.	Bob.	265 Gulf Rd; Yarra Glen 3775.- ex 94 Squadron RAAF, Nav
Whaley S.C.G	Leslie	30 Northmore Crs. Higgins 2615.- Snr. Tech Officer ADF Academy. Son of SqdLdr L.Whaley DFC RAF (retired)
Wells W.J.	Bill	96/100 Warks Rd;Kurrajong Heights 2758.- ex Army RAA Darwin WW2. Artist, Aviation enthusiast - Volunteer on A52-600 project.
Williams M.I.	Max	5 Reef Close Jamboree Heights 4074.- Photographer 1 PRU,87,18,20 Sqdns, 380 Group USAF.
Fitzgerald S.	Stan	Nerrena Rd; Dumbalk 3956.- Aviation enthusiast.
Powell K.St.A	Keith	108 Commodore Crs; Narromine 2821.- Pilot Av.enthusiast
Salmon R.W.	Ron	2 Carinya Crs; Korumburra 3950.- RAAF Motor Transport.
Sutton R.R.	Rex	Apt.159 Mariners Drv. East Tweed Heads 2485 - Aviation enthusiast - Pilot.
Fowler D.R.	Bob	167 Clarence St; Riccarton, Christchurch 8004 NZ - Pilt Attached to 487 Sqdn;(Mosquitos) 140 Wing.
Cousins C.J.	Cec	74-Jonathan St; Eleebana 2252- ex RAAF Wireless Units Intelligence gathering - Aviation enthusiast.



### ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW DUE AND PAYABLE

for the year ending 30th; June 1997

Members attending the AGM on 12/8/96 resolved there should be no change in the Association Fees in 1996/1997, therefore the annual subscription remains at \$20 pa.

All members will receive a copy of this Bulletin (No.13), but further Bulletins can only be forwarded to financial members, due to the costs of production. Please cut out the section below, and return with your particulars and remittance.

..... *cut here*

Address to the Secretary **THE MOSQUITO AIRCRAFT  
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA  
4/18 GORDON ST  
TRARALGON. 3844**

I, *please print* .....

of *please print* .....

.....

enclose my annual subscription to 30/6/97

Please place X in square if a receipt is required

There was movement in the hangar, for the Subs had just come due,  
And all the ranks were gathered there to pay,  
So join the early starters, and put pen to paper too,  
and harken to the Treasurers H O O R A Y !!

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The AGM was held at Traralgon on Monday 12/8/96 with 23 members present. Your Executive & Committee for 1996/1997 are : - President, M. Ripper Vice President K. Johnston, Hon Secretary/Treasurer A. Davies, Committee J. Burgess J. Graham, C. Ryan, R. Skinner.

The main business of this meeting was the sweeping changes to RAAF planning for the continued restoration of Mosquito A52-600, including relocation to the RAAF Museum at Point Cook. This is indeed good news for our members, but for some will be bittersweet. This refers to that dedicated band of both service personnel and civilians, who have devoted much of their spare time and talents to the restoration whilst it was based at Richmond since 1989. Their valued services will, in the course of time, be suitably recorded. In the meantime we all salute them for helping to keep the restoration afloat in somewhat difficult times. Their recent work in preparing A52-600 as a progressive restoration exhibit is to be commended. The art work of Bill Wells has been particularly valuable to this end.

The full details on the new plans for the restoration of A52-600 will be found on other pages of this Bulletin, in the Addendum to the Annual Reports.

**Finance.** Your Executive refers members to the Finance section of the Addendum, and asks you all to give your consideration to becoming an active participant in this restoration, by becoming an annual contributor to the funding of this most worthwhile undertaking.

de Havilland  
Mosquito  
RR 299

VALE

AIRCREW

and

AIRCRAFT

JULY 23rd  
1996

It is with great regret we record the loss of a vintage aircraft, de Havilland MkT3 Mosquito - RR299, owned and flown by British Aerospace.

This aircraft has long been an icon in the UK's vintage aircraft collection and has been a source of great interest and entertainment to the crowds attending the air pageants, where RR 299 was always in great demand.

The Mosquito went out of control when appearing at an Air Display at the Barton Air Show at Salford, greater Manchester, when it seemed to stall or developed a control fault.

The aircraft burst into flames as it crashed into a wooded area close to Barton aerodrome. The pilot and navigator did not survive the crash.

The de Havilland Mosquito, long famed for its versatility and speed, played an important part in WW2, only becoming obsolete with the refinements in the development of the jet engine.

Aircraft enthusiasts throughout the world will deeply regret the sad end to RR 299's last flight.



British Aerospace  
Mk. T3 Mosquito RR299

**MEMBERS** - Please complete and send in the Subscription notice on the other side of this reminder, with your remittance. **NOW WOULD BE NICE !!**

Your editor is indebted to and acknowledges the cooperation of Daniel Rutland, publishing director of Rutland Cowling-Smith Associates, the Publishers of the Official Souvenir Commemorative Publication of the RAAF 75th Anniversary. Also RAAF historian, Alan Stephens and Defence Artist Jeff Isaacs, in the production of this Bulletin.



# NOTICES AND ODDS AND ENDS



NOTE ! ex personnel No. 1 Squadron  
You will be pleased to learn that WNGCDR Mark Lax's treatise "THE No. 1 SQUADRON MOSQUITO STORY" has been completed and has taken Third place in the Literary Section of the RAAF Heritage Competition. - Congrats to Mark for his endeavour to preserve this part of one of the original Squadrons of the AFC and The RAAF, and his success in the Heritage.

RAAF 75th; ANNIVERSARY  
The remaining Open Days & the Anniversary Parade at RAAF Richmond Base still to be held, AFTER you receive this bulletin are-  
RAAF Base Richmond NSW - 3/10/96 - Parade.

RAAF Base Wagga NSW - 13/10/96 - Open Day  
RAAF Base Richmond NSW - 17/11/96 - " "

This is a great wind up to the activities of the 75th; Anniversary, obviously a great opportunity for our NSW members to be part of these occasions. Those of you who have not yet seen "the object of our affections" will be able to inspect the project at Richmond Open Day on 17/11/96.

Our Bulletin No.4 - August 1993 quoted an "origin" of the LAST POST - well here is another origin, somewhat different to the first, but with some corroborating similarities. It certainly has a factual, down to earth feel about it. The source was a Legacy bulletin.

## LAST POST



Playing of the Last Post is derived from the old custom of beating Tattoo. This word comes from the Dutch phrase - "doe den tap toe", meaning "turn the taps off". In the days when British troops served in the lowlands, it was the custom for a drummer to march through the streets beating his drum to warn the troops to leave the taverns and return to their billets. At the sound of the drum the Dutch innkeepers would order "doe den tap toe".

When bugle calls were generally introduced two posts were written. First Post symbolises the first inn to see that all soldiers had left and the Last Post symbolises the inspection of the last inn in the town.

It was then a simple step for the Last Post to become associated with Military Funerals, its playing denoting the end of the day. Played at funerals the last post is followed by the call Rouser, a later version of Reveille which symbolises the awakening of a new life.

## ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS.

At the AGM held on the 12/8/96, members fixed Fees at the same figures set for the past three years. We are paying our way and showing an annual surplus, in addition to the welcome donations to the A52-600 Restoration Fund, from some of our members. Our financial support will prove valuable to the project, as it gathers momentum.

Your ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION is now due, for the financial year ending 30/6/97. Your cooperation is sought in making an early payment, as with our large membership it is most helpful to your secretariat to have the busy period of Fees receipt & associated bookkeeping, together with the exchange of correspondence that takes place at this time, all cleared up as soon as possible in the new fiscal year.

A form of account appears in this bulletin, please fill in the return section and forward with your payment of subscription of \$20 ASAP to the Treasurer - Thanks fellers - in confident expectation - HE HOPES !!

THE BULLETIN A big THANKYOU to those members who are sending in material they think will be of interest to our members. It will probably be some time before articles, news and yarns will appear, due to space problems and just the three bulletins each year. KEEP 'EM COMING !! Will have a VERY SPECIAL SQUADRON SONG in the December Bulletin.

## Herald Sun

April 10, 1996

## RAAF reshuffle

A NEW Air Commander has been appointed to head the Royal Australian Air Force.

Air Commodore Peter Nicholson has been promoted to Air Vice Marshal and yesterday assumed the role of Air Commander Australia.

Air Vice Marshal Nicholson, who joined the RAAF in 1968, has replaced Air Vice Marshal Gary Beck, who takes over as Commandant at the Australian Defence Force Academy in Canberra.



The F111C

LANDING AT RAF STATION, BLACKBUSH IN 1944 USING

"FIDO"

( FOG INSTALLATION DISPERSAL OPERATION )

We are indebted to our member Basil Watkin who piloted Mosquito aircraft on No. 487 Squadron RNZAF, also serving on 217 & 228 Squadrons RAF, & No. 1 Squadron RNZAF, for these recollections of a never to be forgotten "FIDO" experience.

This innovation ("FIDO") was but one of the ingenious inventions of our "BACK ROOM BOFFINS", that undoubtedly aided the Allies in their final victory and saved many an aircrew and aircraft.

"FIDO" employed a system of fuel oil ignition alongside emergency runways. The enormous heat generated serving to burn off the fog in the immediate locality. The system was first used on the night of 19th/20th November 1943 at RAF Gravelley and eventually equipped 15 airfields.

It is estimated that 2500 aircraft were recovered during the later part of the war, through the use of "FIDO" *Ed.*

Briefly in May, 1944 as a pilot of No 487 squadron in a Wing of No 2 Group, (AOC was Air Commodore Basil Embury) consisting of Numbers 21(RAF), 484 (RAAF) and 487 (RNZAF) squadrons, I flew Mosquito Mark IV fighter-bomber aircraft. As a Wing we lived completely under canvas preparing for D-Day, when we were to give close ground support to the infantry operating from a Luftwaffe airfield in Normandy to be captured immediately after the D-Day landings. Our then day-night operations included night-intruder interdictions against Luftwaffe fighter airfields in an attempt to reduce the attacks by German night fighters against our Bomber Command aircraft

In these missions, as individual aircraft we would arrive over a specific airfield at a precise ETA, maintain "on station" for a specified time, then depart at an exact predetermined minute, on a specified flight path and altitude and return to base. On target we would attack aircraft in the air and attempt to keep any fighters on the ground by making a series of attacks against the airfield and its installations using our 4-500 pounders, 4 5" cannons and 4 303 Brownings and then we carried out dummy runs, when we ran out of ammunition and bombs. These seemed to be successful, as at their preflight briefings our colleagues in Bomber Command always appeared to welcome the information that the Mossies would be "on patrol".

It was almost exactly 50 years ago on THIS night - just before D-Day - that my navigator FIO Munro (a recognised expert navigator who, prior to joining 487, was chosen as lead navigator of a Mosquito flight to attack the German battleship TIRPITZ, then skulking in the Norwegian fjords, which was cancelled) and I were detailed to carry out a night-intruder attack on a German fighter base in eastern France. Despite the unbelievably lousy weather with heavy rain, low cloud, almost nil visibility and forecast to deteriorate, this operation was "ON". As the first aircraft on target we departed at dusk into the heavy overcast to be met with such heavy static that any R/T was impossible. However we were on R/T silence, so it did not give us much concern.

How wrong we were!

We climbed to altitude, meeting AA flak en route and on ETA we identified our target through the murk. During our 35 minutes over the airfield we carried out standard low level attacks on aircraft in the air, on the ground and airfield installations. On ETD we departed and climbed back into the comparative safety of the heavy overcast and on ETA we crossed the French coast and called base with the standard call of -

"...our feet are wet..."

To say that we were stunned with the replies is an understatement, which included -

"...How had we missed the general recall, all operations had been cancelled?"  
(This had been soon after our takeoff during that heavy static) and  
"...all airfields in England were closed due weather..." and  
"...we had the entire radar and ATC system for our sole benefit..." WOW!!!

After simple, but short discussions with base we were offered two alternatives -

1. Bail out over England (and lose our faithful "R" for "Roger" Mossie).
  2. Make a "FIDO" approach at R.A.F. Station, Blackbushe (and keep "R").
- It was a no-win situation, for us there was only the one solution - go to Blackbushe.

Unfortunately neither of us had flown "FIDO", but as a real safety-conscious crew we had studied the "FIDO" film - I wonder where that film is now? - and during training sessions had preplanned and flown our own approaches and let-downs into dummy airfields. But, even if we both had completed another 100 missions, never did we ever suspect that we would need one or other of these procedures, let alone both at the same time. Weather at Blackbushe was really lousy, airfield closed due fog with visibility 50 yards, cloud base 200 feet and landings permitted using "FIDO" and an added proviso - "for pilots experienced in "FIDO" only".

We arrived over Blackbushe and using his "G" box, Andy proceeded to instruct me in our Watkin/Munro "G" approach and let-down. What a carefully instructed and oh so painstakingly flown approach and let-down. Approaching 200 feet and committal attitude, suddenly directly ahead, piercing the dense fog, appeared this tiny rectangle of intense fire and to Andy's only extraneous laconic comment during the let-down of -

"...Gosh! It is rather small, even for our Mossie..."

We landed safely in this wall of fire, to be met by a completely unexpected incredibly deafening roar from the enormous thrust of the thousands of gallons of fuel being forced through the burners, intense almost unbearable heat with an unbelievable brightness from the burning fuel. We immediately experienced complete loss of sight or any other, vision. As we rolled to a stop, two events occurred without warning -

1. The burners were turned off, leaving us in complete and utter blackness. (We could not see anyway).
  2. Both motors just stopped. We had run out of fuel.
- (Later discovered to be due to the AA fire we had encountered on our mission. What chance of an overshoot then?)

Eventually Blackbushe M/T found us in the fog and towed us to the nearest hard-standing. Our simple de-briefing consisted mainly of -

"...Where in the H... had we been?..."  
 "...Why had we run out of fuel?..."  
 and

After a greasy, but very welcome, early morning breakfast of beans and sweet tea - I still do not drink sweet tea - two very tired airmen retired to lumpy bunks in the duty pilots hut. Later that morning we returned to our own base by M/T, leaving "R" at Blackbushe, to be greeted at base by our Commanding Officer, and his main comments included -

"...where on earth have you two been?..."  
 "...at least you bought your aircraft back!..."  
 and

The saddened sequel to this was a few days later I managed to break my neck - yes flying Mossies and when bailing out I landed on my head instead of my feet - so while the R.A.F. medics were doing a superb "repair" job on my neck, Andy was crewed with a new pilot and sadly they crashed in flames attacking an ammunition train in France. A year later, fit for full flying duties, I was posted to Transport Command. It was not until after the war, when commanding a Ferry Squadron, did I have the opportunity to fly my beloved Mossies again. But that is another story.

After 25 years in the R.A.F. I retired to my native New Zealand, joining Air Traffic Control, which gave me another 20 happy years in the aviation world. I still maintain a positive interest in aviation as President of the Gold Coast Branch of the Royal Air Forces Association and member of the Gold Coast Branch of the Aircrew Association. Now my wife, Helen, and I live and enjoy the warmth and sunny climate of Queensland, Australia.

Yours most sincerely,

*Basil L Watkin*

Basil L Watkin  
 Squadron Leader, R.A.F., Retired.

This detail comes from a letter from Basil written in 1994. Ed.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO TOKYO ROSE,? well remembered for her comically extravagant claims in favour of the Japanese war efforts and laughable attempts to subvert the morale of our service personnel, during the course of the campaigns in the Pacific war zones.

## "Tokyo Rose's" tirade was all a smoke screen!

repeated threats from "Tokyo Rose" that bombers and fighters of the Imperial Japanese Air Force were set to annihilate the ships that had arrived at Labuan with the invasion force.

The order went out to the vast assembly of ships, big and small, that made up the invasion force. Vessels were to instruct their engine rooms to be prepared to generate thick black smoke so that a great blanket of smoke could be laid over the whole invasion area.

Extra lookouts were posted in all ships to search for anything that moved in the water, such as suicide swimmers trying to clamp limpet mines on the hulls of ships lying offshore.

But there was one night at Labuan when her dire threats weren't taken light heartedly. Warship radio rooms heard

anti-submarine patrols off Labuan and in the sea lanes of the South China Sea. It was a long night as those on the warships, transports and invasion ships waited out the dark hours.

The dire threat from "Tokyo Rose" did not eventuate and the invasion of Labuan progressed as the second of the three Borneo beach-head landings.

Borneo's importance for fleet and air bases from which to recapture Singapore and the Netherlands East Indies was offset by the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki which led quickly to Japan's unconditional surrender.

"Tokyo Rose" had little to add subsequently. She was in her mid-twenties when she broadcast over Radio Tokyo. Three years after the war she went on trial, was

found guilty, and sentenced to 10 years jail plus a fine of \$10,000.

After her release, she lived in America. In 1977, President Ford granted her a pardon.

All of which was uppermost in the minds of the Navy men on the Borneo pilgrimage as they approached Labuan on the sleek, modern, hi-tech ferry that transported the *Australia Remembers* contingent from Kota Kinabalu to Labuan for a major remembrance ceremony at Labuan War Cemetery coupled with visits to the beach-head landing areas and the plaque that commemorates the surrender of the Japanese Army in Borneo.

\* Max Thomson, a member of the Borneo pilgrimage, was a signalier on the frigate HMAS *Hawkesbury* during the Labuan landing.

### V A L E -

We sadly record the passing of our members and friends and convey our sorrow in the loss to the bereaved families.

- \* Harvey ("Red") ARMOUR 4/10/16 - 18/3/96
- \* George Keith GRANGER M.I.D. 13/8/14 - 29/4/96
- \* Kenneth ("Sparks") MCCOWAT 11/5/96
- \* Joe BURNS M.I.D. 14/5/23 - 18/5/96
- \* James (Jim) SCOTT. 5/6/96

No. 5 OTU

John Lever of Post Office, KOORLONG Vic; 3501, Tel No. (050) 25 7363, is currently researching for the preparation of a Unit History of No. 5 OTU. This Unit was formed at Forest Hill in Oct; 1942, moving to Tocumwal in Oct; 1943, eventually settling at Williamtown in July 1944.

All our aircrew members & some groundcrews ex No's 87 PR, 1 & 94 Squadrons would have converted to Mosquitos or otherwise served at Williamtown in 1944. John is most anxious to HEAR FROM YOU with your recollections of time spent at 5 OTU, with photo copies of photos and other memorabilia.

PLEASE WRITE OR PHONE JOHN LEVER at the above listed address & phone No. He has already compiled the histories of No's 2 and 7 OTU's.

STOP PRESS - 464 Squadron History.

WNGCDR Mark Lax is posted to Alabama USA for 12 Months. His new address is 6425 Merritt Court, AL, USA, 36177. Mark advises he has joined forces with another member of this Association, Professor Leon Kane-Maguire, whose father flew with No.464 Sqn; in Ventura days. Leon has been researching 464 for some years. Leon's address is Institute of Molecular Recognition, University of Wollongong, Northfields Ave; Wollongong NSW 2522. Members ex 464 Sqn; aircrew & ground staff, are urged to send their recollections and material to either of the above addresses as Mark & Leon are co-operating fully together in the research & compilation of the History of No. 464 Squadron RAAF.

No. 464 Sqn.  
RAAF

Survivor RAAF



## The Mosquito Aircraft Association of Australia

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