

The Mosquito Aircraft Association of Australia

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

BULLETIN - No 20~DECEMBER~1998

— A MOSQUITO SURVIVOR —

Photo - Courtesy of
Express & Echo
Exeter, England.



Mosquito RS 712 retired from service on 9th; May 1963.

Mosquito RS 712 was sold from the collection of Sir William Roberts to Kermit Weeks by auction on the 14th; June 1981, for S.£100,000 and is part of the Week's Aviation Museum in Miami, Florida USA, where from last reports she was still in flight condition. This aircraft was reported on briefly in our Bulletins No's 2 and 3, and more detailed information has now come to hand.

Built by Airspeed at Christchurch in 1946, it entered RAF service on the 13th; March 1947 and following brief periods of service with three units, was converted for target towing, and on 31st; December 1953, RS 712 began duties as a target tug with Civil Anti Aircraft Cooperation Unit 1 (CAACU).

Donations of \$2 and upwards are allowable Tax deductions.

— A MOSQUITO SURVIVOR — *continued*

On 28th; February 1958, RS712 was briefly located in North Western Germany with 2nd TAF and towed sleeve targets for the NATO Air Forces. On 30th; April 1958 the aircraft was allocated to No.3 CAACU at Exeter. The pilots and ground staff were all civilians, employed by Exeter Airport Limited, under contract from the Air Ministry.

Some 12 pilots flew 13 different aircraft types during the 13 years this unit operated, mainly in the Mk B 35 Mosquito (Post War) modified for Target Towing. Duties were to provide target practice for the Royal Navy and the Army.

On the 9th; May 1963 RS712 was one of 5 Mosquitoes in an Official Fly Past of the Units' Mosquitoes. Then with other ex No 3 CAACU Mosquitoes RS 712 was camouflaged as a Mk PB VI Mosquito, with machine gun barrels attached to the nose, to take part in the filming of "633 Squadron".

In 1986, numbered N35 Mk the US civil registration, the aircraft was flown to the USA as part of the Week's Air Museum in Miami and is now the only Mosquito aircraft left in the world in flight condition.

An intriguing part of this aircraft's history is found within this Associations' Membership. Mrs. Ann Cogan of Traralgon, Victoria is the daughter of Pilot Sid Cooper, who flew RS712 On No3 CAACU, totalling 714 hrs 50 mins flying time on Mosquito aircraft. He appears, 4th; from the left on the front cover print. Sid Cooper was a RAF SGT Pilot flying Hurricanes in the Battle for Britain.

The editor gratefully acknowledges the contributions of Mrs. Ann Cogan and Stuart Howe, the author of "Mosquito Survivors" in the compilation of this story. Also thanks to Weeks Air Museum Director, Vincent Tirado for current news on Mosquito N35 Mk and details of aircraft damaged in a hurricane. His letter appears in this Bulletin.



The Mosquito Aircraft Association of Australia
Allan L. Davies, Hon. Secretary/Treasurer
4/13 Gordon Street
Traralgon VIC 3844
Australia

2 July, 1998


Editors Note.
The Mosquito referred to in this letter is RS712 which appears in this Bulletins' cover story.

Dear Mr. Davies,

Thank you very much for your letter dated 19 June, 1998. Your concern for the de Havilland Mosquito is admiring and worth much respect. The accompanying newsletter and information was most informative. The Mosquito that you make inquiries about is alive and well in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. The Mossie never received any damage from hurricane Andrew as it was already hangered in Wisconsin. The rest of the aircraft in our museum were not as lucky.

We unfortunately lost several of the World War I aircraft that were too badly damaged to repair or rebuild. Several other aircraft were badly damaged, such as the B-17, B-23, P-40E, and P-51D. These aircraft are in the process of restoration to flying or static display. The lack of funds and qualified restorers draws out the time period for this process. The P-51D, Cripes A' Mighty III, should be finished this month or next. The other three are projects requiring much more time.

The Experimental Aircraft Association annual airshow at Oshkosh is usually held the end of July through the first few days of August. It has become the biggest airshow in the United States. I am sure that you know of it. The Mossie will be on display giving the public the chance to see a truly beautiful airplane. If there is anything else that we can do for you please do not hesitate to contact us. Good luck on the restoration and care of your Mosquito.

Most Sincerely,

Vincent Tirado
Director

THEY ALSO SERVED

A TRIBUTE TO FLORA READ.

Flora Read is one of our lady members and on her behalf a beautiful, colour illustrated book of Allied and Enemy Aircraft, was presented to the RAAF Museum at our AGM on the 18th; of August 1998. We thank Flora for making this gift to the Association, and for her practical support for the A52-600 project since joining our membership on 21/10/1994.

Flora played her part in the War Effort, working on Mosquito aircraft construction for de Havilland from 1942 to the end of the war.

The first Mosquitoes to fly in operations over enemy targets in the SW Pacific were built in Australia. The first, A52-2, being taken on strength of No. 87 PR Squadron on the 29th; of May 1944 and 3 days later this Mosquito flew the first operational RAAF Mosquito flight over enemy territory, to Ambon.

These first deliveries to 87 Squadron were the PB Mk. 40 model, designed and armed for attack Squadrons and modified for PR use with no armament. There can be no doubt that Flora had a hand in production of these badly needed aircraft, so necessary for long range aerial reconnaissance. It was not until the 4th; of March 1944 that the Squadron received the first of 12 PR MkXVI Mosquitoes ordered some 11 months earlier and British built.

Those of our members who served on the Squadrons in all theatres of war well recognise the value of those civilian workers, who so successfully built up the Aircraft Construction Industry in the war torn years of 1939-1945. This was Flora's contribution and this page is a tribute to her and her co-workers for their wholehearted support to the war effort as civilians. *Ed.*



The photograph above was taken in 1944 of Flora and her foreman at a de Havilland employees' dance.

Flora lives at Wodonga, is a war widow and is blessed with a son & daughter, 2 grandsons, 1 granddaughter and 1 great granddaughter.

WORLD WAR 2, 1939-1945.

In 1942, Flora Read commenced work at the De Havilland Aircraft Factory, O'Riordan Street Alexandria. Flora first worked in the Metal Shop making parts for the Tiger Moth plane.

With the development of the Mosquito Bomber, De Havilland needed to camouflage their manufacturing operations, so they moved to the 4th and 5th Floors of Bradfield's Cotton mills on the corner of Missenden Road & Parramatta Road CAMPERDOWN.

Part of Flora's work duties at the Camperdown Factory was to help make engine mounts. Using a hacksaw she cut different size tubing into various lengths some up to 5ft. long, and place them in jigs for welding by the men. Once finished, the parts would be despatched to Bankstown for final assembly of the Mosquito Bomber.



DUPLICATE	HOLDER
No. 8817	No. 8817
MRS. F. M. READ	
CLOCK NO. 1241	
is authorised to enter	
(NO. 5) MISSENDEN ROAD	
Factory	
as F38B	
Date 26/1/44	
Authorised by <i>A. Coleman</i>	Signature of Holder <i>Flora Read</i>
DE HAVILLAND AIRCRAFT PTY. LTD. Sydney	Height 5'1 in Complexion FAIR



VISIT TO THE RAAF MUSEUM

Following an invitation from the RAAF, on Wednesday the 14th; October, 22. Members and friends attended a meeting at Point Cook.

David Gardner, Chief Curator addressed the meeting giving a concise outline of the procedures necessary to bring A52-600 to the recommencement of restoration stage. Basically this meant the completion of a full inventory and quality check, for which volunteers were being sought.

GRPCPT R. Gratton the project Manager for the Walrus project will also head the Mosquito restoration.

The estimated time scale is, completion of inventory in June 1999 with the completion of the Walrus 18 months further on, when full restoration mode on A52-600 will recommence in full swing. However in the meantime works will be carried out on the engines, u/c components, other metal parts perspex and instruments.

This introduction to the restoration plans for A52-600 at Point Cook was followed by an inspection of the aircraft in Hangar 78, where the project will be carried out as a display of a restoration in progress for public viewing.

The volunteer work required on the inventory requires no specialised experience and members and friends wishing to volunteer for this and perhaps later stage of the restoration, should telephone, Chief Curator Mr. David Gardner on 9256 1279 or SQDLDR Gary Westley on 9256 1479

Voted - A great day, albeit somewhat in the distant future to completely satisfy the hopes of our membership - but a spirit of confidence was evident and the writer feels that the long wait in the wilderness on the backburner has finished for A52-600 and US.

AN APPEAL TO MELBOURNE MEMBERS

With the move of A52-600 to the RAAF Museum your Committee considers a change of base to Melbourne is indicated in the best interests of the Association. A survey of the Melbourne members revealed that support for a Melbourne based Committee was very high and to date firm expressions of interest received would result in the following nominations for Committee :- Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, and two Committeemen, leaving the Presidents office and two committeemen as vacancies to fill the constitutional requirements,

The main advantages in moving the base to Melbourne are :-

- 1) Proximity to RAAF Museum, Point Cook.
- 2) Large population - an obvious benefit to fund raising and PR.
- 3) Better prospects for increased membership, with a better age balance.
- 4) Opportunity to assist on the project during and after restoration.

We will look forward to receiving your earnest consideration to this important matter and the receipt of expressions of interest in Committee service, particularly President and Committeemen will be greatly appreciated.

ACTION REQUIRED

HOW YOU CAN HELP !! - MELBOURNE MEMBERS ACTION REQUIRED. —

TO ACTIVELY CANVAS FRIENDS AND RELATIVES OR EVEN THEMSELVES TO SERVE ON A PROPOSED NEW COMMITTEE BASED IN THE MELBOURNE ENVIRONS.

WE ARE HALFWAY THERE AND REQUIRE EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST WITH SUBSEQUENT NOMINATION FOR A PRESIDENT AND TWO COMMITTEEMEN.

Non members of the Association may be approached, but must be accepted for membership before eventual nomination for Committee.

Four Melbourne members have already expressed interest in standing as Vice President, Treasurer and two as Committeemen, so with YOUR HELP it should be possible to form the Melbourne based Committee to stand for election. Pamphlets etc; to aid you in this promotion are available on request. Contact the Secretary if further information is required.

NOTICES ETC.

SPECIAL NOTICE. Your Committee will visit Melbourne on Monday the 15th; of February 1999, to meet with Melbourne or near surrounds members, at the RAAF Association (Vic; RHQ - 4 Cromwell Street, South Yarra at 2.00 pm.

This Meeting is called to advise you all, of the current position in our efforts to establish a Melbourne based Committee in our 1999/2000th; year and to seek your assistance in receiving expressions of interest for the offices of President and two Committeemen.

We have received expressions of interest in all other offices, indicating the keen interest evident towards establishing a Melbourne based committee. Of course, as a democratic body, the Association will accept expressions of interest from any member, not necessarily residing in Melbourne's environs, who feel the tyranny of distance would not adversely affect attendances at meetings of Committee.

The advantages of a Melbourne based committee are outlined elsewhere in this Bulletin. Please list this date Monday 15th; of February 1999 on your calendar and meet with your present Committee at the RAAF Association HQ; on Monday the 15th; of February 1999.

Your advice of intention to be present would be appreciated.

M.B. (Brian) Pulsford
15th; October 1998.

V A L E

C.A. ("Chuck") Gregory
17th, March 1998

Brian served as a FLTLT Pilot in the RAAF, his last unit being No. 94 Mosquito Squadron. Brian was a long standing member of this Association - we mourn his loss.

"Chuck" was a FLTLT Pilot on No. 464 Squadron RAAF, serving in Europe in WW2. He will be sadly missed by his family and friends. Sincere sympathy to Jess.

HELP! POSTWAR AUSTRALIAN MOSQUITOS

Reply to

Doug Morrison
54 River Road West
Lane Cove NSW 2066
Or email <sthlands@one.net.au>

Although we now have A52-319 preserved and A52-600 in a rebuild stage, most persons with an interest in Australian mosquitos may not realize that in the 1950s a few exRAAF aircraft made the commercial register. A52-319 was one of those.

I am desperately seeking anyone who has knowledge and just as importantly photographs of the following three postwar mosquitos.

Firstly and secondly, A52-306 and A52-313. Both aircraft made the USA and Australian commercial registers as N1596V/VH-WWA and N1597V/VH-WWS respectively. These aircraft were owned by World Wide Aerial Surveys based out of Camden, NSW in 1955 to 1957. Previously they had flown photographic surveys in Borneo/Labuan in 1954 for Aero Service Corporation of Philadelphia. To my knowledge A52-306 did little flying after the return from Borneo but A52-313 flew surveys in Broome in 1955 (as N1597V) and various places in NSW throughout the period 1956 to 1957. Both aircraft were stripped and burnt at Camden in 1957.

Thirdly, a mosquito was built up from three disposed of aircraft sitting at Forest Hill, Wagga Wagga in mid to late 1953. This aircraft was placed on the US register as N4928V and flown via Sydney to Los Angeles. United States FAA documentation has this aircraft as airframe "MN277" which looks like it could be a construction serial number but could it be a corrupted version of A52-177? (A52-177 was one of three mossies sold at disposal to RH Grant & Co in 1953). Not much is known on this aircraft and is a mystery to me after leaving Australia.

Any source of information or photographs would be greatly appreciated. This is a private research project. Thanks *Doug*.

PLEASE NOTE.

(particularly Melbourne members). Below are the Phone No's to ring to record your interest in Hands On Help to complete the inventory of A52-600 components now stored at Point Cook.

Your help is required to ensure the inventory is completed ASAP, ready for the recommencement of the restoration.

You may find that you can enlist the interest of friends and relatives in

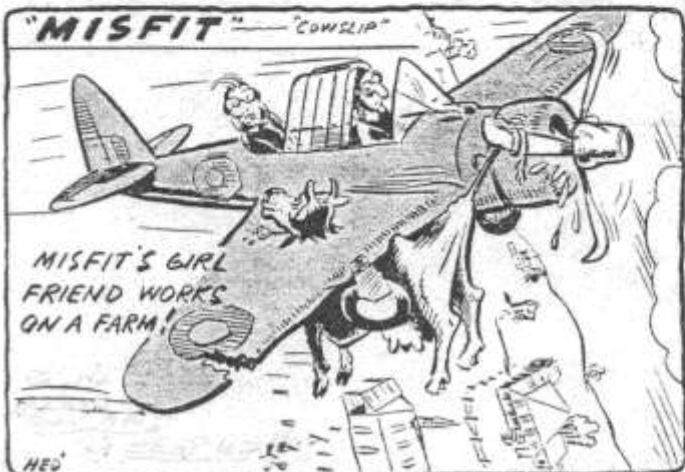
this project. This was the experience at Richmond where a strong volunteer group was formed.

The telephone No's are as follows :-
9256 1479 -SQDLDR Gary Westley
CO RAAF Museum.

9256 1279 -Mr. David Gardner.
Chief Curator

9256 1300 -PO Brad Owen
Volunteer Coordinator.

No experience is required to assist in making this inventory, but if you have experience in woodwork such as cabinet making, or as an aircraft fitter (airframe or engine) please advise for future reference.



"CYCLONE TRACY"

In December 1974, DARWIN was flattened by a particularly severe Tropical Cyclone named "TRACY". The city was devastated. Thousands of residents had lost all their possessions and were now homeless. Darwin could no longer support these people and the Australian Government decided to evacuate the area. Over the following few days a massive airlift transported all who couldn't contribute to the rebuilding of this once proud city, South.

The dramatic airlift, carried out by Civil and Military aircraft was Australia's largest, in War or Peace. I took part in two of those flights.

My airline had recently added another new Boeing 727-200 to the fleet. VH-RMX, with a special volunteer crew was one of many aircraft put at the disposal of the Rescue Co-ordinators. My brief was to use the aircraft and take the unfortunate people from Darwin where ever needed. With my overnight bag, I signed on in Brisbane.

Special Flight 7762 was no ordinary flight subject to A.N.O's but an Emergency Flt. The outbound flight carried only a few special passengers. Fuel for any onward flight was the prime consideration. Little fuel was available in Darwin. For one thing there was no power to pump from the underground storage tanks. Nobody was really surprised when I asked that RMX be fuelled to the limit. The flight plan showed 60'000 lbs, just over 9,000 gallons giving an endurance of 333 minutes. The special passengers comprised Salvation Army Officers and some Doctors who had answered the call. Freight included compressors, first aid items, clothing, fresh fruit & vegetables and several cartons of a well known beer, donated by the Ansett staff who thought that by the end of the day their mates in Darwin would enjoy a drink. How right they were.

At a special briefing before departure I was told that there were no Radio Nav. aids operating in Darwin. All homing and hazard beacons were likewise U/S. Because there was no communication facility at Darwin, the area from 150 miles north of Mt. Isa to Darwin had been declared uncontrolled. Special authorisation was required for any flight to Darwin from the Dept. of Transport Rescue & Co-ordination Centre, Adelaide. All aircraft so authorised MUST TRACK OVER TINDAL and then fly a direct track to Darwin. The final NOTAM (Notice to Airmen) read..... Aircrews exercise extreme caution as debris strewn all over airfield in close proximity to taxiways and runways.

It was 0413Z (13 mins after 2) on a hot summer afternoon when we set course for what was left of Darwin. Forecast enroute weather was fair... Brisbane to Mt. Isa, rain areas with occasional thunderstorms, tops to 40,000 feet. Moderate icing and severe turbulence associated with "C.B's". From Mt. Isa to Darwin, much the same with the addition of more middle and upper level cloud that would obscure the thunderheads. The remains of Tracy. Darwin Terminal forecast was more promising. Still plenty of cloud about, rain showers, etc., but a good cloud base to be expected. The worst of the weather had moved south, as we were to discover near Tindal.

Whilst at altitude we could communicate with Mt. Isa but once on descent we were out of touch. As there were no Nav aids we had to rely on visual fixes but nearing Darwin these too were impossible due to the amount of cloud. From a position at 31,000 feet, 100 miles south of Tindal the remains of "Tracy" could be seen. A long row of thunderstorms, much higher than our altitude, stretched right across track. It was time for descent. The briefing stressed from Tindal to Darwin a direct track. Things were secured in the aircraft, the speed slowed to best penetration speed and down we went. Now in uncontrolled airspace the thought of collision came to mind. Heavy rain lashed the aircraft and St. Elmos fire danced about the windscreen. We bounced about and just after 5 p.m. local time we came out the bottom of a boiling cloud mass. We were at 5000'.

Daylight was still good, visibility fair but we couldn't recognise anything. We could see the coastline and the estuary but things looked very different. Finally we saw the very long wet runway over to port. On final approach it was unbelievable. Buildings, Factories, a large Caravan Park that we had come to know from previous visits had all gone.... disappeared!

We touched down at 0750Z (5.20 local) having decided not to use reverse thrust in case it dislodged sheets of twisted iron that lay beside the strip and let RMX roll through on this very long runway.

Finally we turned off and moved to a specially cleared area on the hard standing beneath what was left of the control tower..... UTTER CHAOS.

An Air Force Hercules taxied out for take off without knowing the drama that lay ahead. (See Ref. later.)

We opened the door, stairs were put in place and a rush of hot, humid air entered the aircraft. There was no Ground Power Unit available. It was difficult to recognise anything or anyone. Ansett Traffic Staff and Engineer were, like everyone else that had been in Darwin during the worst of the cyclone, dressed in the only clothes they possessed. Mainly shorts and thongs. The authority of uniform had gone.

I remember upturned aircraft, one standing on its nose, leaning against all that remained of a hangar. Another small aircraft caught up against the wing and fuselage of a D.C.A. F27 as though it had sort shelter from the larger aircraft. An RAAF DC3 had been plucked from its hangar and lobbed on its back more than a $\frac{1}{2}$ mile away. Not one light aircraft was intact. Towards the remains of the terminal building, thousands of homeless men, women and children stood clutching their only belongings, shocked and stunned by the magnitude of it all.

THESE PEOPLE HAD BEEN THROUGH HELL. There was no rational thinking. No one could tell me where RMX was to proceed. Adelaide was suggested, then someone else thought Sydney. We didn't care but no final decision was forthcoming. Finally when a third gent said to me, "Where is your aircraft bound, Skip?" I replied, "Brisbane." Things straight away became orderly and organised. I had stopped the indecision. My reason for saying Brisbane was that all crew members came from there and I realised that RMX could then make a 2nd trip to Darwin.

The people in Darwin, looked on us as a link with another world. Only hours before they had been fighting for their lives and included in these folk were the resident airline staff who had suffered personal tragedy with homes destroyed and all belongings lost forever. Rational decisions were beyond them. These homeless Australians with few possessions were now being told to board aircraft to leave Darwin, the city they called home.

I picked my way through the debris to what remained of the terminal building. Like the airport it was wrecked. There were no phones, no radio, no telex, just no link with the outside world. No one was in the terminal. Loose sheets of roofing iron still sounded a warning. The floor was wet and covered with broken glass, fibro and iron and many, many soaked documents. A huge number of people were gathered outside however and moving among them were the hostesses from our flight and the Salvation Army passengers we had carried, already handing out food and clothing. I remember thinking how smart our Hosties looked... for all other females were in tatters.

The tower came back to operation with a limited range of 30 miles. A loud hailer was used to direct people with relatives or friends in Cairns, Townsville Brisbane Etc., to join a long queue that was already forming near RMX. Those, and there were many, needing Hospital treatment and suffering injuries were given priority. Passengers were literally LABELLED for their destination by attaching luggage labels to their wrists. This was a flight where no ticket was required. The whole exercise was to get as many as possible out of Darwin as quickly as possible for there was little food and no drinking water in the area. Disease could break out at any minute.

I hated asking the hostesses to leave those needy people and the good work the girls were doing but once boarding commenced they would be needed at the aircraft. By the time I walked back to RMX to carry out external checks, there was a queue from the aircraft back to the terminal. There was no fuss or bother just an orderly line shuffling toward the forward steps.

Somehow we had to arrive at a take off weight. How many could we safely carry? RMX was only equipped with seating for 152 persons. There would be no freight, and little baggage, the total possessions of those on board. Boarding commenced. A traffic officer counted as they entered. So many went in I thought they must have been going out the rear stairs. When the count reached 284 we had to call a halt. The cabin was just full of people. It was not according to the book but books don't allow for these emergencies. We were aware of the risks. Lots of people would have to sit on the floor with no restraint equipment, also there would be insufficient oxygen masks in the unlikely event of a cabin depressurisation, but the urgency of the flight outweighed all the risks. We finally arrived at a weight and computed our take off speeds. Fortunately Darwin had one of the longest runways in Australia, 3352 meters, or over 11,000 feet in length. We used up most of it during our take off run.

Due to the shortage of usable fuel in Darwin and the fact that Storms were forecast for our arrival Brisbane I told the tower that we would not start engines until we were sure of an immediate take off. The 284 passengers onboard, some seated cross legged in the aisle, others tucked in between the seats whilst others spilled over into the flight deck area were told that these same positions had to be taken up any time the seat belt sign was on.

Tower gave us permission to start, fingers crossed, for this was no ordinary start. There was no ground power unit so we had to start one engine with the aircraft APU and then cross bleed to start the others. A sigh of relief as all 3 stabilised. We were then able to provide cooler air to the cabin which must have been stifling with all those people.

We taxied via the parallel taxiway towards the end of the long runway 29 then suddenly we were told that the Hercules we had seen take off on our arrival, had declared an emergency and was returning to Darwin. Ofcourse that aircraft now had priority. The "Herc" reported that during his climb out he had encountered severe turbulence and

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had been struck by lightning. Unrestrained passengers had been thrown about the cabin, some receiving serious injuries. To add to the problem the aircraft was now flying on 3 engines. We carried on with our pre take off checks and flaps were lowered to the take off position, then the tower announced that a fire truck would overtake us on the starboard side. We quickly retracted the flaps as a fire tender went whizzing under the wing. In his haste the driver skidded and when last observed was heading towards a drain beside the taxiway.

After about a ten minute delay the Hercules landed safely. In view of his storm encounter I decided that initially we would head towards Port Moresby, at least till we gained some altitude and had time to analyse the weather. Once clear of the storm centre we would turn out over the Gulf and finally regain track to Mt. Isa.

MAX POWER... BRAKES RELEASED... We were rolling. By the time the F/O called V1 we were well down this long runway. After what seemed an eternity RMX came unstuck. The senior hostess came in to tell me that a large number on board wanted to use the toilets. There had been none available at Darwin. I had to say "Not now". We didn't want a repeat of the Hercules incident.

As we slowly gained height the outside visibility improved. There was still just enough daylight to pick out the towering cumulus clouds and together with aircraft radar we picked our way up through cloud valleys. At 15,000 feet the Seat Belt sign was turned off. The toilets now became the focus of attention. Finding a nice gap in the clouds to starboard we turned and were able to set course for Mt. Isa. At 28,000 feet RMX was struggling so we levelled off. We would climb higher if necessary as the weight decreased as fuel was burnt. Soon the lightning and slight turbulence was behind. These passengers were finally free of Tracy.

The flight back was busy for all. Searching for the smoothest flight path for our precious load and answering the many questions relayed from Brisbane. Did we have any stretcher cases on board? How many people needed hospitalisation? What was the total number of people on board? The hostesses moved about the cluttered cabin seeking answers. Negative to stretcher cases. 8 passengers needed to go immediately to hospital on our arrival. A further 12 would require the services of a Doctor. The answer to the question How many on board brought silence... then, "Say again sir". We repeated Total on board... 296. 284 passengers plus 12 crew... ON A 152 SEAT AIRCRAFT.

As the airconditioned air took over and the cabin lights were dimmed most of these exhausted folk slept for the first time since that terrible ordeal. Approaching Brisbane lightning was observed but the busy controllers kept RMX in smooth air all the way.

So ended one of my most memorable flights. I was proud to have been a very small part of this huge undertaking. In the days to follow things became more organised. Major General Alan Stratten was in Darwin organising this huge operation. The following day I again carried Evacuees from Darwin and in that 24 hours the shock was wearing off. People now wanted to talk about their experiences where as before they just sat stunned. Children once again enjoyed visiting the flight deck whilst parents sat chatting to the friendly hostesses. Only time would heal the memories of that dreadful night in Darwin. The night that more than 50 people died and the once proud city was razed.

The following telegram was sent to Ansett Airlines of Australia:-

" ON BEHALF OF THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT AND MYSELF WOULD YOU PLEASE CONVEY TO YOUR AIRCREWS AND GROUND STAFF INVOLVED IN THE EVACUATION OF DARWIN, OUR DEEPEST APPRECIATION OF THEIR WONDERFUL CONTRIBUTION, THEIR SELFLESS DEDICATION TO THIS GREAT TASK IS IN THE FINEST TRADITION OF AUSTRALIAN AIR TRANSPORT AND MERITS THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE PRAISE."

Signed. C.K. Jones. (Minister for Transport.)

Editors Note We are indebted to Ray Lackey, whose vivid memories of an epic flight out of Darwin, in December 1974, are recorded here. Ray is an early member of this Association joining on 26/8/92.

In WW2 Ray as a young FLTLT Pilot was attached to 464 Attack Squadron (RAAF), flying Mosquitoes in the 1944/1945 skies over Europe.

R. Lackey

(RETIRED CAPTAIN)

EX 464 SQDN.

His flying career continued in Civvie Street for 35 years, retiring as a Captain from Ansett Airlines with the M.A.P. (Master Air Pilot), this indeed is a topical story for our December Bulletin, as readers will remember "Cyclone Tracy" overtook Darwin on Christmas day 1974.

THE BOSTON RESTORATION

A MOST FITTING MEMORIAL TO FLTLT W.E. NEWTON VC (RAAF)

After being shot down by the Japanese in 1943 and languishing in a swamp for 39 years, a WW2 Boston bomber now has a new home at the RAAF Museum, at Point Cook, Victoria.

The Boston, "J" for Jessica, has been brought back to life after a 15 year process at RAAF Base, Amberley. Recovered from a swamp on Goodenough Island in Papua New Guinea in 1982, it was lovingly restored by a group of volunteers and members of No.23 Squadron at Amberly.

Now with the help of the Army's 26 Tpt Sqn; which successfully transported it to Point Cook, the aircraft becomes part of the growing collection maintained by the the RAAF Museum.

Operated by the RAAF's No.2 Squadron in PNG, Jessica was severely damaged by Japanese anti-aircraft fire over Goodenough Island. The pilot, Flying Officer Harry Rowell was injured in the landing but he and the gunner, Sgt Doug Lyons, got out, waded across the swamp and were rescued.

The Commanding Officer of the RAAF Museum, SQDLLD Gary Westley said the Boston held a special place in Australian history, as the only RAAF

Victoria Cross winner from the Pacific War Zone was FLTLT Bill Newton who flew Boston aircraft with No.22 Sqn.

He flew more than 50 missions with No.22 Squadron and was shot down in a repeated attack over Salamaua in March 1943. He and one of the crew survived but were captured and executed by the Japanese.

SQDLLD Westley said the Air Force operated 67 of the Aircraft with No. 22 Squadron in New Guinea during the war. "it was a very effective aircraft and won a good reputation for its abilities in attacking enemy shipping and ground-based units"

During the restoration process several aircraft were recovered to have enough parts to produce two Museum quality Boston aircraft.

Another Boston operated by the USA in PNG, has also been restored and will be returned to PNG Government as part of a bicentennial deal which allowed the RAAF to gain parts needed for the restoration work.

FLIGHT LIEUTENANT W.E. NEWTON

THE ONLY RAAF winner of the Victoria Cross in the Pacific, William Ellis Newton was born at St Kilda on 8 June 1919 and educated to Intermediate Certificate level at Melbourne Grammar School. Tall and powerfully built, Bill Newton was a fine sportsman who played cricket for the Victorian Second XI. His schoolmasters regarded him as a future community leader.

Enlisting on the outbreak of the war with Germany, Newton completed a tour as a flying instructor before going on operations in New Guinea in May 1942, flying Boston light bombers with No. 22 Squadron.

Throughout his fifty-two operational sorties, ninety per cent of which were flown through anti-aircraft fire, Newton consistently displayed great courage and a remarkable determination to inflict the utmost damage on the enemy. Disdaining evasive tactics even when under heavy fire, he always 'went straight at his objective' to try to achieve maximum accuracy with his weapons.

He carried out many daring machine gun attacks on enemy positions, flying low through intense and sustained point-blank-range anti-aircraft fire to ensure 'devastating accuracy'. On one such occasion his aircraft's starboard engine failed over the target but Newton completed the attack and then flew 260 kilometres to a safe airfield.

His exploits earned him the squadron nickname of 'The Firebug'—wherever he flew, he left a trail of fire.

While leading an attack against a target near Salamaua on 16 March 1943, Newton dived through intense and accurate shell fire. Although his aircraft was hit repeatedly, he held his course and bombed the target from low level, destroying many buildings and supply dumps, including two 180,000-litre fuel installations.

Newton's aircraft was severely damaged, its fuselage and wings torn, engines hit, fuel tanks pierced and one tyre punctured, but he managed to nurse the machine back to home base and land successfully.

Despite that harrowing experience, two days later Newton returned to the same locality for another strike. This time his target was a single building, which he attacked through a barrage of accurate fire.

At the instant Newton's bombs scored a direct hit on the building, his aircraft burst into flames. With great skill he brought the blazing machine down in the sea near the target. Two of the three crew members were seen by squadron colleagues to escape from the Boston and swim ashore.

For his extraordinary fearlessness, courageous leadership and successful operations against the enemy under the most hazardous circumstances, Newton was awarded the VC. Tragically the award was posthumous for, although Newton had been one of the two men to survive the crash landing, he had been captured and beheaded by the Japanese eleven days later on 29 March.

The details of Newton's murder were revealed in a captured Japanese diary and deeply shocked Australia when newspapers reported the atrocity.

The eyewitness account of Newton's death makes deeply emotional reading, the Australian's courage and dignity affecting even his executioners. He was twenty-three years old.

NOTICES ETC.

THE SANDGATE MEMORIAL.

For the information of Queensland members.

Keith Reuter, a member since 1993 advises that a Memorial Garden will be laid out and an engraved stone erected at the Wartime entry to Sandgate RAAF Station.

This Station is now the site of the Eventide Elderly Peoples Home, and this memorial will record the Wartime existence of this RAAF Station and honour and remember our airmen and women who served during WW2.

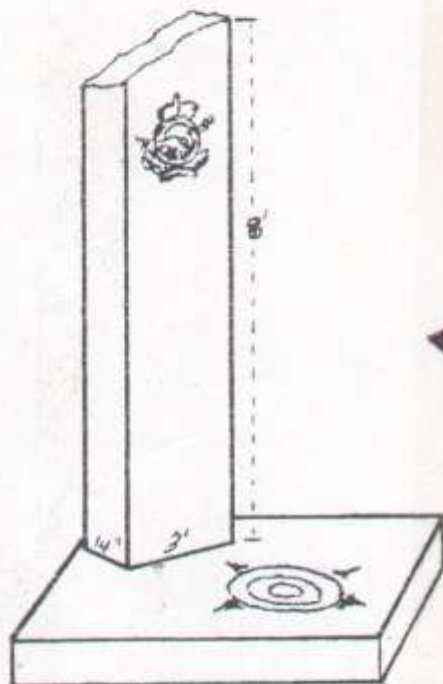
The Committee is currently raising finance for this cause, with a target of \$15000, of which \$4000 has already been raised. Application for Government grant has been made.

For further information members should contact L. Stinson, Chairman of the Sandgate RAAF Station Memorial, PO Box 346, Q'land 4017.

The form of the Memorial has been determined.

It is to be constructed of polished black granite. The RAAF crest, (with the wartime Georgian crown) will be engraved on the face of an 8 feet high stone, approximately 3 feet by 14 inches. This will be mounted on a black granite base, approximately 4 feet by 4 feet. On this base will be engraved three concentric rings signifying the RAAF roundel.

The four cardinal points of the compass will be engraved at the outer circle. This is to signify the importance of the compass in RAAF operations. It is also to symbolise the personnel that came to and departed from Sandgate, from and to all points of the compass.



On the face of the upright stone will be engraved the words:

Lest We Forget

Artists impression of the original concept. Final design and construction is by T Wrafter & Son P/L Nudgee.

Engraved on the rear of this stone will be:

**ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR
FORCE STATION SANDGATE
World War II, 1939-45.**

- VALE -

P.R. (Jack) McDaniel
20/11/17-20/6/98

Jack was a valued member of this Association and his passing is recorded sadly.

He served as a pilot on No. 1 Mosquito Attack Squadron RAAF, during the Borneo Campaign.

Our expressions of Sympathy and Condolences are extended to Sonia, family and close friends.

Playing Chicken

This is reportedly a true story, as heard on "Late Late Show with Tom Snyder":

Scientists at NASA have developed a gun, whose purpose it is to launch dead chickens. It is used to shoot a dead chicken at the windshields of airline jets, military jets, and the space shuttle, at that vehicle's maximum travelling velocity. The idea being, that it will simulate the frequent incidents of collisions with airborne fowl, and therefore determine if the windshields are strong enough.

British engineers, upon hearing of the gun, were eager to test the gun out on the windshield of their new high speed trains.

However, upon the firing of the gun, the engineers watched in shock as the chicken shattered the windshield, smashed through the control console, snapped the engineer's backrest in two, and embedded itself in the back wall of the cabin. Horrified, the engineers sent NASA the results of the experiment, along with the designs of the windshield, and asked the NASA scientists for any suggestions.

The NASA scientists sent back a one sentence response: "Thaw the chicken."

Communication is a tough thing to do!

Contributed by Probus Club of Tea Tree Gully, S.A.

The final flight in the airlift of A52-600 from Richmond to Point Cook.



Fuselage of A52-600
stowed in the Hercules.

Ron Vassie
Our NSW Representative.

This features happenings on the Squadron including VP day celebration on 15/8/45, the start of the detachment to Borneo on 4/8/45 which completed 11 operations in 10 days in 2 Mosquitoes, A52-600 & A52-604 & recorded the sad death of SQDLDR Jim Gillespie, following a crash on take off on 3/8/45. (this log arrived mysteriously on my desk !!! *Ed.*)

R.A.F. Form 540

See instructions for use of this form in K.R. and A.C.I. para. 214, and War Manual, Pt. II, chapter XX, and note in K.A.F. Pocket Book.

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

Page No. 59.

of (Unit or Formation) No. 87 (P.R.) Squadron.

No. of pages used for day -

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices																		
COOMALLIE	AUGUST, 1945.		<p><u>STRENGTH.</u></p> <p>As at 31st. AUGUST, 1945.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><u>OFFICERS</u></td> <td>-</td> <td>30</td> <td>2 attached.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><u>AIRMEN</u></td> <td>-</td> <td>213</td> <td>1 "</td> </tr> <tr> <td><u>TOTAL</u></td> <td></td> <td>243</td> <td>3 " <u>GRAND TOTAL: 246.</u></td> </tr> </table> <p><u>POSTINGS.</u></p> <p><u>OUTWARDS.</u></p> <p>S/Ldr. H.A. GALEE (499) - G.D. Pilot and his Navigator P/O. L.C. LOBB (408965) departed for 1 F.D. on 3rd. AUGUST, 1945. S/Ldr. GALEE having handed over command of the Squadron to S/Ldr. L.W. LAW (144) - G.D. Pilot.</p> <p>F/Lt. G. LUNDBERG (404607) - G.D. Pilot departed for 3 F.D. on 27/8/45.</p> <p>P/O. J.E. KERCHER (60832) - G.D. Navigator "W" departed for 2 F.D. on 27/8/45.</p> <p>F/Lt. R.E. TILBURY (408335) - G.D. Pilot departed for 2 F.D. on 22/8/45.</p> <p>P/O. D.E. KING (431361) - G.D. Navigator "W" Departed for 1 F.D. on 27/8/45.</p> <p><u>INWARDS.</u></p> <p>425705, W/O. MACLEOD, J.A. - Navigator "W" (Commanding Officer's Navigator) arrived ex. 2 R.P.F. on 6/8/45.</p> <p>F/Lt. W. LAITLAND (407797) - G.D. Pilot arrived ex. 2 R.P.F. on 6/8/45.</p> <p>No. 435574, P/Sgt. LONNY, C. - Navigator "W" arrived ex. 2 R.P.F. on 6/8/45.</p> <p>P/O. G.D. POWELL (5834) - G.D. Nav. B. W. arrived ex. 12 A.R.D. on 10/8/45 for Signals Duties.</p> <p>F/Lt. V.D. EPHGRAVE (2878) - G.D. Pilot arrived ex. 2 R.P.F. on 9/8/45.</p> <p>P/O. W. REEDY (427549) - G.D. Navigator "W" arrived ex. 2 R.P.F. on 9/8/45.</p> <p>P/O. P. LEFKEVER (404738) - G.D. Navigator B. arrived ex. North Western Area Headquarters for Intelligence Officers Duties.</p> <p>F/Lt. A.P. DOBSON (406615) - G.D. Intel. arrived ex. E.C. North Western Area for Intelligence Officers Duties.</p> <p>F/Lt. G.C. KAY (407533) - G.D. Pilot arrived ex. 2 R.P.F. on 23/8/45.</p> <p>W/O. W.L. RALPH No. 31098, Navigator B.W. arrived ex. 2 R.P.F. on 23/8/45.</p> <p><u>PROMOTIONS.</u></p> <p>I/O. J.G. GIBBONS (49128) - G.D. Navigator "W" was promoted to Flying Officer w.e.f. 9/6/45.</p> <p><u>FLYING TIMES.</u></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Losquito</td> <td>194 hours, 50 minutes.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wireway</td> <td>41 " 25 minutes.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><u>TOTAL</u></td> <td>236 " 15 "</td> </tr> </table>	<u>OFFICERS</u>	-	30	2 attached.	<u>AIRMEN</u>	-	213	1 "	<u>TOTAL</u>		243	3 " <u>GRAND TOTAL: 246.</u>	Losquito	194 hours, 50 minutes.	Wireway	41 " 25 minutes.	<u>TOTAL</u>	236 " 15 "	
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COOMALLIE	AUGUST, 1945.	<p><u>VISITS AND INSPECTIONS.</u> The Air Officer Commanding, North Western Area, Air Commodore A.I. CHARLESWORTH, A.F.C., the S.O.A., Group Captain F. HEADLAM and the Staff Officer Operations, S/Ldr. R.X. RECHNER, D.F.C., visited the Squadron on "V.P." Day - 15th. AUGUST, 1945.</p> <p><u>OPERATIONS.</u></p> <p>For almost six years we have all been awaiting the month in which we can record the victorious end of the war, and so for No. 87 (P.R.) Squadron, the 15th. AUGUST, 1945 - the day the complete surrender was announced, was a day of general thanksgiving and no less celebrated than on any other active Squadron on the R.A.A.F.</p> <p>Operations for the half month prior to surrender had shown a tendency to slacken off and it is interesting to record that one of our crews actually started out on an operation after the surrender had been announced over the wireless. This crew was recalled to base before completing the sortie.</p> <p>From the 1st. to the 15th. AUGUST, 1945, 11 sorties in all were ordered but two were cancelled. The one mentioned above and another which was cancelled before take-off when one of our aircraft became unserviceable at TRUSCOTT Airstrip.</p> <p>Of the nine sorties undertaken, 4 were 100% successful, 3 were partially abortive due to cloud obscuring some of the targets and 2 were totally abortive through mechanical defects. F/Lt. EPHGRAVE returned from TILOR when his instruments became unserviceable and F/Lt. HENRY in A52-609 returned from SOELAWA with fuel trouble. Both aircraft reached home safely.</p> <p>Among the targets for the month were S.E. CILKES, FLORES, SOELAWA, SOELBA and TILOR. No Ack Ack was encountered and the only sightings were native craft and one S.D. anchored in BILA BAY.</p> <p>It is saddening to know that this month, bringing us it does the final victory, should also include our first Squadron Casualty for some time. Our Flight Commander, Squadron Leader JIM GILLESPIE died on 5th. AUGUST, 1945 at No. 1 Medical Receiving Station from the burns sustained when his aircraft A52-605 crashed on take-off on the morning of 3rd. AUGUST, 1945. The Navigator P/O. FRANK HAYLES was admitted to No. 1 M.R.S. suffering from burns but is now out of danger and shortly due for release. S/Ldr. GILLESPIE was buried at the ADENLAIDE RIVER WAR CEMETERY on 6th. AUGUST, 1945.</p> <p>At the time of the crash, S/Ldr. GILLESPIE was taking off on a detachment to LABUAY ISLAND, North West BORNEO. F/Lt. LUNDBERG and P/O. KERCHER, P/O. DAVIES and P/O. REYNOLDS took off from COOMALLIE the following morning, 4th. AUGUST for LAHAN via MOHATAI in Mosquito Aircraft A52-600 and A52-604. Both arrived without incident and operated with the First Tactical Air Force, R.A.A.F. until returning to base on 25th. AUGUST, 1945.</p>	
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Our grateful acknowledgements to "GUIDE LINE PUBLICATIONS UK" and DAVID HOWLEY, Publishers and Artist for their consent to us to feature excerpts from the publication "SCALE AIRCRAFT MODELLING" in our Bulletin.

This is one of the Mosquitos on the strength of No.3 Civilian Anti-Aircraft Co-operation Unit, during RS 712's sojourn on that Unit post WW2.



Mosquito TT.35 VP181/54 of No.3 CAACU, Exeter, mid-1960s. Painted aluminium upper surfaces with eight inch Dayglo stripes on wings and fuselage. Undersides trainer yellow with black stripes. Codes and serials in black, with post-war insignia in six positions.

The Association gratefully acknowledges the interest of Australian Paper and their tangible assistance in the production of this Bulletin.

The Mosquito Aircraft Association of Australia

IF UNDELIVERABLE RETURN TO
4/18 GORDON STREET,
TRARALGON, VIC: 3844

SURFACE
MAIL
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AUSTRALIA

