

## 87 Squadron Reactivation

Congratulations and best wishes to all personnel of the new No. 87 Squadron, Royal Australian Air Force! The Squadron was officially re-commissioned on 1 July 2006, and the occasion celebrated in style on Monday evening, 3 July 2006.

At an all ranks function in the Officers Mess, RAAF Edinburgh, the ceremony was opened by Commanding Officer of the 'new' 87 Squadron, Wing Commander Rick Keir AM. He was followed by Air Commander Australia, Air Vice-Marshal John Quaife AM, whose speech was succinct and welcoming. Squadron Leader (Chaplain) Patrick Woods' address was moving, as was the blessing of the two 87 Squadron badges:

"We consecrate these Squadron Badges – the old and the new – which are symbols of No 87 Squadron of the Royal Australian Air Force. We ask your Blessing on its mission and its roles, and in recognition of those who have gone before us, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit."

This was one of the links forged between the old and the new Squadrons on the day. The assembly of historical documents, photos, video and other memorabilia in the annex to the ante room was great; (where did that movie come from? perhaps we shouldn't ask!). Having a chance to talk with and listen to the olds and bolds was a great experience too. Catching up with David Vincent (author of 'Mosquito Monograph'), listening to Kym Bonython and many others was a privilege.



Perhaps **the** highlight of the evening was the superb spirit in which it all happened. The various speeches helped this along, none more so than Air Vice-Marshal (Ret'd) 'Sam' Jordan's! The Mosquito Aircraft Association of Australia was represented by our Patron, 'Sam' Jordan, President Alan Middleton and wife Shirley, Vice President Graeme Coates and committee member Terry Burke.

Since the re-raising, four members of No 87 Squadron have made a courtesy visit (at the invitation of Richard Luxton, owner of Coomalie Farm) to one of 87 Squadron's former bases at Coomalie Creek, N.T. (see 'Mailbag' this issue). The links are pretty well complete.



## The President's Log—by Alan Middleton OAM



MAAA President's Log August 2006.

Under the Constitution of our Association, our Objects are to provide fellowship and develop acquaintances among persons having a common interest in the DH98 Mosquito Aircraft in general, including the provision of a support group to the team involved in the restoration of A52-600 in particular, and also, to advance and preserve the memory of those persons who designed, produced, flew and serviced the DH 98 Mosquito.

The Mosquito was probably the most versatile of all aircraft used by the RAAF, the RAF, other Allied Air Forces and The Royal Navy units during 1944-45 and beyond, and was supplied to more than 140 Squadrons and other units, including three Squadrons of the RAAF. It was employed for almost every purpose possible for an aircraft, from low level attack to high level photo reconnaissance and everything between, both day and night.

Approximately 7700 were produced, including 212 in Australia, with variations of type according to the role they were to play.

This gives our Association a very wide field of operation. Unfortunately, our active Members are very few and for them to cover all aspects is a daunting task.

Our Editors and story writers, Bob Stevens and Terry Burke, are always keen to receive articles, memoirs and personal histories and anecdotes of "Mosquito Life", so I ask for contributions from Members to be sent to Bob or Terry.

An article from Syd Goddard, formerly a Pilot with No 1 Sqdn. Is included in this issue and I am sure there are other stories which would also be of great interest to all.

The history of the Mosquito is in the minds of those of you who lived and worked with them and we would be privileged for you to allow us to share your memoirs.

As previously reported, No 87 Squadron was to be re-formed and this occurred as from 1 July 2006. Wing Commander Rick Keir AM has been appointed Commanding Officer and on 3 July 2006 an appropriate ceremony was conducted at RAAF Edinburgh, followed by dinner in the Officers Mess for all personnel. Several former Members of 87 were invited, those able to attend being our Patron AVM (Retd) Sam Jordan AO, SQNLDR Kym Bonython AC DFC AFC, SQNLDR Ted McKenzie DFC, FLTLT Laddie Hindley, and SQNLDR Harry Farmer.

Ted McKenzie, and Laddie Hindley are former CO's and Kym Bonython is a former Acting CO.

David Vincent, author of

"Mosquito Monograph" and Members of our Association, Terry Burke, Graeme Coates and my wife and I were also present.

The ceremony and the dinner were very moving and of historical significance as they brought together the past and the future. I am certain 87 has an exciting future just the same as it had in the past. We all wish Rick and his enthusiastic team every good fortune.

I would also like to pass congratulations on to the RAAF Museum's Brett Clowes who has recently been promoted to Assistant Technical Curator leaving his Restoration Manager's job open for a new comer.

Brett has provided the MAAA volunteers with guidance during the restoration of A52-600 and also an enormous insight into restoration of aircraft in general.

Regards,  
Alan Middleton



Every **story** has three sides to it, yours, mine and the facts - Foster Meharny Russell

# Restoration News by TRB

In the Restoration hangar, work continues on the mock-up of wing spars and ribs for A52-600, in the area of the left main landing gear attachment points. The strip-down, refurbishment and re-assembly of the MLG itself, plus a survey of the wing (s), is also well under way.

The mock-up has been hoisted into position on its stand; some great work has been done here by the two full time Friends of the RAAF Museum volunteers, Geoff Matthews and Ron Gretton.

In a short aside, Ron was presented with Life Membership of the Friends. He joins Geoff Mathews, previously awarded a Life Membership, and was presented with this richly deserved award by none other than Chief of Air Force, Air Marshal Geoff Shepherd AM, at the Friends Annual Dinner.

I'm sure all MAAA members will join in congratulating Ron and Geoff not only on their awards, but on their outstanding contributions to Restoration and other projects around the Museum which have continued over many years.

In a team which has included Aussie Mossie members Bob Stevens, Don Taylor, Noel Penny, Graeme Coates, Pat Dulhunty, David Devenish, Terry Burke and Alan Middleton among

others, Arthur Winton has worked as a hands-on overseer in refurbishing main landing gear components. Most of the left side sub-assemblies have had a full restoration, and the separate parts are now looking pretty good in their new paint. Geoff Matthews and Ron Gretton have begun re-assembling them in the mock-up, and we should see a full left side main undercarriage assembly complete in its stand before too long.

Senior Technical Curator of the Museum David Jones moved the cut-off sections of wing from storage into the Paint Shop, where our members spent some time removing dust, bird droppings and other unsavoury accumulations. MAAA members have also helped photograph the wing sections in detail, and remove and catalogue various metal brackets prior to their restoration.

While the original Mosquito wing was built in one piece, the RAAF Museum has three sections of a single wing. And no, that doesn't make us lucky. At some stage after being sold by the RAAF, A52-600's wing was cut just outside the fuselage on both sides, and none too gently either. The short centre section remained with the fuselage (which had some shelter), while the two outer sections stayed exposed to



the elements. They present a bit of a challenge, as you can see in the photo.

Among the odds and ends category, mention must be made of the rust stripping results from the molasses tank. This turgid, evil looking and smelling brew has produced some amazing transformations of rusted steel components. We should have some surprising 'before and after' photos of the canopy frame (among other items) by next issue.



TRB inspecting the mockup wing section and some of the MLG in its restoration stand.



A successful completion to the 'bird' removal from the wing.

Life is an endurance test, so why be ashamed of your age? - P.K. Shaw

# Work Safety by Pat Dulhunty

MAAA member Pat Dulhunty had a extremely serious accident at work a couple of years ago and has put this article together to warn against complacency where machinery is concerned and to also pass on his thanks to everyone who helped him through his ordeal.  
There is a lesson here for everyone !

On the 26th of May 2004 I kissed my wife Carmel goodbye and off to work I went, just the same as I had done for almost the past 29 years.

Just another day at work...

That day I could have died—I was injured at work when my right arm became entangled around a shaft I was polishing in a lathe with a piece of emery paper. As well as a shattered forearm and humerus (the bone at the top of the arm), I also received a head injury when I was pulled into the lathe, with my head striking the chuck which, thankfully rendered me unconscious.

Had it not been for the quick action of a nearby work-mate, Vince Pezzina, the outcome may have been a lot worse. Vince is a boilermaker and has never used a lathe in his life but still managed to activate the emergency stop, for which my family and I are extremely grateful.

Several other workmates came to my aid and untangled me from the lathe and shaft and laid me down, the ambulance duly arrived and I was taken to Melbourne's Alfred Hospital where I spent about 12 hours in surgery.

I'm told by several people that I was reasonably coherent with the paramedics at work answering their questions as to who I was and what day it was. I'm also told that at the Alfred I told them where my wife, Carmel would be if she wasn't at home.

I have no memory of any of this. My only memory of the day is leaving

home that morning about 05.50 and some 2.5 hours before the accident—the Doctors tell me this is because of the head injury. Anyway it's something that I'm glad I have no memory of.

So what happened? It must have been a cold morning as I had my 'bluey' jacket on, which I only wear on cold days. I also had rigger's gloves on, which I normally do not wear on the lathe. I can only presume that I put them on due to the cold. These items of clothing is what



Pat back volunteering his time at Point Cook after an absence of a year or more.

the emery paper caught on, pulling me into the lathe.

Perhaps I should mention here that I'm also a boilermaker, and although I work as a fitter welder, I've never had any training on a lathe, it's just something I've learned to do over the years I've been at Liquip.

I have always considered myself a very careful worker. Several workmates said to me after I got back to work, "how come you got caught you fussy old bastard". A couple of ex-

workmates have said they couldn't believe that I had been injured at work.

At least it made us all realise how easy it is for anyone to have an accident!

The Alfred Hospital is an amazing place. How anyone managed to put my arm back together is almost beyond belief. Mr. Max Esser, my surgeon, told me later that he had four attempts at getting the forearm back to where it should have been.

I'm very glad to say he did an excellent job on it and the humerus as well. The latest doctor's report shows that I now have 80 to 85% of my original ability. (Actually he said I have 15 to 20% disability but I would prefer to look on the positive side at what I've got and keep working on the 15 to 20 %).

When they had finished with surgery I was taken up to Ward 6 West, where Claire, Chloe and a lot of other great people looked after me for the next 16 days. They had this great roof in 6 West, it kept changing colour! It went from red to green to yellow, but only at night. They also had ferns growing out of the lights! - it was just beautiful.

Then one day, just to add to the confusion, this young lady came in and said she is a dietitian. I thought, "I'm not that fat lady, I've only got a broken arm".

The young lady went on to explain that although she works at the Alfred, the boys from Point Cook had sent her up to say hello. It took me ages to work out what it was all

A yawn is a silent shout - G.K. Chesterton

## Work Safety by Pat Dulhunty—continued

about. I now know this young lady as Kath Mathews, who is the wife of Andrew whom I know from Point Cook.

The following night I decided that everything happening around me was a bit of a joke and that I was going home.

I believe they took my morphine away, the roof stayed white (day & night) and the ferns went away. I now have some idea why some people take funny stuff—it is quite fascinating.

After a couple of weeks mending in the Alfred I was taken to the Epworth Hospital in Richmond for rehabilitation - I was there for another three weeks learning to walk up and down stairs, starting physiotherapy and even going grocery shopping. (I don't do that at home!).

There is no place like home, especially after five and a half weeks in hospitals.

I consider my self to be extremely lucky, I could have been killed on that fateful day.

At first it was physiotherapy six long days a week, then it changed to hand therapy for three days and

physio for the other three. Hand therapy is where you find out what pain is all about !!! It is incredible what pain those young ladies can inflict. I very smartly learnt to go to the boy's room before each bout of hand therapy.

But as they say, "no pain—no gain". I can assure you, it was worth every bit.

The effect of my accident on my family was very, very unfair. I had the accident, not them!

For the first time in 40 years I had to be driven everywhere or have Carmel travel with me on trains to doctors visits. And that's not to mention the shock of the 26th !

That split second of lack of thought has caused me and others considerable pain and suffering for the past two years. I am now back at work and welding at Point Cook, but still have a bit more recovery time ahead of me.

You don't get through a serious accident without family and friends, the visits, cards and flowers that amassed, will never be forgotten.

While I was in the Epworth Hospital,

Alan and Shirley Middleton, Bob Stevens, David Devenish and ? presented me, in the presence of my family, with "Mission Completed", a beautiful print of A52-600 on touchdown at Coomalie Creek. It was a very uplifting moment.

There is a great sign at Point Cook—a young son says to his dad as he is going out the door on his way to work, "Work safe today Dad, you're the only dad I've got."

Another sign I've seen somewhere is, "Work smart, work safe and stay out of the hospital bed."

How true they are.

Pat Dulhunty—21st August 2006.

## MAAA Business Matters

The Annual General Meeting was held on Saturday 19th August 2006 at the Caulfield Returned and Services League building in Elsternwick, Victoria.

There were nine people present, being eight from the old Committee and Pat Dulhunty.

Nominations for this year's Committee were reviewed and as there were no other people nominating to force an election, the old Committee is now the new Committee, that is, President Alan Middleton, Vice President Graeme Coates, Secretary/Treasurer Bob Stevens with Com-

mittee people Terry Burke, Dale Castle, David Devenish, Noel Penny and Don Taylor.

The Meeting resolved to maintain the MAAA membership subscription rate for the 2006/2007 year at \$20.00, this is unaltered since the Association's inception in 1992.

The last few years the proceedings of the MAAA Annual General Meetings have been photocopied and sent to all members with the August/September Bulletin.

This exercise actually doubles the cost of production and sometimes

the cost of postage, so this year the proceedings are not included, but should you be interested in receiving a copy please drop a line or email the Secretary and he will run a copy off and send it in the mail.

The Association will be 15 years old next year. The Committee is considering some social gathering, but previous events have been poorly attended. Have *you* any ideas on what we could do to celebrate?

Drop us a line.

Anything that can become tangled around something else, will. J.D. Boatwood

## “Oboe” explained

This article was forwarded by member Mac Skinner from the “Flight” magazine dated September 6th 1945 titled “Bomber’s Radar.”

Excerpt about “Oboe” – a General Survey of the Three Primary Systems used by Bomber Command.

Mac’s covering letter says: “The article describes Oboe, which was used for bombing and target marking by 105 Squadron of 8 Group and 109 Squadron of 5 Group. As the aural signals were transmitted on a tangent to the Earth’s curved surface, it meant that the further the target was from the transmitting stations the higher the recipient aircraft would need to be. So bring on the Mosquitos at 28,00 feet. After D-Day, mobile tracking and releasing stations could be established on mainland Europe so the target could be increased.

When the radar system called Oboe was introduced, to the lay observer, it is the most amazing of all. Oboe was first used by the Pathfinders to mark Essen in March 1943, for the main bombing force.

Until this raid, Bomber Command had lost 368 aircraft in attacking Krupps, but the six Pathfinder Mosquitoes, which on Oboe, dropped 24 target indicators to mark Krupps for the main bombing force enabled no less than 83 per cent of the bombs lifted to be registered as on-target strikes.

It is of interest to record that the advent of radar made the magnificent work of the Pathfinder Force possible and, consonantly, the wonderful efficiency of our bombing attack.

When the P.F.F. Mosquitoes ground-marked a target the name given to the operation was Parramatta, and when the uncanny system of “sky marking” was used, the operation was called Wanganui. Both these types of target marking are “blind,” that is, they are done on radar, but when the Oboe system was used the word “Musical” was added to the title.

“Newhaven” was the name of another system of target marking, which included both visual and blind marking. It is unfortunate that space forbids our dilating upon these intriguing types of operation; nevertheless, the radar part of the job is in itself of more than passing interest.

Oboe makes use of two ground stations, one in Norfolk the other in Kent, the former being known as the “releasing” station and the latter as the “tracking” station.

The tracking station transmits a component of a signal beam, which runs as a segment of a circle through the target, the radius of the circle being the distance of the target from the tracking station.

The remaining component of the signal beam is supplied by the aircraft equipment. Signals are purely aural, there being no visual representation whatsoever; the pilot and navigator each receive signals through their earphones, the pilot’s being high pitched, the navigator’s low. Each had his own set of signals and consequently the bombing or marking operation is, a joint effort.

We will take the pilot’s signals first. Initially, the aircraft must be flown to a waiting point at one end of the beam, and this can be done either by orthodox navigation or by flying on a W / T beam from Britain.

Having arrived at the waiting point Oboe is switched on and the signals heard. These are the Morse T (dash) and the Morse E (dot) which, when overlapping, give a continuous note in the earphones. The overlap zone is only 17 yards wide and so it may be appreciated that pretty accurate flying is needed to keep the continuous note from breaking down into



The two revolutionary valve elements which made all the difference to transmission. The brass valve on the left is the receiver valve and the other is the magnetron.

dots or dashes, as deviations from the curved path of the beam will bring about.

Subsidiary beams, concentric with the main beam, are spaced at 5, 10 and 15-mile intervals on both sides, and as these give signals of X, Y and Z respectively over and above the dots and dashes making up the main beam, the pilot will know his position with a fair degree of accuracy if he should, by some mishap, be late in getting to the waiting point.

As the aircraft flies along the beam it transmits signals, which are received at the releasing station and consequently, as its range is steadily increasing from the releasing station, it is possible to plot, at the latter, the exact position of the aircraft at any one instant. It is, of course, absolutely essential that, once on the beam,

Nothing puzzles me more than time and space; yet nothing troubles me less - Charles Lamb

## “Oboe” explained—continued

the pilot flies his aircraft at a constant height and fixed air speed. He must on no account vary these factors.

Having for example, switched on the system at the waiting point, we will now follow the aircraft along the curved path of the beam which leads across the target - the pilot keeping the continuous high-pitched note

coming through. The navigator is sitting there listening and, at 10-minutes' flying time from the target, he hears four Morse 'A's which are followed by a continuous low note until, at 8-minutes from target, he gets four Bs.

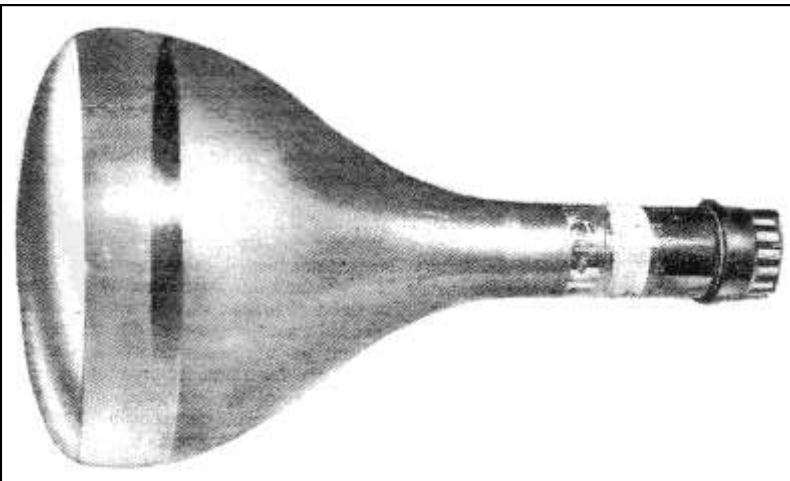
When 5-minutes away four Cs come through, again followed by the continuous

note which breaks at 3-minutes' distance to four Ds.

After this the continuous note comes through until continuous seconds away

from the target, when five pips are heard for 2½ seconds followed by a 2½-second dash. The navigator has the bomb-release button in his hand and, as the 2½-second dash ends, he presses it and the bombs have gone. Immediately the set is then switched off and the aircraft heads for home.

This however, is not the end. At the releasing station a graphic record of the run has been made automatically, and when the crew get back it is they who are told how they have performed. It is no good them saying they were bang on when they can be confronted in black and white with evidence that they were, in fact, 50 yards off.



A cathode-ray tube, on the convex silvered end of which the fluorescent trace or image is registered.

## Restoration News and Facts From Canada

Doug Grant has forwarded this article to let us know some facts about a Mosquito B-35 owned by Bob Jens being rebuilt in Vancouver Canada . The Mosquito was VR796 , later registered as CF-HML. There are four volunteers ( all ex Aircraft Engineers ) working on it with Grant looking after the electrical. There is no time frame for completion date but it will eventually fly.

### Mosquito CF-HML Facts

1. Built in by Airspeed at Christchurch in Hampshire in 1947.
2. Taken on strength by the R.A.F as VR796.
3. Stored at 22 MU Silloth in Cumbria from June 1947 till 1955.
4. Accumulated just 15.50 airframe hours.
5. Sold to *Weldy Phipps* Operation Manager for Spartan Air Services Ltd.
6. Spartan developed High Altitude Photographic Operations, which was especially important for the Distant Early Warning (DEW Line) locations built in the early fifties.
7. VR 796 was one of a batch of five aircraft flown Derby Aviation facility

at Burnaston Derbyshire in Jan 1955. The airfield was closed in 1990 and sold to a Japanese car manufacturer.

8. After maintenance CF-HML departed from Prestwick on May 2nd 1955 and flown by pilots , Peter Nock and Jock Buchanan.
9. Arrived at Uplands airport Ottawa May 3<sup>rd</sup>.
10. Delivery flight time 13.05 Hours
11. Application to go on to Canadian Register May 6<sup>th</sup> 1955, and the Conversion to survey configuration was completed on Aug 15<sup>th</sup>.
12. DOT approval given Aug 24<sup>th</sup>, C of A No 4361.
13. Type approval No 34. "*Certified for Aerial Survey Only*".

14. Carried a Pilot, Navigator, Camera Operator, and Flight Mechanic.

15. CF-HML spent 1955 in the North West Territories, Pelly Lake and Fort Smith.

16. CF-HML suffered two engine failures: May 21<sup>st</sup> 1958 ,Big end bearing failed after 308.50 hours since overhaul; Jan 12 1959, Rear propeller shaft bearing retainer 41 hours total time.

17. CF-HML was selected to fill the role of Dual control trainer. It replaced Type FB26 CF-GKK which was cancelled from the register on Feb 23 1959.

18. Spartan moved operations to Winnipeg in 1960 and CF-HML was modified for dual controls and rudder pedals with a forward hinging upper

You know more than you think you do - Dr Benjamin Spock

## Restoration News and Facts From Canada—continued

panel for cockpit access and a lower forward hatch.

19. The last C of A was issued to CF-HML in May 29<sup>th</sup> 1962 and it had a total of 515.10 flight time.

20. Its final survey was conducted in the North West Territories, Churchill Manitoba and Lakehead Ontario, now known as Thunder Bay. The crew being pilot Hal Moore, Nav Don Benkie, and camera operator James Living.

21. On Aug 26<sup>th</sup> CF-HML was grounded with severe engine vibration.

22. It was flown back to Uplands Ottawa on June 28<sup>th</sup> the following year.

23. After 312 survey flights and 616.05 flight hours, CF-HML was retired.

24. Aircraft stored at Uplands with sister ship CF-HMQ.

25. CF-HML was bought by Don Campbell an ex Spitfire pilot.

26. The aircraft was moved to Kapuskasing in Northern Ontario

27. Plans to restore aircraft using air cadets from 647 sqn. ( R.C.A.C )

28. CF-HML dismantled and moved by truck ,with the help of Syd Bake Spartan Air Services Engineer.

29. DOT became cautious on granting approval for the restoration. Main Concerns: Aircraft Stored unprotected since retirement; Condition of glue used for bonding

30. DOT did not want to discourage the project, and agreed to relocate



the registration CF-HML in Sept 1968.

31. In mid 1969 ,DOT inspection confirmed that the primary structure was sound.

32. with help from many ex Mosquito personnel, funds were donated to the project, but it was 1977 before the fuselage structurally was completed.

33. In 1979 an agreement was arranged between Don Campbell and Mike Meeker, who owned Anglo-American Cedar Products in Mission British Columbia.

34. CF-HML was moved 2772 miles from Ottawa to Mission British Columbia.

Mission is 44 miles East of Vancouver.

35. Mike Meeker had already purchased the remains of Mosquito B-35 XB-TOX formerly TA717.

This aircraft had sat outside of the Holiday Inn in Mexico City for

many years. It completely disintegrated on being salvaged.

36. CF-HML was hangered in a spacious restoration building, only a few miles for Abbotsford Airport.

37. Some of the people involved with the restoration were: Bill Merrikan who's last position was Chief Restoration Officer National Aviation Museum Ottawa; Ron Bestwood; An expert in wooden aircraft repair; Gordon Keith ,Chief Inspector of Conair Aviation; Mark Mohan, Aircraft Maintenance Engineer with Canadian Pacific.

38. The wings were basically complete and the following areas were reworked: Port leading Edge; Trailing edge structures; Front Spar center section. Complete rebuild of the Horizontal Stabilizer

Work on the wings started, and 36 coats of nitrate dope were applied with every third coat sanded down which eventually made the aerofil as smooth as glass.

39. The wings were mated to the fuselage in the spring of 1984.

40. Project went on "Hold"as private and government funding evaporated.

41. CF-HML sat for two years in the restoration facility.

42. Don Campbell passed his beloved project over to Ed and Rose Zalesky of the Canadian Museum of Flight and Transportation.



An egotist has one point in his favour - he doesn't go round talking about other people - W.G.P.



## Restoration News and Facts From Canada—continued

43. CF-HML was moved to the CMFT museum at Crescent Beach located about 35 miles south of Mission.

44. CF-HML was again put up for sale in 1996 and was bought by Robert Jens in 2001.

45. The aircraft was brought down by road to Penta Aviations paint hanger where the undercarriage was installed. Once the undercarriage was fitted the aircraft was moved to the executive hanger along side TZ-138 a Mk 14e Spitfire that is in an airworthy condition.

46. CF-HML was moved once again to its final restoration hanger, which

is module A of the Millionaire executive aircraft facility.

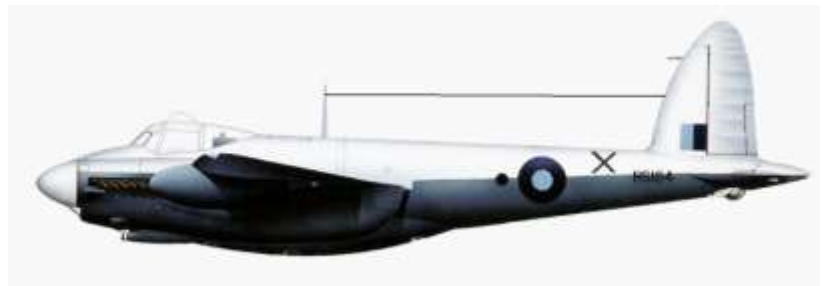
47. The restoration is moving along with a structures technician, two retired Avionics people and one retired aircraft maintenance engineer.



## Mossie Data by Brian Fillery

### Mosquito PR Mk 34 and PR Mk 34A.

<b>Description:</b>	Very long range reconnaissance
<b>Engines:</b>	Merlin 114 (PR Mk 34a had Merlin 114A)
<b>Wing Span:</b>	54ft 2ins (16.45m)
<b>Wing Area:</b>	454sq ft (42.2sq m)
<b>Length:</b>	41ft 2ins (12.5m)
<b>Height:</b>	15ft 3ins (4.65m)
<b>Weight:</b>	14,180lbs (kg) empty 25,000lbs (kg) auw with 1,226 gallons 25,500lbs (kg) max permissable
<b>Fuel:</b>	1,269 gallons (5,768 litres) incl 2x200 gal (909 litre) drop tanks
<b>Speed:</b>	425mph (kph) max
<b>Ceiling:</b>	43,000ft (13,106m)
<b>Max Range:</b>	3,340 miles (5,375km)
<b>Weapons:</b>	Unarmed.
<b>Bomb Load:</b>	None
<b>Notes:</b>	All armour and fuel tank bullet proofing removed. Swollen belly cut max speed by 6mph (9.6kph) TAS.



*NB: Mosquito data from various sources is often contradictory.*

The **average**, healthy, well adjusted adult gets up at seven thirty in the morning feeling just plain terrible - Jean Kerr

# From the Mailbag

## 1 From member Syd Goddard:

During a telephone conversation with Alan Middleton, he suggested I contribute something of interest about No. 1 Mosquito Squadron. I hope the enclosed article is what Alan had in mind.

My ex-Navigator Dean Barrett is also a long time member of the Association and was an excellent photographer. He probably could provide some good wartime photos of Mosquitos, if you have a requirement.

Although our Association generally focuses on No. 87 Squadron and the A52-600 project, I personally would like to see the 'other' Australian Mosquito Squadron given recognition. To this end, while the memory and my old logbook are still intact, I have put together a brief outline of some of the history.

No. 1 Mosquito Attack Squadron formed up at Kingaroy as part of No. 86 Attack Wing, together with No. 93 Beaufighter Squadron. No 1 Squadron was under the command of Wing Commander Ross Little, DFC, who had seen operations with No. 30 Beaufighter Squadron.

Our aircraft were new English Mk VI Fighter Bombers with Merlin (21, 23 or 25) engines and three-blade propellers. The armament was four Browning .303 machine guns and 4 Hispano 20 mm. cannons. All aircraft were fitted with long-range fuel drop-tanks.

Tragically, two Mosquitoes crashed at Kingaroy with the loss of both pilots and navigators.

Before the Squadron was due to depart, there was a requirement to test the suitability of American anti-personnel bombs to be fitted to our Mosquitoes. I was selected to fly my Mosquito - A52-521 - to Morotai for the air tests.

Although the tests were never done, No. 79 Spitfire Squadron, under the auspices of 1st T.A.F., decided to use A52-521 in daylight strafing, in company with two Spitfires. These raids were officially recognised as

the first RAAF Mosquito crew (F/Lt Syd Goddard and Nav. F/O Dean Barrett) to strike at Japanese targets in the South West Pacific Area (SWPA).

When the runway at Labuan Island was apparently ready, I was directed to proceed via Sanga Sanga (Tawi Tawi).

On arrival at Labuan the cloud base was about 500 feet and heavy rain made visibility poor. At the time a landing approach was to be attempted, Ground Control called to report, 'You cannot land here - runway is unserviceable - go back.' The return to Sanga Sanga, through thunderstorms and severe turbulence, was the roughest I experienced during my Mosquito flying.

After a few days, a report was received that the runway at Labuan was open, so we returned and landed without incident.

During the following weeks the rest of the Squadron arrived from Australia. The short, patched-up runway at Labuan took its toll. Only 3,500 feet long and 100 feet wide, there was no margin for error, especially on take-off with a full fuel-load. Two more aircraft crashed on take-off - due to swinging before lift-off - but there were no casualties. Another Mosquito crashed into the sea after take-off, when an engine failed and the undercarriage pins had been left in. The aircraft could not accelerate and hit the water just near the beach. The crew were rescued and survived.

Operations from Labuan were generally against Japanese installations and a few runways where their aircraft were parked. One Mosquito - A52-510, with Squadron Leader Dick Browne - crashed into the Kuching River while strafing. Both crew were lost. After the war a report was received that a Japanese machine gunner had claimed the credit. There were some low-level operations to Indo-China (Vietnam) but these did not appear very effective. The six-hour low-level trip over the South China Sea resulted in a heavy salt deposit on the aircraft wind-

screen, reducing visibility for the approach and landing on return to Labuan.

On 15 August 1945, all offensive operations ceased. However, during September, problems arose with the serviceability of our Mosquito aircraft. The equatorial weather conditions - heavy rain and high humidity - had started some deterioration of the main plane fabric. Fortunately there were no more operational requirements, and the aircraft - which were temporarily grounded - were assessed as safe for ferrying to Australia.

In late October, the ferry flights commenced. My flight took me via Balikpapan where I experienced my first landing on the metal plates laid down on the black oily sand. I was surprised by the loud noise when operating on that type of runway.

Arriving at RAAF Richmond, the Mosquitoes were allotted to No. 2 AD - never to fly again.

Yours faithfully  
Syd Goddard  
Spearwood, WA

## 2 From member Bert Garrett:

The Aussie Mossie edition was full of interest and well put together. I was sorry that I was not able to go back to Coomalie for the great Celebration. Tom Baird who was a close friend in the days of 107 Squadron at Rathmines (Anti-sub) followed by our posting to 87 Squadron.



At Coomalie there were only two Mossies at first and one of them was lost when the Commanding Officer ran out of fuel (because of an incorrect bearing!) on the beach near Merauke, New Guinea. He and his Navigator, if I remember rightly were quite safe although the enemy were not far away. They tried to burn the aircraft but were not successful,

A poor excuse is like an old bucket; doesn't **matter** what shape it's in, as long as it holds water - P.K. Shaw

## From the Mailbag—continued

even the Very Pistol Cartridge was no help. They were rescued by a US Navy submarine looking for some of their own.

Again, if memory serves me rightly the CO was Stewart Hermes. With only one aircraft you can imagine how marvellous the Ground Staff kept it flying servicing it at night for the next op down take-off.

There were a few chooks penned on the property, so when you were on the next job, you were treated at early breakfast with a “real” fresh egg—so different from the usual tinned variety!!

Sincerely and with kind regards,  
Bert Garrett  
Wavell Heights, Queensland.

### 3 From member Laddie Hindley:

Some jottings herewith that you may find suitable for the “From the Mailbag”.

Interested to see in our April 06 issue, the new arrival, Tiger Moth A17-692, at the Point Cook Museum. It



triggered a few memories of years long past.

After being demobbed in 1945, I re-joined the RAAF in March 1951, with top priority being a refresher course at East Sale starting with Tiger Moths. On the 12th April 1951, I flew A17-692. It was the only occasion that I flew that particular aircraft and now I start to wonder why only once as I spent a lot of flying time on Tigers as an instructor at Uranquinty, New South Wales and Laver-ton/Moorabbin as OIC Aircrew Training, National Service, Victoria.

Can someone supply the history of A17-692?

Continuing on with refreshed memories, it was whilst with NST at Laver-ton in 1957 that I received directives from the Department of the Air to proceed to Tocumwal on an opportunity basis to carry out test flights on any serviceable aircraft that I was qualified to fly. On the occasions that I proceeded to Tocumwal, Tiger Moths, Wirraways and Mustangs were the only types that I was offered.

I would lovingly look at the Mosquitos and suggest that at least one must be serviceable but not so.

The only RAAF member at Tocumwal was an Engineering Officer and I believe that he was needed more as a Policeman than as an Engineer.

The last Mosquito that I ferried across from Fairbairn to Tocumwal was A52-325 on 1st October 1952, but from memory, one or two followed. They were all housed in hangars, so they did receive priority treatment. The Mustangs, although in mint condition were out in the open and there must have been fifty or sixty of them.

It's nice to have memories.

Regards,  
Laddie Hindley  
Torrens, ACT



Published by The de Havilland Aircraft of Canada Ltd.,  
Toronto, 1944

If you ask for it you'll get the lot,  
(Don't top up coolant when the engine's hot).

A wishbone has never taken the place of a backbone - W.G.P.

## From the Mailbag—continued

4 From member Richard Luxton—  
owner of Coomalie Creek:

### Coomalie Diaries 1: Merlin Night: Sat 24 June and Sun 25 June 2006

For the first time in sixty years Coomalie crackled to the sound of a Rolls Royce Merlin “right hand tractor” engine. It was an occasion that exceeded all our expectations!

In superb dry season weather, the afternoon started with the arrival of ultralights, G.A. aircraft and a chartered C47 Dakota from Hardy Aviation with a full load of passengers down for the night. It was a wonderful sight to see the Dakota landing gracefully on runway 17 after another near sixty year absence.

Formation flying, aerobatics displays and our local Yak 52 making its spectacular entrance heralded the arrival of the Merlin and a Pratt and Whitney radial engine. The Aviation Historical Society of the Northern Territory owns both these. They were followed by “Mad” (a.k.a. Ron) Laycock and his World War 2 vintage Blitz truck complete with tray-mounted jet engine.

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> was a moonless night, so we looked forward to enjoying both the sound and sight of the Merlin. It was parked on its trailer, on the



Coomalie Creek with Dakota present adjacent to Runway 17.  
The silhouette of a Mosquito can be seen on the right.

starboard wing of the Mossie silhouette painted on the flight line near the threshold of 17, and was cranked up soon after sundown. (For those unused to the tropical Top End, twilight conditions up here are either short or non-existent).

Around two hundred people gathered for the fray and we were delighted when all twelve cylinders caught and revs were brought up. Almost as good as the characteristic growl was the sight of twelve spears of light showing up two hundred grinning faces. The Pratt didn't disappoint, and the jet powered Blitz split the night with its sound and light

show. With full afterburner, Ron released the brakes and began to disappear down 17. Fuel supply was cut in time so we still don't know whether Blitzez really will fly.

Everyone then returned to the cricket oval for a magnificent barbecue and bonfire, which has become one of the great Coomalie institutions. An enjoyable musical accompaniment from the Top End Folk Club and others kept a very full evening going until around 02:00 Sunday.

Ron Lawford's RV6 was airborne at 07:00 to fly the dawn patrol, followed by breakfast (more than 100 eggs, 10kg bacon, sausages etc. etc.), and then more flying. There were still about sixty of us around at 11:00 on Sunday morning to enjoy the graceful departure of the Dakota, heading for Darwin with a very happy load of wingnuts.

The whole event was the culmination of the best efforts of fliers, musicians, St Johns Ambulance volunteers, interested visitors and of course a group of elated Aviation Historical Society members.

I don't quite know why but everyone wants to do it all again next year!

Richard Luxton  
Coomalie Farm N.T.



A woman is like a teabag - only in hot water do you **realise** how strong she is - Nancy Reagan

## From the Mailbag—continued

For other photos of the event see the Top End Flying Club's website at [www.tefc.com.au](http://www.tefc.com.au)

### Coomalie Diaries 2: Welcome return 25 July 2006

On Tuesday 25 July 2006, the Commanding Officer and members of No. 87 Squadron Royal Australian Air Force made their first formal visit to Coomalie Creek since the Squadron was re-raised on 1 July 2006. There have been many visits to Coomalie over the years by former 87 Squadron personnel, but this was a first for the 'new' Unit since the previous Squadron's departure at the end of October 1945. (It was also one of the former operational 'homes' of PR Mk XVI Mosquito A52-600, currently undergoing restoration at the RAAF Museum, Point Cook).

C.O. Wing Commander Rick Keir, Squadron Leader Rob Elliott, Flight Lieutenant Chris McInnes and Warrant Officer Bruce Homewood represented the 'new' 87 Squadron on this visit. Another important link was



The wreckage in front of the 87 Sqn personnel is the undercarriage structure of Mosquito aircraft A52-611 'Gamble's Folly', the stripped fuselage of which was burned as part of the VP Bonfire. Similar parts from A52-600 are currently being reassembled at the RAAF Museum. Note also the new 87 Sqn caps, which include the original 'unofficial' stinging mosquito 87 Sqn badge.

forged by introducing these "new" Squadron personnel to important parts of the legacy they've inherited from earlier 87 Squadron days. They were given an escorted tour around the airstrip, the cricket pitch and VP Day Victory Bonfire sites and then the former 87 Squadron campsite. Here they were shown the former CO's tent and office sites, the QM's store and Photographic Section darkroom as well as a more general overview.

Richard Luxton  
Coomalie Farm N.T.

For satellite imagery of Coomalie see [www.maps.google.com/](http://www.maps.google.com/) (Find Batchelor in the N.T., then scroll to the east) (look for the Mossie and Beaufighter silhouettes) For more information about 87 Squadron's previous life see David Vincent's excellent book 'Mosquito Monograph'



## Last Bulletins Quiz Answer

In the last issue of Aussie Mossie, we asked you to identify the small, brass, cylindrical object at the front of the navigator's table in the nose of A52-600. The winner has been notified, and the cloth badge is on its way.

**Answer:** It's a hand-operated pump which squirts a quantity of ethylene glycol de-icing fluid over the outside of the optically flat pane of glass in the nose bubble, to help the navigator/bomb aimer see the target.

TRB

A guest sees more in an hour than the host in a year - Polish proverb

## What does the Future hold for Point Cook ?

This was the question on many devotees of the RAAF Museum and RAAF Base Williams some three to five years ago. The concern was then, that the base may be partially or fully sold off to the encroaching land developers and that air operations would be severely curtailed if not stopped as a consequence.

Our minds were put to rest in February 2004 with this following announcement (refer MAAA Bulletin no. 39 for the full transcript):

***“Point Cook will be retained in public ownership with the airfield and majority of the land being leased for 49 years to a not-for-profit National Aviation Museum Trust, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Defence, Fran Bailey announced on Sunday 29th February 2004 at the Point Cook Air Pageant.***

***The announcement coincided with the 90th anniversary of the first flight at Point Cook in a Bristol Boxkite on 1st March 1914.***

***The National Aviation Museum Trust will:***

- ♦ ***manage the aviation activities on the site for educational, recreational and commercial purposes;***

- ♦ ***oversee the development of a National Aviation Museum at Point Cook;***

- ♦ ***preserve the heritage buildings;***

- ♦ ***ensure the local community and veterans’ organisations are consulted.***

***The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Defence said the Government had decided not to proceed with the sale of Point Cook, following the need to support the RAAF College operations until its relocation and representations made by the veterans community and aviation enthusiasts.”***

The Trust has subsequently been closed and the RAAF created the “Heritage Advisory Council” instead some nine months or more ago and Point Cook’s future is still undecided.

The Secretary for Defence, Senator the Hon. Sandy McDonald, in a letter recently stated:

***“Current activities at Point Cook will not be affected in the immediate future. Should any non-Defence activities be considered incompatible with future Defence activities, then termination of those leases/licenses would be negotiated.”***

About a fortnight ago all the civilian aviation tenants on the historic WW1 Southern Tarmac were given 30 days to vacate their Hangars by the Defence Department.

No alternative accommodation was offered either temporarily or permanently and no plans or proposals for the tenants to re-occupy the Hangars at a later date has been suggested.

A number of the Bellman Hangars being vacated are rumoured to be targeted for demolition.

In Section 2.8 of the Constitution of the Mosquito Aircraft Association of Australia it states that we are:

***“To be independent of any other organisation and to be a non-political, non-sectarian Association.”***

But it would be remiss of the Committee not to mention that it is disappointed and gravely concerned about the future of Point Cook.

## Articles Anecdotes and Historical Facts

We at the Aussie Mossie bulletin were recently taken to task for spending too much printers ink on 87 Squadron, RAAF.

The criticism was both timely and apt, and we’ve taken it on board. Yes, A52-600 flew on 87 Squadron strength, and yes, 87 Squadron has recently been re-commissioned.

However we intend to devote more space to the other two Australian-based Mossie Squadrons, No 1 and No 94 Squadrons RAAF soon. We’ll then follow up with the RAAF and Australian-manned RAF Mossie

Squadrons which operated in the European theatre.

But we need your help.

There’s no way we could, or would want to compete with the many excellent books available on the exploits of the “Wooden Wonder” and its ground and air crews. What we ask is to hear from you about anything at all to do with your personal experiences of or with Mossies.

Many of the olds and bolds are with us no longer, and it’s extremely important to preserve the personal memories that remain. As one exam-

ple, member Brian Fillery (a regular contributor to the Bulletin) says his admiration for the aircraft was born in 1944, when as a young lad he watched and listened to the distinctive whistling growl of a Mosquito diving down to line up a V1, the rattle of cannons and machine guns, and the subsequent flamer.

So what about it? Over (but not out) to you.

Editors and staff (both of us), the “Aussie Mossie” bulletin

It is with regret that the Association must relay the passing of two of it's members:

**BALLARD**, Gordon Henry of ROCKHAMPTON, Queensland

**WILLIAMS**, Len of HAWTHORN, Victoria

The Association's condolences go to their families.

## New Members

The Association is pleased to announce and welcome the following people who have joined us since the last Bulletin was published:

**Suburbs Scale Modeling Club Inc** of BOX HILL, Victoria

**GLENDINNING**, Ian of MILL PARK, Victoria

**SCHNEIDER**, Lorraine Ann of GEELONG, Victoria

**SCOTT**, Richard Peter of RINGWOOD NORTH, Victoria

**SHAW**, Fraser of TEMPLESTOWE, Victoria

**WRIGHT**, Jennifer of SHEPPARTON, Victoria

Welcome to you all, we hope you have a long, enjoyable association and take an active interest in the restoration of A52-600.

Two Eskimos sitting in a kayak were chilly.  
But when they lit a fire in the craft, it sank.  
Which proves that you can't have your kayak and heat it!

☺

The chemist was robbed last week and a quantity of Viagra was stolen.  
Police say that they are looking for a gang of hardened criminals.

☺

Mahatma Gandhi, as you know, walked barefoot most of the time.  
This produced an impressive set of calluses on his feet.  
He also ate very little, which made him rather frail.  
And with his odd diet, he suffered from bad breath.  
This made him a super calloused fragile mystic hexed by halitosis.

☺

And finally, there was the person who sent twenty different puns to his friends.  
He hoped that at least ten of the puns would make them laugh.  
No pun in ten did.

☺



This is quite pleasant laying here on my back watching the water flow by, but there are always those pesky flies (fliers?) hanging around my nose...

An intellectual is a man without a craft - an eastern saying

## Member Profile—Flt Lt Don Charlwood

Date of birth: 06 September 1915  
Place of birth: Melbourne, VIC

Don Charlwood served in Bomber Command during the Second World War and later wrote several books about his experiences in the RAAF. He was born in Hawthorn, Victoria, on 6 September 1915. Charlwood's family moved to Frankston when he was eight and it was there that he completed his schooling in 1931.

Charlwood decided to be a writer and, to that end, sought work on a newspaper, once approaching Keith Murdoch, who lived nearby, at his home. Offered only the distant possibility of a job as a messenger boy, Charlwood instead found work in a local market and estate agency. Shortly afterwards, in 1932, he moved to Nareen in rural Victoria where he found work as a farm hand and made a little extra money selling short stories. He was still working at Nareen when the Second World War began and, in 1940, realising that the war would be long, he joined the RAAF.

In 1941 he sailed for Canada under the Empire Air Training Scheme to learn the navigators' trade. He was 26 years old, older than most of his fellow airmen, when he began operational training in England before being posted to 103 Squadron at Elsham Wolds. Shortly after Charlwood's arrival, the squadron convert-

ed from Halifaxes to Lancasters and he flew most of his tour of 30 operations in the latter type of aircraft over the winter of 1942-43. In April 1943 Charlwood's crew, under pilot Geoff Maddern, became the first 103 Squadron crew to survive a tour in nine months.

A deeply thoughtful and reflective man, Charlwood knew very well how fortunate he was to have survived his 30 operations. His later writings reveal that, of the 20 men who had qualified as navigators with him, only five were still alive at the end of the war. In two of his books, *No moon tonight* and *Journeys into night*, Charlwood described his own experience and chronicled the fate of his friends. His vivid, moving records of those months are among the finest autobiographical works on Bomber Command.

During his training in Canada, Charlwood had met Nell East, a primary school teacher. His intuition told him he would marry her. With his tour complete, Charlwood left England for the United States and training on Liberators, but back problems ended his flying career. Before returning to Australia from San Francisco, Charlwood travelled to Edmonton where he did indeed marry Nell East. They were lucky enough to be able to travel to Australia together.

After the war, Charlwood worked as an air traffic controller and wrote

eleven books, some autobiographical, and others - works of history. He became Vice President of the Victorian branch of the Fellowship of Australian writers in 1975 and held the position for 15 years. He was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 1992 and has contributed to the Memorial's collection, having been interviewed in 1989 about his wartime experiences. Charlwood lives in Warrandyte, Victoria.



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*A CD of all previous Bulletins is available from the Editor at no cost to members.*

The difference between **what** we do and what we are capable of doing would suffice to solve most of the world's problems.