

# Farewell to Allan Davies

The Mosquito Aircraft Association of Australia is saddened by the passing of it's founder, Allan Llewellyn Davies on 29th November 2006.

Allan's drive and enthusiasm led to the formation of the Association on the 21st July 1992. He became the inaugural Secretary, Treasurer and Editor until retiring from the task at the August 1999 AGM. At that meeting he became the Association's first Life Member.

He was born on the 3rd September 1918 in Liverpool, England and migrated with his family to Australia as a young nipper. During those formative years he showed his willingness to work and a passion to get things done.



Allan at home undertaking one of his roles—the editor of the first 22 Bulletins keeping the membership up to date on A52-600 restoration activities and 'cutting and pasting' many interesting articles he found for the 200 odd members, a task that he relished.

At the age of 22 he enlisted in the RAAF, did his training in Sydney and was shipped off to South Africa.

During the next three or four years he was posted to Bulawayo in South Africa, Kasfareet in Egypt, Gil Gil and Nakuru in Kenya, Heliopolis in Egypt, Iraq, back to Egypt at Gianacles, then to Bombay in India.

This ended his overseas postings, returning to Melbourne, Sydney, East Sale in Victoria, Williamtown in New South Wales, 54 Mile in the Northern Territory and finally Coomalie where he flew A52 600 and other Mosquitos.

During 1945 he proceeded on duty to Borneo where he took his beloved picture of A52 600 at Labuan Island. Allan used the photo below in the first and the last Bulletins he produced.

Our condolences go to his wife Fay, his sister and MAAA member Hafrena, his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

His enthusiasm and passion in everything he did, made him a driven man to excel at work and in his retirement to assist many organisations and especially the MAAA.

He will long be remembered.



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



heart, was the passing of my brother, Harry, at Noosa, as he was not only my brother, but was also our unofficial Representative of MAAA in Queensland and proudly wore the distinctive apparel which carried our Association emblems and made others aware of our existence

At Harry's service, all his Grandchildren spoke of their Grandpa and one read a poem he had composed for the occasion. I thought this was great and I have taken the liberty to include it for all to share.

The festive season is with us once more and on behalf of your Committee, I bring greetings for this time and our best wishes for a happy year 2007 and many beyond. Our feelings are somewhat saddened when looking back over the past year, to find several of our Members have died, but time and tide wait for no man, and the inevitability of our passing is a reality of life, and our memories of those who have gone will, remain with us.

I know we all feel a deep sense of loss of our friends, and, in our case, particularly with the loss of our Association Founder, Allan Davies, who formed and managed all aspects of our Association for many years, virtually on his own.

Our sincere regrets have been tendered to his wife, Fay, and his family, and we know they are aware of the high esteem in which we held Allan. Well done Allan!

Another loss, particularly close to my

"If ever it was a hug that you did seek,  
You would know the feel as he kissed your cheek.

A grind of the face on my baby soft skin,  
It never mattered coz I knew it was him.

Where ever we were, it didn't concern.

There was always a kiss that would inevitably burn. And when bed time came, he would tuck us in,

With another big kiss that would exfoliate our chin. And as morning drew near I knew I was bound-ta' Come in contact with another bristly encounter.

Home in Melbourne, that's what I miss,

The abrasive feel of his tender kiss. Not Dad or Dave, or any other. Could possibly match his rugged cover.

And if one thing does stay, in me with bliss.

Its the compassion and heart of the

whiskery kiss."

I have received a Christmas card from W/Cdr Rick Keir, CO of 87 Sqdn, in which he extends his season's greetings to all our Members. Rick advises 87 is working well and is hoping to catch up with some of us in the New Year.

The progress of A52-600 continues at a slower rate than we would like. It has been hampered by the always present difficulties of change of personnel and technical problems.

Following the promotion of Brett Clowes to the position of Assistant Technical Curator, the position of Restoration Manager has been vacant. I am pleased to advise that Brett Redway, formerly known to us as "B2", has been appointed to that position. We congratulate Brett and assure him that our support will be willingly given to him as it has been in the past.

It is with great pleasure that I advise we have been able to acquire a further limited number of prints of artist, John Brown's magnificent painting of A52-600 returning to Coomalie Creek, "Mission Completed". These are the last available prints, numbered and signed by John and will be available for purchase.

Those who are interested in buying these, please contact me for further details.

Point Cook continues to be haunted by uncertainty as to its future. We have expressed our strong belief that this historical site must be preserved and we are hopeful that the current signs point in favourable directions.

Best wishes to all,

Alan Middleton

## MAAA 15th Year Celebrations

For all you Queenslanders and northern New South Welsh people, member David Beazley in conjunction with the Queensland Air Museum at Pathfinder Drive, Caloundra, Queensland will be organising a bar-b-que on Sunday 21st January 2007 to help celebrate the MAAA's 15th birthday. Opening time is 10:30. To quote David :

*"It will be leisurely day with a specially set aside seating area for the MAAA and during the day a number of aircraft will be opened for inspection. Member Noel Sparrow is preparing an 87 Sqdn display and will also have a number of Mosquito parts on display".*

If you are interested in attending please phone David on 0407 672 359 or email him at [beazley.braypark@bigpond.com](mailto:beazley.braypark@bigpond.com) so that he can calculate the food and drinks requirements for the day.

Melbourne activities will be announced later and we are still seeking other people interstate to organise a day.

So live that you wouldn't be ashamed to sell the family parrot to the town gossip - Will Rogers

## Vic Pederson—the Flying Padre by TRB

### News from Coomalie Farm 08 December 2006

Auster J5 G-AOFM was a recent visitor to Coomalie Creek, arriving on the 10<sup>th</sup> and departing on the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2006. It was recently purchased from Chris Harrison (an Auster fan from way back) by the Aviation Historical Society of the N.T.

It will form the basis of a display commemorating the life of Brigadier Vic Pedersen, who died aged 93 in September 2006. A memorial service was held at the AHS NT Centre, which his children and a wide circle of friends from the Salvation Army, pastoral properties and the aviation industry from around the Top End attended.

As first Lt. then Capt. Pedersen, spent the years from 1945 to 1972 covering the north of Australia as the Salvation Army's Flying Padre. He became a well known and much loved member of the far flung communities covering a huge area of our land, in much the same vein as the earlier Doc Fenton. Both are legends in the Territory and beyond.

Capt. Pedersen's flying career was not without incident. Flying light aircraft such as Tiger Moths, Austers, and Cessnas in remote areas could be a risky business. As well as a Tiger Moth, Austers VH-BYS (J5B), UED (J5Q) and BTG (J5P) became imbedded in the scenery of the Northern Territory.

The AHS NT has acquired the wreckage of the latter two,

which will be included in the display. Capt. Pedersen suffered only minor injuries, and had some amazing experiences walking out to the nearest habitation; many of his friends believed he worked for the right company.

A memorial plaque to Brig. Pedersen was unveiled by the Chief Minister of the NT, Claire Martin, at the Fannie Bay headquarters of the Darwin Museum and Gallery on Wednesday 5 December 2006. Once again, a wide circle of Territorians attended. We're all pleased to see one of the legends of Top End aviation remembered in this way.

(from MAAA member Richard Luxton)

For more info, visit:

[www.salvationarmy.org.au/flyingpadre/planes](http://www.salvationarmy.org.au/flyingpadre/planes)

Footnote:

As a 12-year old lad, I attended Darwin Higher Primary school in 1955 and 1956 with one of Capt. Pedersen's sons. As I also had an interest in the Salvation Army's youth group, I managed to scrounge a flight with him in one of the Austers (probably VH-BYS). We flew a circuit around the wider extents of Darwin harbour, an exciting and memorable experience for a young bloke!

TRB

Photo:

The Auster parked on the Mossie silhouette on the flight line of Runway 17, Coomalie Creek. Fittingly, the aircraft was flown more than 7000km over the inland of Australia to reach its final resting place.



## A Tribute to Allan Davies

At 14:00 hours EDST on Wednesday 5 December 2006, a flare was released above the threshold of Runway 17 at Coomalie Creek, to guide Allan Davies home.

(from Richard Luxton)

The great consolation in life is to say what one thinks - Voltaire

# Restoration of Vampire A79-476

MAAA member **David Beazley** writes about the restoration of **VAMPIRE F.Mk30 A79-476** at the Queensland Air Museum

Since 2005 the restoration of a Vampire F.Mk30 jet fighter has been underway in Queensland. The aircraft is part of the Queensland Air Museum collection and involves two members of the MAAA, Noel Sparrow and myself.

The Vampire is an aircraft that has many connections to the Mosquito. Both aircraft are products of the de Havilland Aircraft Company and they share the same plywood / balsa fuselage construction. Also, in Australia, the final Mosquito off the Bankstown production line was immediately followed by the start of Vampire production.

The DH.100 Vampire was one of the first generation of jet fighters. It was designed around the first British production jet engine, the de Havilland Goblin. This engine initially known as the Halford H1 was designed by Major Frank Halford and is a centrifugal flow type turbojet. Designing began in early 1941 with the development, using the code name 'Supercharger', attracting top security during this wartime period. It had its first run on the test bed on the 13<sup>th</sup> April 1942 and initially produced 1,700 lb of thrust.

The following month the Air Ministry gave permission to begin the construction of the Vampire prototype. The design of the airframe was dictated by the need of the engine to use a short tailpipe to limit thrust loss and to also minimize weight. A pod-like fuselage satisfied these requirements, with the cockpit at the front and the engine in the rear fed by a split intake.

The cockpit section of the fuselage was constructed of the same fabric covered plywood / balsa sandwich used on the Mosquito, which was in full production at the time. In the same manor as the Mosquito, the



Author David Beazley working on the Vampire nose

fuselage was built in two halves, fitted out and then joined along the centre line. The remainder of the airframe was of conventional construction made from aluminium alloys.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> September 1943, after only 16 months of construction, Geoffrey de Havilland Jnr took the prototype on its maiden flight. The aircraft was soon exceeding 500 mph in level flight with the Goblin engine producing 2,700 lb of thrust. RAF squadrons began receiving aircraft in April 1946 which was just in time to participate in the Victory Day flypast over London.

A two seat night fighter variant was developed in 1949, the DH113 Vampire NF.10 had a side by side cockpit based on that of the Mosquito NF.Mk.36. This was further developed into a two seat trainer, the DH.115 Vampire Trainer, with the removal of the radar and the fitting of a re-profiled nose. The two seat trainer and the single seat fighter were both to see service with the

RAAF and to be produced in Australia.

The Vampire F.Mk30 was first jet aircraft to enter RAAF squadron service and it was also the first jet aircraft to be built in Australia. A total of 80 of the single seat fighters were built at the de Havilland Aircraft factory at Bankstown in Sydney. These aircraft were powered by the Rolls Royce Nene, which were licensed built by the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation. The Nene produced 5,000lb of thrust which was much more powerful than the standard Goblin with 3,100lb of thrust. Australian production commenced in May 1948 with the first flight of the locally produced Vampire being carried out by DHA's chief test pilot, Brian 'Blackjack' Walker, on 29<sup>th</sup> June 1949.

Deliveries to the RAAF began in September 1949 with 78 Wing equipping 75 and 76 Squadrons and 2OTU. From July 1951 the Vampires began equipping the Citizen Air Force fighter squadrons of No.21

No wise man ever wished to be younger - Jonathon Swift

## Restoration of Vampire A79-476—continued

(City of Melbourne), No.22 (City of Sydney), No.23 (City of Brisbane) and No.25 (City of Perth).

The final 23 single seat aircraft were built as FB.MK31 fighter/bombers, with strengthened wings and undercarriages. In addition to the standard four 20mm Hispano cannons they could also carry two 1,000lb bombs or eight 3" rocket projectiles. Later 24 of the F.Mk.30s were modified to the FB.Mk.31 standard and most of the aircraft were retrofitted with ejection seats and updated radios.

The final single seater was completed in August 1953, however the two seat trainer was by then also in production which continued until 1960. The single seat Vampires were phased out of RAAF service in 1960 and the two seat Vampire Trainers in 1970.

### THE RESTORATION AIRCRAFT

A79-476 (c/n 4018) was taken on charge by the RAAF in March 1951 and was operated by 78 Wing at Williamtown which included time with 2OTU. This aircraft initially carried

the serial A79-876, but it was changed due to the introduction of the Vampire two seat trainers and the decision to number them in the A79-600 and -800 and blocks.

1955 saw A79-876 converted to a Target Tug and it was painted in a black and yellow stripe colour scheme. This is the paint scheme that can be seen on the Vampire in the RAAF Museum at Point Cook. In fact that aircraft has been painted to represent A79-876 and so shortly there will be two A79-876s in museums.

In 1957 it was sent to Wagga Wagga to become an instructional airframe at the RAAF Technical Training School. In September 1962 it was converted to a pressurization test rig with the tail booms removed and the wing tips cut off. Its RAAF career ended in 1971 with the aircraft put up for disposal.

It was eventually purchased by the Queensland Air Museum in August 1991 and moved to Caloundra in July 1992, where it was disassembled and stored. Restoration commenced in 2005 when the fuselage

was moved to Noel Sparrow's home in Brisbane's northern suburbs.

Noel Sparrow has undertaken to restore all the timber work. Noel is very qualified in this area as with a Cabinet Making background he joined the RAAF in 1951 and completed the Carpenter/Riggers course. He was then posted to work on the Mosquitos of 87 (Photo Reconnaissance) Squadron in Canberra. He was also part of the squadron's survey deployments to Fiji and New Guinea.

This restoration is being conducted to a static display standard. This has allowed us to make some concessions to the materials originally used in its construction but without compromising the finish to the aircraft. This is mainly a cost consideration and the need to minimize unnecessary expenses.

The QAM is a community museum run entirely by volunteers, so all our acquisitions and restorations are funded through admission charges to the museum and donations.

The major departure from the original plywood/balsa sandwich fuselage shell, in this restoration, involves the substitution of the balsa with another softwood. Noel made the decision to use cedar, for which he has sourced enough off-cuts to complete the job for no cost. Noel possesses a great knack of getting most things at the right price, as he also sourced a suitable adhesive that the supplier agreed to donate.

My role in the restoration involves the repair of the metal components, beginning with the nose and belly panels. Some of these panels are missing and need to be totally manufactured. As an Aircraft Sheet Metal Worker by trade, this work is very familiar to me. I do however find this work very rewarding and a good change to my everyday work refurbishing Bell Jetranger helicopters. I also enjoy the volunteer work for the



Noel Sparrow fitting an outer ply on the Vampire

Those who hate you don't win unless you hate them - and then you destroy yourself - Richard Nixon

## Restoration of Vampire A79-476—continued

museum, for which Noel can also attest, includes many other jobs other than aircraft restoration.

The restoration has now progressed to the point that the fuselage is ready for the fabric to be doped onto the outer ply.

When completed the fuselage will be transported back to the museum in Caloundra and put on display as a cockpit section until the wings and tail booms are completed.

The Vampire F.Mk30 will then be in good company sitting beside the other de Havilland plywood/balsa fuselage jet aircraft, a Sea Venom and a two seat Vampire T.Mk35A.



Vampire A79-476 at Noel Sparrows home

## Airfield Construction Memiors

TRUSCOTT AIRFIELD - ANJO PENINSULA, WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

SOME MEMORIES OF ITS CONSTRUCTION BY No 14 AIRFIELD CONSTRUCTION SQUADRON CONTRIBUTED BY A.A.McLEAN (Ex F/LIEUT R.A.A.F.)

### R.A.A.F AIRFIELD CONSTRUCTION

No. 14 A.C.S. was part of No. 61 Works Wing, units of which operated in the North-West Pacific Zone from early in the Pacific War and built a number of airfields and other facilities, mainly in the Darwin area and off-shore Islands for use by the R.A.A.F. and U.S. Airforces.

No.1. Mobile Works Squadron (under Command of W/ Cdr D. Rooney) with a strength of 1100 to 1200, pioneered R.A.A.F's involvement in the provision of urgently needed facilities for the defence of Northern Australia following the Japanese bombing attack on Darwin.

Some of the initial facilities were also built by U.S. Army Engineering Corps. (No.62 Works Wing carried out similar tasks in the New Guinea area of operations.)

As the needs increased, the Wings were expanded and additional squadrons and units were formed, No. 61 Wing gaining No. 3 (Maintenance) Squadron. No. 12 Survey and Design Unit, together with Mechanical Maintenance and Water Boring Units. Later, No.8 A.C.S. was formed and operated in the Area. No. 1. M.W.S. was in 1943 split into two squadrons with the

formation of No. 14. M.W.S.

Shortly after this the construction units were renamed as "Airfield Construction Squadrons" to more appropriately indicate their basic function.

Among the tasks performed, the following can be listed:-

- R.A.A.F. Darwin Airfield.- Restoration and Major re-development
- Batchelor Airfield- (Rum Jungle)
- Darwin- R.A.A.F Base (Restoration & Major Re-development for Heavy Bomber Operation)
- Gould Airfield (Rum Jungle)
- Darwin - Civil Airfield (Fighter Operations)
- Coomalie Creek Airfield
- Hughes Airfield
- Livingstone, Straus, and Sattler (Fighter Strips)
- Fenton Airfield (Heavy Bomber Operations)
- Long Airfield (Heavy Bomber Operations)
- Pell (Repair and Maintenance Base)
- McDonald Airfield - Pine Creek -(Medium Bomber Base)
- Mambuloo Katherine - (Heavy Bomber Opera-

For every girl with a curve there are several men with an angle - W.G.P.

## Airfield Construction Memiors—continued

tions)

- Gove Airfield - Melville Bay - (Heavy Bombers and Sea Plane Base.)
- Gorrie Airfield - Larimah (Rear Repairs and Maintenance Base.)
- Other Ancillary facilities, including Melville and Wessel Islands, Various Camps and Bomb Storage dumps, roads.
- Crash-landing Strips at Tipperary, and of course, Truscott Base.
- No. 14. A.C.S., in August 1944, joined the U.S. operations in the assault on Morotai Island constructing landing strips.
- No.3 A.C.S. also carried out similar operations at Mindoro, in the Philippines.

### TRUSCOTT PROJECT.

This project was planned to provide a re-fuelling and Bombing-up forward base for heavy Bomber and long distance operations in the Allied forward campaign on towards Indonesia, Borneo, Singapore and the Philippines, being the nearest practicable position to Indonesia.

Anjo Peninsula was a barren, isolated piece of Kimberley Territory, situated between Vansittart and West Bays of the Timor Sea. The strip site was about 25 miles N.W. of the Drysdale River Mission, but otherwise quite remote from other civilisation with hundreds of miles of rugged hinterland.

The main force of No. 14. A.C.S. had assembled at Wymellie, Darwin after leave and re-equipping in the South and loaded the "George Eastman"- (U.S.N. Liberty Ship with its plant, equipment and material at Darwin for departure on 23 April 44.

The initial reconnaissance and assessment had been made by W/Cdr. Rooney and other 61 Works Wing H.Q. staff on 1<sup>st</sup> Jan. 1944.

Preliminary supplies and equipment were dispatched on the "Babinda" and unloaded at Mission Bay on 17<sup>th</sup> Jan. '44 for transport by barges to West Bay. Further cargo was unloaded at West Bay, accompanied by Ack-ack Battery 232. from "Burwah" on 11<sup>th</sup>. Feb.

A large quantity of cargo was dispatched from Darwin on the "William Prouse" and arrived at West Bay on 7<sup>th</sup> April with 130 men from 14 A.C.S. and 150 of A.I.F. Deployment Coy. to handle the unloading.

Only 14 men of 14 ACS remained at Anjo and these formed the advance work force to prepare for the arrival of the main force under S/Ldr. T. Nossiter and 367 personnel.

The principal officers of the Squadron for the operation

were :

- Commanding Officer - S/Ldr Trevor Nossiter
- Senior Works Officer (2.I/C) F/Lt Clarrie Sieber
- Construction Flight - O/C's -
  - o No.1 Flight - F/Lt. A.A. McLean
  - o No.2 Flight - F/Lt. E Mills

F/Lt. McLean (the writer) assumed the post of Senior Works Officer and (later) Acting C/O. when S/Ldr. Nossiter and F/Lt. Sieber were sent South for briefing on the next operation.

The writer rejoined the Squadron only two days before sailing date, arriving from Melbourne with a rear detachment of about 40 personnel and equipment. On being briefed with the details of the task, he expressed strong doubts about certain technical aspects of the proposed strip construction, particularly in regard to difficulty likely to be encountered in consolidating the prevailing sandy soil in the absence of substantial water resources, and the plant required to deliver the water necessary to secure a satisfactory base to carry the intended Marsden steel-matting run-way and heavy aircraft, with full bomb and fuel load.

Action was therefore initiated to procure supplies of - 2" dia. water piping and, at least, 8 or 12 - 400 gal. ships tanks - also power kerosene and Navy fuel oil for the cutting-back of the bitumen to provide a priming material more likely to be suitable for the sealing of the runway base and taxiways.

Despite the panic, these efforts were successful and the last minute loading effort was a credit to the personnel involved. The "George Eastman," escorted by R.A.N. Corvette "Ballarat" crossed the Timor Sea in calm weather without incident, to anchor off Anjo. The troops enjoyed the Yank food after our monotonous canned fare.

The U.S. skipper was very apprehensive of enemy attack and made it quite clear that he wanted to "get the hell out of it", so our very arduous unloading into 40ft. barges from the ship standing about a mile off-shore on to the open sand beach, proceeded day and night until the thousands of tons of equipment and material were finally landed and largely man-handled across the beach to our transport vehicles- (which, in themselves, posed problems in getting them ashore on to firm land), then by rough cleared track, to the camp and strip site about a mile inland!

The camp huts had been partly erected by the No.14 A.C.S. advance detachment and a water supply, pumped from a spring about a half a mile from the camp provided a very potable, though limited supply of water in an otherwise very dry situation.

We all like to think we're unique until someone tells us we're different - P.K. Shaw

## Airfield Construction Memiors—continued

Conditions at that time of the year, were though quite pleasant from a physical viewpoint, allowing for the ever present fly population and the remoteness.

The landing at Anjo, on the 25<sup>th</sup> April, was a very significant event as a reminder of another landing by Australian troops twenty-nine years earlier, and prompted our camofleur- Eric Jolliffe (a well-known artist) to produce a series of cartoons recording some light-hearted aspects of the event.

Not much time was available for settling down, as the limited target date, which emphasised the urgency of the project, demanded priorities in which personal comfort took a back seat.

Work completing the clearing of the native timber for the runway, taxiways and dispersal bays, commenced immediately. The haulage of the thousands of tons of steel matting, steel mesh, bitumen, oil and fuel, together with other stores, put great pressure on transport resources, while the ancillary sections - such as medical, workshop and equipment went quickly into action.

The construction complement of the Squadron comprised No.1 and 2 Flights (Engineering) and No.3 Flight (Building). These were directly augmented by Workshops - for mechanical maintenance and repairs together with transport.

Though the heavy earthmoving plant was mainly new, it was generally lacking in capacity - (largely supplied under "Lease-Lend" from U.S.A. - whose own forces appeared to get first choice) so the toll on this plant and the other sadly-worn items from earlier ops. soon became a problem. The construction operations commenced on a three-shift-24 hour schedule, working under flood lights at night - (which was the usual policy on Urgent Projects.) Soon however, the pressure on the troops together with the effects of poor rations and disturbed sleep took its toll and the medical parade queue became longer and the available workforce smaller. The writer who by that time had moved from O/C. No.1 Flight to Senior Works Officer and concerned at the deteriorating morale of a usually enthusiastic and spirited group of men, directed that the schedule change to two dawn to dusk shifts, which, though longer, enabled them to get a more normal night's sleep, regular meals and free evening recreation, including the movies, without distraction.

Though challenged by Wing H.Q. on this action, it was felt that the output did not suffer in any way while morale was definitely improved.

Most importantly, the ultimate target date was achieved.

Prior to this change, it was found necessary to augment the Mat Laying force with other personnel from sections working normal daylight duty, i.e. orderly room, messing, barracks personnel to do extra duty of 2 or 3 hours under lights.

Despite the usual grizzles, they performed admirably and felt proud of their valuable contribution.

The initial forming, grading and consolidation of the 1 ½ mile long runway, aprons and over 5 miles of taxiways, with 60 dispersal bays proceeded to the extreme limits of our resources, but serious problems arose from the lack of water.

The ships tanks were assembled - 4 on to each of 2 of our 4 semi-trailers, (thus reducing our capacity for other essential transport operations). The only available water source was the sea, so this was hauled over rough limestone outcropping ground a distance of about 1 mile from Vansittart Bay on the West side of the Peninsula.

Even this was quite inadequate and it was only with great difficulty that some degree of consolidation was



Squadron Leader K W Truscott DFC,  
the Truscott base was named in his honour.

The medical revolution has extended the life of our elderly citizens without providing the dignity and the security those later years deserve - John F Kennedy



## Airfield Construction Memiors—continued

obtained and primer-sealing of base for the strip could be secured. Similar problems applied to the taxiways and hardstands for which previously unreported deposits of latetite gravel near the site was used for surfacing instead of the specified steel mesh. (Which, in any case, would have demanded man power which we just did not have.)

Despite all these problems and pressures, the troops performed magnificently and the tedious job of steel mat laying proceeded well and a sufficient length of landing strip became usable for light aircraft to bring in fresh meat supplies and most importantly mail. These luxuries boosted the flagging morale, though an occasional catch of fresh fish (mackerel) and easily gathered fresh rock oysters were relished, if time could be found to procure them.

The landing strip then also allowed a defence cover of three Spitfire fighters to take care of us which was soon demonstrated by the shooting down of a Jap. "Betty" reconnaissance plane, which no doubt would have taken back some beautiful photos for further reference!

When finally in early June, the main strip was approaching completion, a R.A.A.F. "meat van" plane landing in a strong cross wind nearly came to grief with a flat wheel-tyre which undoubtedly tore on the sharp-edge of a flexible matting-clip, in the side skid. When the pilot dispatched a normal signal to Com. Flight H.Q. for a replacement tyre, the facts were misconstrued resulting in Op. H.Q. thinking that there may be serious faults in the runway. In consequence, all strike operations which were about to commence were "put on hold" and a R.A.A.F. Lib.B/24 bomber with Pilot. F/L. Napier with a U.S. tyre expert was sent over to test and report. After a couple of days taking off and landing with varying bomb loads, they announced the strip "perfect". Even then, the A.O.C./N.W.A.- A.V. Marshall "King" Cole came over to make a personal assessment. The writer as then acting C.O., had the satisfaction of sending him back re-assured - though a nice fish lunch may have contributed to his satisfaction!

Allowing for this hiccough, the target date was achieved.

An interesting sequel can be recorded - the courier pilot - Bill Egan, several years after the war opened a service station in my home town and I was able to chide him about him holding up the War for a week. We became firm friends over many years and I am sad to record his death some years ago. His wife is still with us and has enjoyed the story just related.

Towards the end of our task, No.1 Wing C.O. (then Group Capt.) Rooney O.B.E. came over to Truscott and at the end of dinner in the Mess, called the writer outside



"Bluey" Truscott and one of his aircraft

to inform him of the Squadron's next move - i.e. to the assault on Morotai Is. with the U.S. forces. When asked "why us?" he replied "because MacArthur's H.Q. only wants a crack A.I.F. Battalion, and your best airfield construction unit and that's No.14 because it has always achieved its target date." Though taken aback by the compliment, I hastened to question the Unit's fitness, with the general weariness of the troops and the poor condition of our equipment.

Nevertheless, the Squadron duly pulled out and reloaded on another Liberty ship and with only short calls at Darwin and Hollandia (N.G.) duly landed, after the first assault troops on Morotai, fortunately, without too much enemy resistance.

When the heavy tasks on this coral surface took its toll on the already weary personnel and plant, the apprehension proved justified, but as usual, the unit did its best in the circumstances.

In recording the foregoing account, the complete accuracy of which depends only on memory, I believe that some well-deserved credit for those involved will find a place in the Truscott Archives and I feel privileged to add something worthy of that place.

(Andrew Alexander McLEAN. M.B.E.- M.I.E. Aust. ex F/ Lieut. No. 14 A.C.S.)

You can run an office without a boss, but you can't run an office with secretaries - Jane Fonda

## From the Mailbag

An email from overseas:

A long shot maybe, but an elderly friend of mine, Bernard Hammond, was a Mosquito pilot on 618 Sqn. RAF based at Narromine NSW during WW2. A number of the English aircrew emigrated to Australia and I wonder if you might have some of these now elderly gentleman as members of the Mosquito Association.

I'll also be having a look at the Gunnies site. I'm an ex-RAF armourer of 24 years service and was based at RAAF Darwin twice, 1962 and 1966-67. First time was on a desert bombing exercise down the track alongside the Stuart Highway, the second time in a bomb dump on the coast, servicing 1,000 lb. high explosive bombs left behind by a variety of V-Bomber detachments. The memories were all good ones, especially over Christmas/New Year 1966-67.

Seven Pommie airmen wondered what we'd do as Darwin shut down, only to find that we'd been "farmed" out to seven families on the base for the festive season. What wonderful hospitality, and never forgotten by myself.

Finally, a temporary member of our local Royal British Legion branch is one Tony Sheldrake, who emigrated to Australia many years ago and is currently staying with his brother in the next village. It turns out that Tony and I were both based at Darwin in 66-67, he in the RAAF and me in the RAF. While in Oz, I became a fan of the Ettamogah Pub Mob and have a number of their cartoon albums, I'll have another one when Tony returns in the New Year. Small world.

Regards,

Alan Mudge  
Pentney, Norfolk.

Email: Bombhead40@aol.com



Thanks for your newsletters, I am here in Vancouver Canada, a small group of us are in the process of rebuilding a Mosquito B-35. I have enclosed a little joke for your next edition:

A man goes to see his Doctor.  
The Doctor says "Well Mr Smith, I have some good news and some bad news".  
Mr Smith says 'Give me the good news'.  
"O.K" says the Doctor, you have only seven days to live".  
"So what's the bad news"  
"I should of told you last week".

Regards Doug Grant



The Editor, I enclose a document of the article from 1943. I have not written the portion of 'how to make a model of the aircraft'.

I have attached pictures in the article and hope they will come up satisfactorily. If NOT, let me know and I will photograph them and send proper black & white prints in the regular mail to you.

I have a dozen copies of the magazine with many interesting articles that might entertain. The Owen gun for instance published in November 1941. I find it curious that a top secret new weapon was published so early in the war. The July & August 1942 magazine tells all about the Japanese attack on Sydney Harbour which was again recently a subject on TV.

Each magazine has a photo page with three aircraft depicted 'They is helping win the war'. Some of these planes were obsolete before they left the ground yet are talked about as if they are flying marvels- propaganda I suppose. An example: The Blackburn Skua aircraft is one of the British Navy's most modern fighting machines- 1943.

Feature Story Headlines: Mystery

Bomb A Squib. Girl Nazi Air Gunners.

Aero Engines for 10 pounds. Eight-engined Flying boat. Heavier Loads for U.S. Bombers. New Healing Drug. Women's Underground Paper. Radio Location Sinks Battleship. Pocket-size Machine-guns. 24 Hours to fly Pacific. Spitfires Out-fly Zeros

Regards TREVOR PATRICK

*The article is reproduced elsewhere in this Bulletin—Ed.*



I was recommended to write to you by Tony Wilson of the British association. My father, John Jefferson, navigated Mosquitos with 109 Squadron.

His pilot was usually "Mick" O'Neill, whose real name might have been Eugene. I think he also flew with several others, including P/O Thelwell, F/L Ackland, S/L Somerville, S/L Campbell, G/C Bufton, W/C Green, S/L Stephens, and F/L Raybould

I was wondering how many of these survive still, especially "Mick" O'Neill. I know that he moved back to Australia, and thence to Tasmania, but I wonder if anyone knows of his whereabouts now.

I know that he also flew with Peter Kleboe, but that he was killed later in the war, in low flying.

Dad would have been 96 now, but he did say that most of the others were younger than himself, so there are probably plenty of fit 85 year olds around, to tell the tales. Also, I'm wondering about the planes themselves. I know that Kermit Weekes' was delaminating in the wonderful Florida climate; the plane wasn't having a holiday.

I have some photos of his Mossie (and of him sheltering under its wing, from the English rain) shortly before he bought it, at Booker. I understand

Give a man a free hand and he'll try to put it all over you - Mae West

that BAE's was crashed.

I was wondering if either of these, or any other in existence, was expected to fly again, and Tony told me about the RAAF project to re-build one. Hoping to hear from you when you get a moment, if you can dig anything up.

David Jefferson  
Email: spikej@tesco.net



Reading of Kim Bonython reminded me of the times I rode as pillion on the back of his Solo motorbike, after dark to a picture show, I think at Batchelor, Northern Territory, in "THE BUSH". He was intrepid and loved speed, I asked him - "why are you riding with an arm in front of his eyes." His reply was—" to keep the insects away from my eyes."

After the war he took up driving fast cars and had the inevitable crash or crashes, however he survived and lives on - such was the man with nine lives. He neither smoked or drank anything other than "lolly water" for which we bought for about sixpence a bottle. Where it was made, I can't recall, perhaps in the Airmen's lines, where other "foreigners" were manufactured - such as Perspex brooches, sandals

and other saleable items outside the skills of Aircrew.

I think Kim was awarded an A.C. for flying a Mossie on a P.R. 6F further west over Java than anyone else, goodness knows what fuel he had left when he landed back at Broome.

Sincerely, and all the best,  
Bert Garrett



Sorry I have not been down to Point Cook for quite a while, I have an aim to complete the two New South Wales C 38 loco's I am building by the end of this year. I have been working on them for years, having manufactured the parts and assembled them both in my spare time (not that I have much of that!).

Thanks for keeping me up to date on the restoration of A52 600 and other "doings" in the newsletters, particularly the pictures of the guys.

Keep up the good work, it is very gratifying when you complete the lengthy task.

Regards  
Les Phillips  
Vermont South, Vic



### Restoration News: Plastic Parrot flies again!

Wing Commander Warren Madsen, the RAAF Museum's Operations Officer flew CT4A A19-077 for the first time in more than 12 years last month.

The aircraft has been in storage at the Museum for most of that time, and recently completed an extensive refurbishment. It's now on the active register, complete with civil registration, and has now joined the regular Interactive flying display program. With less than 5 hours engine time, it's not yet cleared for aerobatics; this clearance should be gained after 15 hours or so.

From an original design by Henry Millicer, Senior Lecturer in Aeronautical Engineering at RMIT, the aircraft started life as all wood construction. It was entered in a design competition in the UK (which it won), and was then developed as an all-metal aircraft. It eventually became the successful Victa Airtourer, over 100 examples of which were sold in Australia and overseas.

With unfettered competition from US light aircraft manufacturers (and no tariff protection), its small production volumes eventually told against it, and the company was sold off to a New Zealand operation. Ironically, the aircraft were later sold back to the RAAF as the CT4A after significant incremental developments. It was introduced to replace the ageing Winjeel fleet.

With many light weight components such as fibreglass wing tips, a large acrylic bubble canopy and so on, it didn't have the robust and unbreakable-by-trainees look of the Winjeel. It was more like a light aircraft than an Air Force trainer, which probably explains where the "Plastic" moniker came in. The original aircraft had bright green and yellow high-visibility paint schemes, hence the "Parrot". The present orange and white paint

*(Continued on page 12)*



Never have children, only grandchildren - Gore Vidal

## Eulogy for Ray Lackey

Ray Lackey was born in Burwood Sydney, NSW on 3rd September 1922.

The very first time he experienced "lift off" was as a young boy with none other than "Sir Charles Kingsford Smith" at Mascot airport. This flight came about because his mother purchased two 'Pelaco Junior Airman Shirts' which entitled him to the flight.

From that moment on, the young Ray Lackey wanted to fly.

The day WWII broke out was his 17th birthday and Ray had hopes of joining the RAAF, but a eye problem failed him. Instead he was called up for duty in the Army, but during this period his boss arranged for treatment on his eye.

A year and a half later he managed to transfer to the RAAF, learning to fly in Tiger Moths. When he acquired his wings, he was transferred to Canada where he fly Cessna Cranes and Avro Ansons.

This was followed by a move to the UK in preparation for

D-Day and was eventually posted to active flying duty with 464 Australian Mosquito Squadron.

He broadened his skills by adding Oxfords and Walruses to his repertoire to aircraft flown.

At the cessation of war, Ray took his new 'war bride' Lilian back to Australia with him.

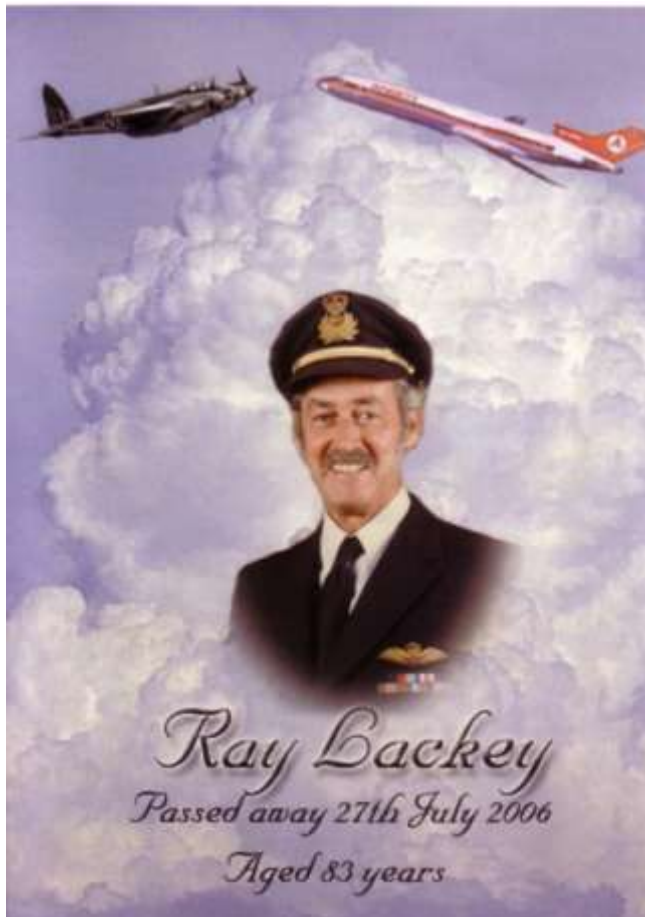
It was suggested he go to Japan to fly Mustangs, but as he had set down roots in Sydney, he decided it was time to leave the RAAF.

He began his civil flying career with Australian National Airways that became Ansett ANA then Ansett Airlines.

He completed 29 years civil flying in many different aircraft types, such as DC3, DC4, DC6B, Viscount, Carvair, DC9 but his favourite was the Boeing 727-200. He amassed 16,600 hours flying time of which 8,342 were in command.

Ray actually flew one to Darwin following Cyclone Tracy on Christmas Day 1974. Although the aircraft was made to seat 154 passengers, he managed to get 296 on his aircraft and return safely to Brisbane...

Ray leaves behind his wife Lilian and their children Diane, Peter and Julie.



## From the Mailbag—contd

*(Continued from page 11)*

scheme was adopted during their service life.

Anyway, enough from me. You can find out more about these aircraft from the RAAF Museum's website at [www.raafmuseum.com.au](http://www.raafmuseum.com.au), or better still come down for a first hand look.

For an update on what's due to fly in the Interactive Flying Program, phone the RAAF Museum on (03) 9256 1040.

TRB



Don't fail for want of trying - give it a go - W.G.P.

# Mossie Data by Brian Fillery

## Mosquito PR Mk I.

**Description:** Photo-reconnaissance  
**Engines:** Merlin 21 or 23  
**First flight:** 10 June 1941  
**Wing Span:** 54ft 2 ins (16.45m)  
**Wing Area:** 454sq ft (42.1sq m)

**Length:** 40ft 6 in (12.35m)  
**Height:** 12ft 6in (3.75m)  
**Weight:** 13,009lbs (5,900kg)  
tare.

17,940lbs (8,137kg) useful operational load.  
18,050lbs (8,187kg) auw.

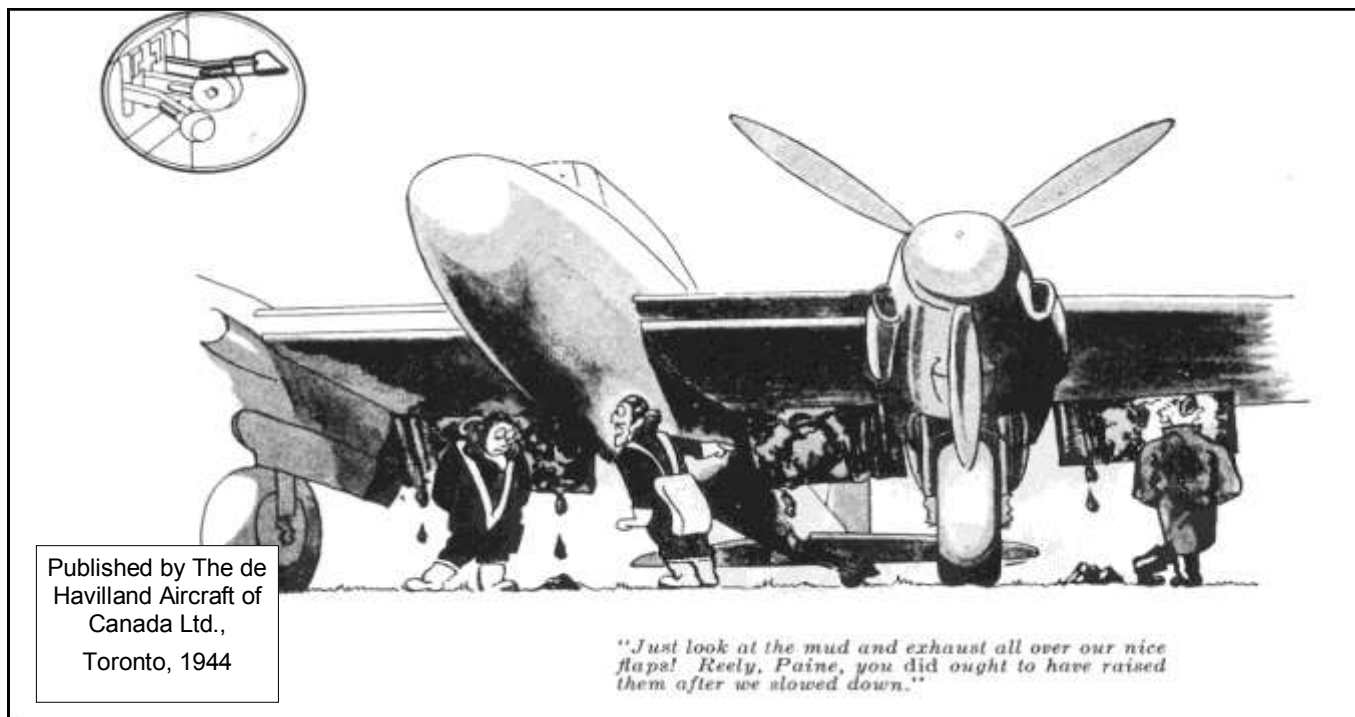
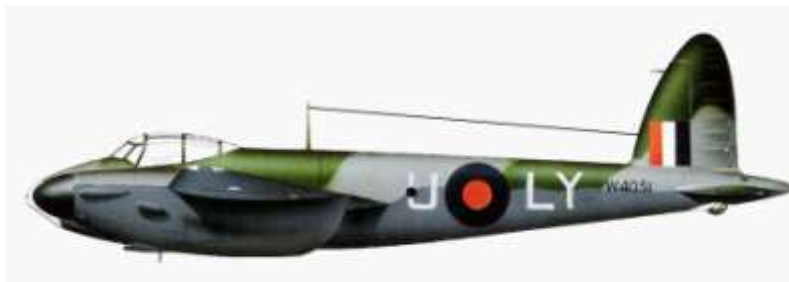
**Fuel:** 690 gallons (3,136 litres)  
**Oil:** 44 gallons (200 litres)

**Speed:** 382mph (614kph)  
**Initial Climb:** 2,850ft/min (14.5m/sec)  
**Ceiling:** 35,000ft (10,668m)  
**Max Range:** 2,180 miles (3,508km)

**Weapons:** Unarmed - 3 vertical cameras, 1 oblique.

**Notes:** Based on W4050. Had short nacelles, original tailplane. Nine built plus prototype (W4051).  
Two were long range with operational weight of 19,310lbs (8,758kg).  
Two were tropicalised.

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



There is no class of person more moved by hate than the motorist - C.R. Hewitt

# Radio and Hobbies Transcript from July 1943

Transcription from  
**RADIO AND HOBBIES FOR JULY 1943 Magazine**  
by *MAAA member Trevor Patrick.*

*The original article was written in the middle of the Second World War with censorship operating and false information often given to confuse the enemy. It has been recorded many times that the enemy was aware in fine detail of troop movements, names of commanding officers and the vital statistics of new weapon systems. It is possible that the publication of this article was considered of little practical value to the enemy because they were already experiencing its 'sting'. - Trevor Patrick*

## THE WORLD'S FASTEST BOMBING PLANE

Britain's Hurricane and Spitfire, the US Flying Fortress, Germany's Stuka, Japan's Zero, and a variety of other planes have all had their turn beneath the spotlight of public interest. Foremost among the planes now in the news is the de Havilland Mosquito. Since its debut in Norway, it has gone from success to success, worrying the Nazis and intriguing the Allies.

The Mosquito first made the headlines with an extremely successful daylight raid on Oslo, Norway, during which Nazi headquarters were badly damaged.

During this raid the Mosquitoes (later identified as a de Havilland product) came into their target area at low level in daylight and were thus able accurately to press home their attack.

Interception by Germany's crack fighter planes, the Focke Wulf FW190, was attempted, and proved unsuccessful, due to the high speed and maneuverability of the new bombers. The Mosquitoes evaded and outdistanced their pursuers and arrived safely at their home bases.

To have a bomber plane outstrip their best fighter aircraft must have been quite a blow to the Nazis. They were due for some more morale shattering from these planes, in the form of an attack on Berlin on January 30, at the exact hour when Reichmarshal Goering was scheduled to deliver the Nazis Party's Tenth Anniversary address at the Air Ministry.

The speech was completely disrupted by the bursting bombs delivered in the RAF's first daylight raid of the war on the German capital.

The three Mosquitoes responsible escaped without loss and returned again at 4pm to spoil Goering's second speech of the day at the huge Berlin Sportpalast. One of the planes was lost on this second venture.

To make the long trip over hostile territory, bomb Berlin and escape in daylight speaks volumes for the efficiency of these new

struction, fabricated in huge concrete moulds and jigs. The fuselage is made in two half-shells comprising a layer of plywood, casein glue, filler and binder material, more glue, and then another plywood layer. Incidentally, balsa wood, our standard model building timber, is reputed to be the filler material used.

The use of a filler material between the plywood layers, besides giving bulk and rigidity to the structure, helps considerably in the reduction of engine noise and resonance within the cabin.



Homeward bound—on a single engine - from the publication

planes.

The veil of secrecy surrounding the Mosquito has now been lifted and most of its general details have been made available officially for publication. We feel sure you will be very happy to add this outstanding plane to your collection of Aircraft Recognition Models.

The plane is of all wood con-

The two half-shells, comprised as previously stated, are placed in the concrete moulds with a huge rubber airbag between them, and they are then bolted together.

Heat is applied and the airbag is blown up under terrific pressure. After a certain predetermined time has elapsed, the moulds are allowed to cool, the air-bag is deflat-

Any jackass can kick down a barn, but it takes a good carpenter to build one - Sam Rayburn

ed and the moulds removed.

This leaves us with a completed fuselage shell all ready for the attachment and installation of equipment. You will notice the method of construction has a lot in common with the building and retreading of motor-car tyres.

The wing and tail surfaces follow a somewhat similar process inasmuch as the plywood covering surfaces are preformed prior to their attachment to the usual built-up rib-stringer-spar type of construction.

This performing of the covering surface makes for ease of attachment to the inner structure and decreases the likelihood of warped surfaces.

The use of moulded plywood throughout, although not entirely new in the aircraft field, is new to combat type aircraft. The Mosquito is the first plane of its type to use this radical departure from the orthodox, and its performance augurs well for the success of moulded plywood and plastic planes yet to come.

This method of construction gives exceptionally light, strong and smooth surfaces.

To increase further its inherent smoothness, the complete plane is given coat after coat of clear high-gloss lacquer over its regulation camouflage colouring. The extreme smoothness of finish so obtained cuts down considerably on skin friction, and thus adds materially to the amazingly high top speed of the Mosquito.

## POWER PLANT ASSEMBLY

This machine is powered by two Rolls Royce Merlin XX motors fitted with two-stage two-speed gear-driven superchargers. This type of supercharger allows the pilot to change gear and so secure the maximum performance from the motors, whether flying at low or high altitude.

The engines are mounted outboard of the fuselage in the wing leading edge, and are completely enclosed in removable fairing panels. They are mounted on welded steel tubing motor mounts and pro-

ject ahead and below the wings in such a manner as to bring the top of the engine nacelles and the wing panels completely flush.

The engine nacelles (or cowlings) are well streamlined and fair beautifully into the wings, thus reducing parasitic drag at this point to minimum.

Two three-bladed all-metal constant speed de Havilland propellers are fitted. Perhaps it will be of interest to mention that the de Havilland concern is reputed to be the largest propeller manufacturing factory in the world.

The landing gear follows the conventional tractor pattern, the two wheels being supported by double shock struts on either side of the axles. Wheel brakes are fitted and may be used independently in either wheel, thus allowing the pilot good ground control of his aircraft.

The undercarriage folds rearward and upward by hydraulic power into the rear section of the engine nacelles. Large clam shell doors mounted on the struts completely enclose the landing gear when folded up.

The tail wheel also retracts rearward into the fuselage but has no covering door.

A distinguishing feature of the Mosquito is the projecting lead-

ing edge of the wing inboard of the engines; this lies at right angles to the fuselage centre line, whereas the



Trevor's copy of the 1943 publication

wing outboard of the nacelles sweep sharply rearward in a pronounced taper.

The leading edge between the engine nacelles and fuselage is used as a novel means of securing intake of air to the oil coolers, supercharged inter-coolers and liquid coolant radiators.

All these essential accessories are mounted within the wing structure and so add a minimum of drag to the plane.

Small controllable flaps located in the lower wing surfaces inboard of the motors control the amount of air passing through these coolers. Thus, the pilot, per medium of these controls, is able to regulate

his oil and engine temperatures.

The carburetor gets its air supply from a small duct situated underneath the engine cowling.

## POINTS OF RECOGNITION

The plane sits quite low on the ground and the entire assembly is characterised by two huge propeller spinners, easily the largest ever installed on any plane. The nose barely projects beyond the motors and is moulded of phenol plastic.

A flat clear-vision panel set at a large angle is included in the nose of the machine to enable the bomb-sighting mechanism to be used effectively. Just aft of the nose section on either side of the plane are situated two large observation windows.

The crew's enclosure, beautifully faired into the fuselage, is on the top and well forward, thus providing excellent vision for its occupants. The bomb-bay doors are situated beneath the ship and almost directly underneath the crew's quarters, the latter being separated from the bomb compartment by solid flooring.

The crew of two men enters and leave the plane by a small door situated in the bottom of the fuselage between the nose cone and the bomb-bay doors.

These are the only openings in the entire fuselage, with the exception of that reserved for the tail wheel.

The Mosquito first made its debut as a bomber, but, since then, has been used as a fighter-bomber and also as a straight-out fighter plane.

In the bomber version it carried no defensive armament but relied solely on its speed and nimbleness to avoid damage from enemy fighters. In this role it carried some 2000lb. of bombs, usually in the form of four 500lb. types and this places it in the category of a light bomber.

As a fighter-bomber it is armed with four 20mm. cannon and four .303 Browning machine-guns,

plus an assortment of bombs. Used in this manner, it can make an attack on ground targets and they stay to battle it out with any fighters which may attempt to intercept.

It is now being used extensively to make sweeps over enemy territory attacking numerous targets by bombing and cannon fire. Its use as a fighter plane should prove extremely interesting due to its high speed and maneuverability.

Although some doubt has been expressed as to its ability to do 400mph, it is undoubtedly capable of reaching this figure in view of Mr. Churchill's statement that it is faster than the Spitfire, and, in fact, the fastest plane in the world.

Its inherent light weight, extreme smoothness of surfaces and two powerful Rolls Royce motors lends credence to this statement.

It is exceptionally maneuverable and Captain G. de Havilland and Mr. C.C. Walker, the firm's chief engineer, have both flown the plane and commented on this feature.

In the past, twin-engined machines have proved themselves quit capable as fighter aircraft, but, with the possible exception of the Lockheed Lightning, were lacking in a really high top speed.

Perhaps the Mosquito, containing as it does all the attributes of a successful fighter machine, may prove to be a really top-notch performer as so become the most versatile plane of this war.

In all of its three versions it carries a crew of two men acting as pilot and co-pilot in a side-by-side seating arrangement.

## RADIO EQUIPMENT

Complete radio communication equipment is installed, the co-pilot acting as the radio operator. You will notice that the antenna mast is located on top and to the rear of the crew's enclosure and the aerial wires run from there to the fin.

Because of its all-wooden structure, carpenters, cabinetmakers and

wood-workers of all types are employed in its manufacture. This eases the growing strain which was being put on the engineering trades by the pressure of work on metal type aircraft.

It brings a large body of wood-working craftsmen more directly into the fight, thus helping the Allies to bring home to the German people the grim realities of a war which they so unceremoniously thrust on the world.

The de Havilland Mosquito will undoubtedly play a vital role in the destruction of the enemies of mankind everywhere.

The Mosquito is de Havilland's first military plane of World War II, and it may well become the war's most outstanding plane and thus gain still further achievement for the designer and builder.

## BUILDING A MODEL

For the benefit of those wishing to construct a model of this outstanding plane, a three-view plan has been prepared.

The plans show you the colour lines used. As the Mosquito is mainly used in daylight, the usual olive and drab colours are added to the top of the plane. The underneath surfaces are painted a very pale blue. The usual colour markings are evident on the wings, rudder and fuselage.

## MOSQUITO STATISTICS

Wing span of 54 feet 2 inches; a total length overall of 40 feet 9 ½ inches; and a wing area of 420 square feet. It stands 15 feet 3 inches high over the propeller tips.

Maximum Speed 425 m.p.h.

The maximum range has not been released but must be quite considerable, in view of Mr. Churchill's statement that it has flown to Russia and returned in one day.

- Trevor Patrick.



# Vale

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

**JAMES**, Allan Eric of ROCKHAMPTON, Queensland

**JONES**, Phyllis of ORANGE, New South Wales

**MIDDLETON**, Harry Clive of NOOSAVILLE, Queensland

The Association's condolences go to all their loved ones.

## New Members

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

**JONES**, Noel of WARWICK FARM, New South Wales

Welcome to you Noel, thanks for continuing the association on behalf of your father Bill and mother Phyllis we hope you have a long, enjoyable association and take an active interest in Mosquitos and in particular the restoration of A52-600.



**Spectacular photos...**

This photo was taken by a soldier in Afghanistan of a helo-rescue mission. The pilot is a PA Guard guy who flies EMS choppers in civilian life. Now how many people on the planet you reckon could set the rear end of a chopper down on the roof top of a shack on a steep mountain cliff and hold it there while soldiers load wounded men in. If this does not impress you .. nothing ever will. Gives me the chills and a serious case of the vertigo.



An awkward time to get a compressor stall...

If you want work well done, select a busy man; the other kind has no time - Elbert Hubbard

## Member Profile—P/O Malcolm (Mac) Skinner

Mac Skinner completed his Navigators Bomb Aimers course at 3 A.O.S. Port Pirie, S.A. on 26th May 1944, receiving his Observer's Wing (known in those days as the Flying Arsehole) and a commission as Pilot Officer.

He was drafted to travel to England, to fly with the RAF. After pre-embarkation leave, as no transport was immediately available, he joined 71 Squadron at Coffs Harbour, NSW. for three weeks, doing coastal patrols in Avro Ansons.

Eventually at the end of July, 1944, he traveled to England- (Brisbane, San Francisco, New York, Greenock) to join the RAAF Staging Unit at Brighton. He was then given the option of going straight Navigator or straight Bomb Aimer, both on heavy Bombers or going as Navigator/ Bomber Aimer which would probably be on Mosquitos.

While he was at Port Pirie, he saw his first Mosquito, when Black Jack Walker flew in from Western Australia, and took off the next morning with a bit of a display. Mac has been rapt with Mosquitos from that day.

He took the option to remain as a Navigator/Bomb Aimer and after doing Advanced Flying Unit, Operational Training Unit, Mosquito Conversation Unit and Pathfinder Training Unit he was eventually posted to 105 Squadron at Bourn ( nine miles out from Cambridge).

105 Squadron used a top secret sys-

tem, called Oboe for accurate bombing and target marking. His pilot was a New Zealander - David Young.

At 2:26 on the morning of Mac's 20th birthday, 21st April 1945 in Mosquito "A" of 105 Squadron he released 4x500 M.C. bombs on Alexandre Platz, in the centre of Berlin, from a height of 28,000 feet, using "Oboe" for a computed error of 50 yards.

It transpired that these were the last RAF bombs to be dropped on Berlin and Mac has a certificate, signed by Bourn's Intelligence Officer confirming this.

Later on that day Russian troops were in the streets of Berlin, which negated any further bombing. The reason that these bombs were the last, was that just prior to takeoff, the Mosquito scheduled to be used developed an engine fault which necessitated a change to Mosquito "A", with a delay of about 20 minutes, by which time a cold front had moved in and to avoid icing on the wings, they flew out at 30,000 feet dropping to 28,000 feet for the 10 minute run into the target.

In a MAAA newsletter an excerpt from a publication stated that the last RAF raid of the war against Germany took place on the night of 2/3 May, 1945, when 125 Mosquitos attacked the port of Keil.

They bombed in two waves,

making use of the sophisticated "Oboe" navigational. This prompted Mac to check his Log Book, which showed that they bombed Husum A/ F (Keil), on that raid, dropping a 4,000 lb "cookie".

Mac was later posted to Administration at RAAF Holding Unit at Gamston and finally returned to Australia in early January, 1946, and rejoined the staff of Bank of New South Wales, two months before his 21st birthday.



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

If men had to have babies they would only ever have one each - Diana, Princess of Wales