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Wings



WINTER 2018
Volume 70 No. 2



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22



57



10



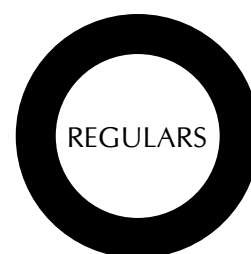
10 The F-35A Lightning II

16 The Domino Theory

22 The Great Flight of the Vimy

28 Record of Luck

42 Magpie Painting



6 National Council

45 Air Force Today

52 Defence Talk

55 Australian Air League

57 Air Force Cadets

59 Briefing Room

64 History

71 Veterans Information

75 Books in Brief

Front Cover:

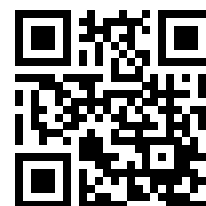
A F-35A Lightning II departs RAAF Base Amberley.

Photo Casey Gaul.

Image has been digitally manipulated.

MATERIAL CLOSING DATES

Spring Issue - 14 July
Summer Issue - 14 October
Autumn Issue - 14 January
Winter Issue - 14 April



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From the President's Desk

Every ANZAC Day we reflect on the horrors of the Great War and the aftermath of fallen servicemen and women, physically and/or psychologically broken veterans, and suffering families. Our nation, like others in this conflict, was ill prepared to deal with the social and economic catastrophe that followed. Fortunately, there were those among our political forefathers and returned servicemen who recognised and advocated for much needed support to our veterans and their families. Today, our service people are supported by veterans' legislation and a government department that is dedicated to administering that legislation. We have a variety of ex-Service Organisations that deliver a range of services including welfare, aged care, advocacy, financial support, fellowship, and commemorations.

An estimated 2,000,000 Australians have served in our Defence Force since Federation and of those about 900,000 have served overseas. There is hardly been a time when our forces have not been involved in operations whether it be warlike, non-warlike, peacekeeping or humanitarian and I think it's reasonable to expect Australia will continue to commit the ADF to conflicts and disaster recovery. It is important now as it was following the Great War that we continue to provide

support to our veterans and their families and that veterans' legislation is in step with current needs.

The Association recognises the complexity of veterans' legislation and is keen to support efforts to get the Government to homogenise the current Acts. Further, it also supports the professionalization of military advocacy training and employment, which appears to be attracting interest from younger veterans. The involvement of younger veterans is pivotal to the future of advocacy.

The term 'veteran' is not clearly understood by the Defence and wider communities. Feedback from several Ex-Service Organisations suggests there is a degree of confusion among former and serving ADF members as to who is a veteran. Most disturbing, is that some members who have had recent operational service do not see themselves as veterans. It is important there is uniform acknowledgement among the veteran community that the term 'veteran' means all Service personnel, regardless of the nature of their service. It is important to ADF members and their families we acknowledge ADF service and its contribution to Australia's well-being.

There is clear evidence veterans need assistance transiting from the ADF into civilian life. First employment

post-service is a high priority for young veterans as is the resettlement of their families. Veteran unemployment is an alarming 30.2% despite the existence of several veteran employment assistance programs and a job rise over the last 12 months. The veteran unemployment rate is five times the national unemployment rate of 5.5%, and over twice the youth unemployment at 13.3%. Veterans also have a higher mismatch of skills in civil employment (19%) compared to their civilian counterparts at 8.5%. Studies into the relationship between unemployment and well-being undoubtedly indicate long-term unemployment increases the risk of anxiety, depression, and somatization. Essentially, unemployment is a health-risk factor. The Air Force Association is currently examining ways in which it may play a role in assisting a better transition for ADF members.

Shortly, the Association will commence its study into the needs of current veterans and their families. The study is part of the Association's National Strategic Implementation Plan that was recently approved by the National Board. Divisions will be soon contact their members and have discussions with serving members to identify future courses of action.

Carl Schiller OAM CSM
National President



No 6 Training Squadron SE5As lined up, Minchinhampton, July 1918. *Photo: RAAF Museum*

NOMINATIONS REQUIRED

YOUR ASSOCIATION NEEDS YOU !!

There are Branches, Groups and Individuals throughout Australia who do good work on an annual basis in support of the Air Force Association, its Divisions, or its Branches. However, we need YOU, the members of the Association to help us recognise that support at a National level.

The O'Connor Trophy and the Geoff Michael Award are two National Awards that are awarded annually. The criteria for selection for each of the Awards is outlined below.

O'CONNOR TROPHY

The Trophy was donated to the Association by Brian and Nora O'Connor in 1988 to be awarded annually to a person who, or organization that, has provided outstanding service to the Association during the previous year or for a number of years.

GEOFF MICHAEL AWARD

The Geoff Michael Award was instituted in 2012 by the National Council, to be awarded annually to an Association member who has rendered exemplary service to and enhanced the standing of the Association. The Award is named after the late Air Commodore Geoffrey Michael AO OBE AFC (Retd), who served for 23 years as the National President of the Association.

Please consider and nominate people or organisations that you know are doing good work. Discuss with your Branch or Division and submit your nomination through the Division Council.

If you wish, you may email your nomination directly to the National Secretary at NatSec@raafa.org.au. Nominations required by the end of September 2018.

They've done their bit. We now need YOU to do YOURS, by nominating THEM.

Membership of the Air Force Association

Members and ex-members of the Royal Australian Air Force, aircrew of Australian and other Designated Services' Navies and Armies and technical personnel specifically engaged in the maintenance of the aircraft of the above Services

Serving and former members of the Australian Air Force Cadets or the Australian Air League and its predecessors who are over the age

of eighteen years and have given satisfactory service

Persons who being not less than eighteen years of age, are siblings, sons or daughters of members, or of deceased former members of this Association Spouses of Association members, deceased Association members or of deceased members of the Royal Australian Air Force.

Persons who have an involvement or relationship with the uniformed or civilian areas of the Royal Australian Air Force, related industries or activities

Residents in a Retirement Estate or Village owned or conducted by the Association, Division or Branch.

Please contact your State Secretary for further details

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Spec Homes a Win for First Home Owners

First home owners at Ecco Ripley are swooping in on the opportunity to purchase a new property with the \$20,000 First Home Owners' Grant ahead of the expiry of the extended offer on June 30, 2018.

The highly sought after Sekisui House spec homes at Ecco Ripley has allowed first home owners to get the keys to their new home sooner with the grant allowing their dream of owning a home more attainable.

First home owner Nathan McCartney, who is a Captain in the Australian Army based at RAAF Amberley, is among many buyers making the move to the burgeoning Ripley region.

Mr McCartney purchased a townhouse in Ecco Ripley's Foxtail Place release and said the advantages of purchasing a completed product outweighed the uncertainty of a house and land package.

"Having the opportunity to view our home provided me with a sense of security that the build had been completed to a good standard and that I had a turnkey property that I could move



into straight away," Mr McCartney said.

"The completed product also allowed us to visualise what our home would be like with our furniture."

The couple had considered purchasing a house and land package but the time frame was not suitable.

"I needed to purchase a house that would be available in a short time frame," he said.

"I had also been informed that the banks are more comfortable in providing finance for an established property."

Mr McCartney said he and his wife were originally attracted to the price point of the Foxtail Place townhouses.

"The design of the townhouse is family friendly and allows for the normal creature comforts," he said.

"The townhouse is the ideal property for us to gain some capital before moving again, and it is almost maintenance free which accommodates our busy lifestyle."

Mr McCartney said the grant played a significant part in the purchase of their property.

"It allowed us to purchase this home almost two years earlier than we may have been able to. We had been looking for the past two years and in that time inflation had kept us one step behind, but this grant and some serious saving pushed us across the line," he said.

"The cost of rent in the area we wished to live in was almost \$300 more a fortnight than our mortgage, we saw this as an opportunity to enter the property market."

Foxtail Place townhouses are due for completion in July 2018 and are priced from \$294,000 or \$274,000 if using the First Home Buyers Grant.

The newly released three and four bedroom spec homes are priced from \$383,900 and feature 2590mm high ceilings, split system air conditioning, stone bench tops, 900mm free-standing family size oven, exposed aggregate driveway and are fully fenced and landscaped.

Sekisui House state sales manager Scott Blaney said spec homes can offer excellent value for money.

"A completed product means an expert has already made all the hard decisions for the buyers in terms of architecture, colours and finishes," Mr Blaney said.

"Many high-end items are also included in the homes, including stone bench tops, which can be expensive if purchased individually."

For more information on Ecco Ripley, visit eccoripley.com.au or phone 1800 RIPLEY.



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- All Ecco Ripley turn-key homes are eligible for the \$20,000 First Home Owners' Grant today*

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*Price includes GST, is current as at April 2018 and is subject to change without notice. Price applies to the advertised lot and home only. House and land components covered under separate contracts. Average full turn-key price is \$417,225. Images are artistic representations and indicative only. Final product may differ to that depicted. Images shown may depict specifications upgrades, design options and decorator items which are not included in the advertised price. Price does not include furniture, décor and landscaping unless otherwise stated. The \$20,000 First Home Owners' Grant is a QLD Government initiative. Eligibility criteria apply. Visit <https://firsthomeowners.initiatives.qld.gov.au/> for further information. Purchasers should inform and assure themselves by inspection, independent advice or as otherwise necessary prior to purchase. All purchases are subject to contract terms.
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FROM FOURTH TO FIFTH GENERATION

ENTER THE F-35A LIGHTNING II



AVM Brian Weston (Ret'd) describes the RAAF's transition through five generations of fighter aircraft. In this article, he outlines how the RAAF plans to transition from the F/A-18A to the F-35A without the loss of combat capability.

Following the earlier RAAF fighter transitions from Avon-Sabre to Mirage IIIO, then to F/A-18A, the RAAF, as evidenced by the deployment of its first two F-35A fighters across the Pacific for the 2017 Avalon Airshow, has already commenced its transition from a fourth generation to a fifth-generation capability. Like the two previous fighter transitions, each with their unique characteristics, the introduction of the

F-35A will pose some new problems especially given the large step-up in capability.

Like previous transitions, this change will also require the RAAF to maintain a credible level of combat capability throughout the change, and possibly require it to sustain concurrent operational deployments. But aside from this, most of the issues arising from the transition can be categorized as related to either the management of the increased resources and personnel needed for the transition, or to the introduction of significantly increased levels of technology and capability.

Previous transitions certainly have stressed both resources and personnel during the phase out of the preceding fighter, the phase in of the new fighter, and during the period of overlapping operations and sustainment of the two types. However, unlike earlier fighter

transitions, the RAAF now can exploit the availability of overseas F-35A training rather than conduct all of the transitional activities in Australia.

No 3 Squadron will be the first RAAF unit to convert to the F-35A with some personnel already in the USA for training. This progressively expanding group will further consolidate their F-35A training by remaining in the USA for some time, with some pilots gaining further experience as instructional pilots (IPs in USAF jargon) in the USAF F-35A training unit.

Soon after, personnel earmarked for future Australian-based F-35A fighter instructional duties will join 3 Squadron personnel in the USA. As this cohort of Australian F-35A instructional staff builds overseas, 2 Operational Conversion Unit (2OCU), the RAAF's dedicated fighter training unit, will cease F/A-18A operational training.



An F-35A Lightning II arrives at the 2017 Australian International Airshow. *Photo SGT Chris Dickson*

Once 3 Squadron has built to a critical mass it will return to Australia where it will further mature into Australia's first operational F-35A unit. Shortly after, the cadre of instructional staff, that had also been building in the USA, will return to Australia to reconstitute 2OCU as the dedicated Australian F-35A training unit. From this US-trained cadre, 2OCU will build its F-35A training capacity and expertise, at a measured rate, until the unit takes on the responsibility for converting pilots from the remaining two F/A-18A squadrons onto the F-35A, as well as commencing the training of pilots direct from the RAAF Lead-in Fighter Program.

With the phase out of the F/A-18A, and with 6 Squadron becoming an EA-18G Growler unit, there also will be consequences for the training of Australian F/A-18F and EA-18G aircrew. The option of including a



An F-35A Lightning II arrives at the 2017 Australian International Airshow. *Photo CPL Ben Dempster*

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training organization for F/A-18F and EA-18G aircrew, within both 1 and 6 Squadrons, would come at the cost of eroding the operational capabilities of both squadrons. Hence the decision to train future Australian F/A-18F and EA-18G aircrew in the US, with 'C' Flight of 1 Squadron being tasked only with the conduct of RAAF F/A-18F refresher and standardization activities.

A part from managing the personnel and resource aspects of the transition, the RAAF must also manage the technological advances which are core to the operational effectiveness of the F-35A. Stealth, sensors, sensor fusion and connectivity, all involve technological leaps which will be periodically advanced through software and hardware upgrades.

These evolving technologies will generate substantial changes in roles, operational doctrine, tactics, and procedures which will impinge on not just other air force capabilities, but also on army and navy capabilities.

The evolutionary expansion of the unparalleled connectivity of the F-35A to other ADF capabilities will presage an expansion of F-35A roles well beyond the roles traditionally espoused for combat systems with a 'Fighter' (F) designation.

So the Air Force seems well-placed in its transition to a new air combat capability, which is not surprising given Australia's long and deep involvement with the JSF program as a Level 2 Partner Nation, as was evident by the presence of the two Australian F-35A aircraft, and their RAAF pilots, at Avalon. The transition from F/A-18A Hornet to the F-35A Lightning II is well underway, with the RAAF on the verge of a new operational era, with its combat force of three F-35A squadrons, an F-35A operational conversion unit, one squadron of F/A-18F Super Hornets and one squadron of EA-18G Growlers.

It would seem to be a good time to be a junior air force Australian Defence Force Academy cadet, with the prospect of earning wings on the spirited Pilatus PC-21, followed by lead-in fighter training on the capable Hawk, and then converting directly to the F-35A.

Courtesy AVM Brian Weston (Ret'd) , Sir Richard Williams Foundation.

The F-35A Lightning II.
Photo CPL Ben Dempster



The F-35A Lightning II.
Photo CPL Craig Barrett

Waterlea, Walloon Offers \$2500 Incentive For RAAF Amberley Personnel

It's a dream that many share. Owning a home in an enviable and convenient location. Somewhere with a relaxed village vibe for the family, where lifestyle amenities are on your doorstep. A neighborhood where peace and serenity can be found perfectly contrasted with a thriving township full of energy and life. Somewhere close to base, yet out of the immediate hustle and bustle of the big smoke.

For RAAF Amberley personnel, such a place to call home can be found at the refreshing new address of Waterlea, Walloon. Quickly taking shape as one of the most anticipated master planned communities in the region; Waterlea is just five minutes from Amberley, 10 minutes from Ipswich and 45 minutes from Brisbane.

The stunning \$350 million residential development will incorporate 1500 new homes, with residential blocks of up to 800 square meters and up to 4500 new residents. Perfectly positioned, it's within close proximity to a range of existing and planned infrastructure including schools, shops and the Walloon Train Station.

Waterlea Development Manager Andrew Cook said Waterlea is the closest master planned estate to Amberley and a perfect opportunity for service men and women who are looking for a new home for them or their families.

"We understand and are grateful for the role of all RAAF staff and we want to show our appreciation for the hard work and commitment they provide to our community," he said.



"We are offering a \$2500 incentive to all RAAF Amberley staff who purchase at Waterlea, to help secure a worthy investment that will not only serve their needs now, but well into the future.

"We are ready to help RAAF staff in identifying the right spot in the growing estate for them and we invite personnel to take advantage of this incentive and discover what Waterlea, Walloon has to offer."

Mr Cook said a Waterlea home is a great choice for buyers in the region due to upwards of \$20 million being spent on infrastructure services for the Walloon region by local authorities.

"Our estate will be the first of many as population and amenities continue to grow, so it is truly a 'ground floor' opportunity now before the market reaches heights unknown," he said.

"There's confidence in the region and the growth potential is huge.

Council are predicting that the Walloon-Rosewood Corridor will grow to house more than 50,000 people in the coming years. "

"Ipswich is now one of the fastest growing cities in Queensland, with the population estimated to increase from 200,000 to almost 500,000 over the



next 25 years.

"In Ipswich city we have seen a recent \$5 billion infrastructure spend including a \$3.6 billion motorway upgrade, \$475 million railway station and \$128 million hospital extension.

"It's great news for the new residents of Waterlea."

RAAF staff who purchase at Waterlea can either choose their preferred block size and builder, or select from one of the many house and land packages available. Construction of the first three stages is well underway, with the first lot of residents already moved in.

Residents will have access to kilometres of cycling paths and hiking trails, wide-open spaces, parklands and plenty of open-air activities, including the community garden and nursery. An array of fitness stations will be dotted throughout the community. Also featured will be a retail and commercial precinct with proposed childcare centre, café and market.

For a relaxed country lifestyle with out compromising on location and amenities, Waterlea ticks all the boxes.

To register you interest in the RAAF incentive, visit www.waterlea.com.au/raaf





Land now selling
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Waterlea is a fresh new address taking shape at Walloon, just a 10 minute drive from the Ipswich CBD. Conveniently located just minutes from the RAAF Amberley base, this masterplanned community provides residents with a peaceful country style of living, making it the perfect place for RAAF employees and families to call home.

Waterlea features a range of blocks sizes to choose from and also partners with a range of builders to create Home and Land packages. To show our appreciation for the hard work and commitment our service men and women give to our community, Waterlea is offering a \$2,500 reward for any RAAF employees that purchase between now and 30 June 2018.

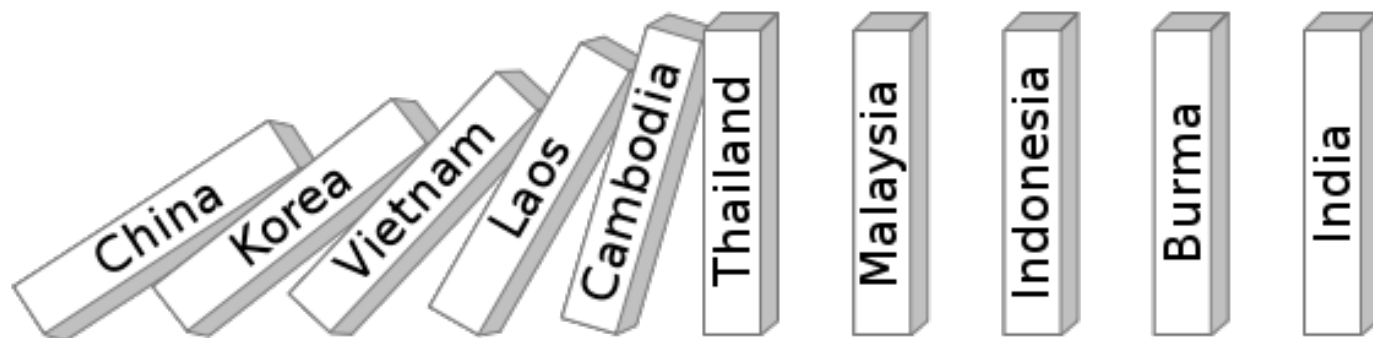
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THE DOMINO THEORY



The Domino Theory was a foreign policy theory during the 1950s - 1980s, promoted at times by the United States Government. It speculated if one land in a region came under the influence of communism, surrounding countries would follow in a domino effect.

It was arguably a key aspect of the Vietnam War and one reason why the United States became involved. It was also a reason why Australia and New Zealand entered the war in support of their allies.

At the request of the Vietnamese and US governments, in 1964 Australia increased its military support to South Vietnam.

The RAAF was in the process of replacing Dakota transport aircraft with Caribou aircraft, and six of these new aircraft were stationed at Butterworth in Malaysia. RAAF Transport Flight Vietnam (RTFV) was formed and deployed to Vietnam, with the first three aircraft arriving at Vung Tau on 8 August 1964.

Why Didn't the Dominos all Fall

To justify helping the French fight communism in Vietnam, on 7 April 1954 President Eisenhower made what became known as his 'Domino Theory' speech. In it he stressed the need to prevent Vietnam becoming 'a dictatorship that is inimical to the free world' - in other words, communist –

and the flow-on effect that could have on the region.

His fear was that if one country fell to communism, those nearby might fall like a row of dominos when one falls and a subsequent chain reaction topples the rest. If communism triumphed in Vietnam, nearby Cambodia, Laos, Burma, Thailand, Malaya (now Malaysia and Singapore) and Indonesia too might fall to communism.

This thinking became known as the Domino Theory and dominated US and Allied thinking on SE Asia for more than a decade. The logic behind it seemed strong. Communism was on the march in the region. Most notably:

- China had been communist since 1949 and was supporting communism wherever it could;
- North Korea was still communist despite three years of costly war just ended;
- Communists, led by Ho Chi Min, had a strong following in North Vietnam;
- the fight against Communist Terrorists (CTs) in Malaya/Singapore was ongoing with no end in sight;
- Indonesia was arming with Soviet weapons despite claims of neutrality and had a large communist party;

• and Burma was run by an unpredictable left-leaning military dictatorship that included astrologers among its advisers.

To that you could add strong Russian and Chinese support of all kinds for regional communists. So when Ho Chi Min's Communists beat the French just weeks later at Dien Bien Phu, and subsequently took over North Vietnam, this further strengthened Eisenhower's case.

Consequently, at the time support for the Domino Theory seemed almost unassailable. But in the end it didn't come to pass. So what happened? Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia all eventually became communist, but there was no flow-on affect. And why didn't the other potential dominos fall as they seemed so ripe to do in 1954?

In simple terms, the potential dominos didn't fall because decisive efforts prevented it. Three different but decisive actions either defeated local communists or kept outsiders at bay. In each case, determined anti-communist efforts thwarted takeover attempts or ambitions. Each effort was very different from the others, but they all worked.

In Malaya/Singapore a fifteen-year effort from UK, Australian, New

Zealand and local forces drove the CTs out of populated areas back into the mountains where they were contained and eventually eliminated by local police and military efforts.

It was no simple task. Over 500 000 troops and police were needed, 12 000 people died and years of mopping up in the mountains followed. But, thanks to this successful campaign, that potential domino did not fall.

In Indonesia, the rule of the mercurial, unpredictable and at times left-leaning Sukarno ended in a 1966 coup by Suharto led conservatives who purged all traces of communism from the country – a not altogether surprising reaction from people whose main religion opposed atheism, and therefore communism.

It was all very messy. Hundreds of thousands died, not all of them communists. Democratic ideals suffered and the aftermath left enduring social scars, but a Communist Indonesia was no longer a possibility. In many ways, religion and Indonesian culture were too strong for the ideology of communism and again a potential domino did not fall.

Thailand, with a lot of help from its friends, also never became communist. When the threat of regional communism led to the creation of SEATO, the South East Asia Treaty Organisation, Thailand signed up on 8 September 1954 along with USA, Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand and Pakistan.

Aimed at strengthening mutual defence against Communist aggression, SEATO had special significance to the Thais, surrounded as they were with volatile and unpredictable regimes, some already communist. Laos, for example, was already in civil war in 1960 when major riots in the capital, Vientiane, increasing the prospect of communist backed trouble spreading over the border.

The problem was not so much that Laos alone was a threat. In fact, it was relatively small and weak and could probably be no more than a serious nuisance. The problem was that China and/or North Vietnam might eventually come though Laos or use it as a base to attack or pressure the Thais. With that in mind, the Thais voiced their concerns via SEATO.

Australia shared these concerns and in 1962 formed No 79 Squadron with eight F-86 Sabres from the RAAF base in Butterworth Malaysia for basing

in Ubon, eastern Thailand, where they stayed until 1968. By then, the anxious Thais had allowed the USAF to form six major bases in their country, stocked with hundreds of combat aircraft and more USAF personnel than in Vietnam at the height of the war.

Regular SEATO exercises, mostly involving ground troops, were also held in Thailand in these times, further reassuring the Thais that they would be well supported by friends and allies should trouble emerge from across their borders.

In combination, SEATO membership, massive USAF firepower in-country and the regular SEATO exercises worked for Thailand. Communist neighbours were deterred until a different world in the 1970s emerged. By then China had adopted less aggressive policies, and the others were beset with internal problems, fought one another and ceased to be a threat. Once more a potential domino did not fall.

This meant that Burma, on Thailand's western border, never had a communist neighbour and so did not get to fully qualify as a potential domino. Furthermore, the generals in charge were more interested in keeping power than in any political ideology that might interfere with their dictatorial rule and associated personal benefits.

Having discussed why some important potential dominos did not fall, it is now time to consider what happened to the three dominos that did fall – Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia – and why they were unable to spread the communist creed outside their borders.

The short answer is that, having taken over, all three experienced a yawning gap between Communist theory and practice. Instead of the promised Utopia, the rigid application of communist doctrines produced widespread social chaos, economic damage and brutal treatment for millions that retarded progress everywhere. They then began fighting among themselves and with time all lost the capacity to threaten their neighbours.

Some of this dysfunction resulted from major changes in the communist world since President Eisenhower's 1954 Domino Theory speech. In those times, the communist world promoted itself as one, united with an aim of world domination, and acted accordingly – in public, at least. The west certainly saw it that way and talked of the 'Communist Bloc'.



But things were never as united as they were made to seem. Nationalism and serious doctrinal differences soon reared their heads. Eventually, communist unity disappeared altogether when serious doctrinal differences caused an irrevocable split between Russia and China. The differences were both real and deep. So deep, in fact, that they raised the issue of who should lead the Communist World.

One sticking point was the basic model for establishing Communism. Russia had done so through their industrial base and the towns, whereas China had first won over the country peasants, established bases in country regions and moved on from there. Quite different training and methods were needed in each case.

But, perhaps more importantly, was the split on how to deal with the non-communist world. Russia had been doing so for much longer and, now that Stalin was gone, favoured a more moderate, less aggressive stance than China.

These differences went to the heart of what Communism was in practical terms, how it should be practiced and who was the more doctrinally pure and should lead the world. The first cracks emerged in the late 1950s and by 1966 had become a serious and public spilt between the two big communist powers. Tensions rose and in 1969 fighting in disputed territory along the Russian/China border broke out.

China then had a re-think and decided that it should deal with all the

Feature Story

world, not just its Communist allies. This thinking included the USA and in 1972 they hosted a visit from US president Nixon. This widened the rift still further. From then on, the two Communist Big Powers were much more rivals than friends and never again co-operated in SE Asia.

This had serious implications for the three ex-French colonies who had previously been supported by both Russia and China. Now they had to choose one over the other. Vietnam and Laos aligned with Russian, Cambodia with China.

The split eventually set Vietnam against Cambodia, adding further to its post-war management tasks. But this was just one of the many problems the Vietnamese Communists faced following their invasion and take-over of the south in 1975. Much of the infrastructure was degraded or destroyed by decades of war and the population was far from united, especially in the south and in some hills areas.

They set about tackling both problems and soon put their stamp on the land and people who had opposed them for so long. Some changes, like renaming Saigon Ho Chi Min City, hurt no one, but other changes in the south proved just how brutal and nasty communism in action could be.

The full story of the Vietnam post-war era is little known in Australia. History text books mention re-education camps but seldom say that these were usually just prisons and slave labour camps. Nor are other equally serious abuses mentioned. Despite that official lack,

there is a mountain of material available on the web and elsewhere that creates a generally consistent picture of those times.

This material tells us that the re-education program dealt mainly with supporters of the previous South Vietnam regime. The focus was on military officers, civil servants, those deemed to be capitalists, priests and the like.

The period of re-education varied with rank and importance. With ex-army officers, for instance, majors and equivalents got 15 years or so, lieutenants 10 and so on. In other fields, people were sentenced according to their previous importance.

Estimates of numbers sent for re-education range up to 2.5 million. The program was as much about revenge and political repression as indoctrination. Hard physical work was the norm and dangerous tasks like clearing mine fields caused many deaths.

But in all, overwork and inadequate food were the main killers. There are no reliable official figures, but estimates of total prisoner deaths as high as 160 000 have been made.

New Economic Zones were formed in the south to be populated by immigrants from the north. Those deemed 'capitalists' had their land and businesses confiscated and redistributed. Many 'capitalists' and others fled if they could, finishing up in refugee camps or becoming 'boat people'. Some ended up in countries like Australia.

Others finished up being 're-

educated', or joined the upwards to a million displaced South Vietnamese forced into uninhabited mountainous regions. Quite a few died doing hard labour, but again, estimates of total deaths vary, although all are in the tens of thousands.

The result of the confiscations was twofold. Firstly, those allocated the confiscated land didn't all want to be farmers and many didn't know how to be. Rice production dropped significantly and a country that is now the world's second biggest exporter of rice (after Thailand) had to import it.

Next, the confiscations included shops, distributors and many producers of goods. Centralised planning by people who didn't understand how to make, distribute and sell a wide range of goods led to serious shortages of most things. Food rationing followed, usually on a week-at-a-time basis. Queues like the famous bread queues in Russia became part of life.

As well as the human costs – lost freedoms, physical suffering and death – these changes seriously retarded the economy. And if that wasn't enough, trouble with the neighbours in Cambodia demanded expensive solutions Vietnam could ill afford.

Now firmly in the China camp, some Cambodian communists (ie., the Khmer Rouge) saw the Russian backed Vietnamese as enemies and began attacks over the border, especially in the delta region. This meant that the delta, the fertile and well watered food bowl of the south, could not be re-settled because of these attacks, causing much angst for Vietnam and exacerbating food problems.

As well, the notorious Pol Pot was now fully in charge in Cambodia, forcing people from the cities and towns into the countryside. Untold numbers, almost certainly at least two million, died or were killed. Appalled by the slaughter and wishing to stop the border incursions, in 1978 Vietnam invaded Cambodia, eventually deposing the Pol Pot regime and restoring a measure of reasonable rule.

Cambodia was such a mess the invasion turned into an occupation lasting until 1989, adding further to Vietnam's budget woes. But well before then, and just when you might think things could not get worse, in 1979 China invaded Vietnam in retaliation for the Vietnamese invasion of their



RAAF Transport Flight, Vung Tau, Vietnam

friends and allies in Cambodia. The Vietnamese army, by now very battle hardened, easily repulsed the invasion in less than three weeks.

The 1979 invasion was a rather silly act by the Chinese and had long-term repercussions for them. It followed many such intrusions in history and persistent attempts to make Vietnam a vassal state, but in the end it simply strengthened Vietnamese resolve from then on not to be dominated by China.

Of note, although motor-bikes and scooters are the main personal transport in Vietnam, and although many owners are relatively poor, almost all the bikes and scooters are much dearer Japanese makes. Very few are Chinese and there are few Chinese goods in the shops. Indeed, the feeling is so strong the Vietnamese call the South China Sea the East Sea on all their maps and openly criticize Chinese territorial claims there.

Vietnam's early post-war years weakened their economy with ill conceived policies, killed, incarcerated and alienated much of the south and devoted considerable effort to fighting and occupying its communist neighbors in Cambodia. It could barely manage what it had on its plate. With no capacity at all to turn its non-communist neighbours into dominos it didn't even try.

It did, however, realize things had to change, especially when change in Russia threatened its \$US3 billion per year Vietnam aid package. In 1986 Doi moi (open door) ushered in the first stage of economic reforms that progressively opened up Vietnam's economy and relations with the world.

Today, apart from single-party Communist government and favoured treatment for the four million party members, Vietnam is less socialist than most Western countries. The free market otherwise rules, government social aid of all kinds is minimal and people live and work much as they please. Converting neighbours to the failed system that almost bought them to their knees is the last thing on their minds.

The Cambodian story is more complicated than Vietnam's and even more brutal and tragic. The essence of the story, however, is the takeover by the Khmer Rouge communists led by the infamous Pol Pot and the death and destruction that followed.



But first, some brief background. As the Vietnam war built in intensity during the 1960s, Cambodia was led by Prince Norodom Sihanouk. He became king in his twenties, but finding he had no real power handed the kingship over to his father and became a politician and the real head of state.

He then set out to do all he could to avoid his country being embroiled in the various wars brewing or actually happening around him. To do so, he constantly shifted Cambodian alliances and policies, becoming known to many as the "Whirling Dervish of Asian Politics" for his efforts.

But there was only so much he could do. Things came to a head when the North Vietnamese began using a Cambodian port to ship supplies to be transferred to war zones via the Ho Chi Min trail. Not wanting this strong Vietnamese presence in his country Sihanouk began diplomatic overtures to the United States and turned a blind eye to US bombing along the Cambodian border.

This led to a successful coup against him but he remained popular with the people. Chinese connections convinced him to use his considerable prestige to back the Cambodian Communists then fighting the republican government that had ousted him.

The upshot was victory for the Khmer

Rouge communists led by the ruthless Pol Pot. Sihanouk was a figurehead president for a year until he was placed in virtual house arrest – saved by his great prestige from something worse – and fell into deep depression over what had happened.

For by now it was obvious that Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge were a disaster for Cambodia. Once in power, they forced the population to evacuate cities and towns for resettlement in newly created villages without adequate food, medical care or agricultural implements. As city people, few had the necessary skills and knowledge to grow food in the amounts needed and malnutrition and starvation became widespread.

Previous military and civilian opponents, academics and many professional people were either executed or forced into rural areas. In particular, businessmen and bureaucrats were singled out. For many, life became precarious and brutal with even the smallest ideological sin – speaking a foreign language, scavenging for food, not doing government assigned work etc - punished by execution.

Religion was suppressed and most of Cambodia's magnificent Buddhist temples were destroyed. (The religion was not killed however, and today most Cambodians are Buddhists and many temples have been re-built.)



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The death of two million or more Cambodians through starvation, disease or on the Killing Fields is so well known it does not need elaboration here. Enough to say, that the situation became so dire that – as previously mentioned – in 1978 the Vietnamese invaded and overthrew the Khmer Rouge. Once there, the Vietnamese were obliged to stay for over ten years, so bad was the situation they inherited.

As a result, although freed of the Khmer Rouge, Cambodia was unable to recover quickly from its troubled times. Indeed, so many skilled and educated people had been killed, and so much infrastructure damaged, that rebuilding was painfully slow and is still ongoing.

Add to that the fact that even though the UN was able to implement a UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) plan that resulted in legitimate elections, many of those elected were previously Khmer Rouge sympathisers and corrupt to boot.

Not surprisingly, Cambodia had no capacity and no ambitions to spread communism. Influencing potential domino neighbours was not an option – if, indeed, the thought ever occurred to them given all the more immediate problems they faced.

Today, like Vietnam, modern Cambodia has an authoritarian government but the free market reigns in most places. Buddhism flourishes, schools operate and people live and work mostly as they please. The country is slowly being rebuilt and modernized and towns like Siem Reap, next to the famous Angkor Wat and other Khmer temples, are crowded with tourists from all over the world.

The Laos story has much in common with the other two ex-French colonies. Following WWII, anti-colonial

movements developed and a Free Laos movement soon emerged. It in turn soon gave way to the Pathet Lao, a communist group led by Souphanouvong, one of three local princes. They sided with the Viet Min against the French and when the French left in 1954 Laos became an independent Kingdom.

The Pathet Lao took over the northern provinces during the 1950s and in 1959 civil war broke out. Mostly sporadic, the war became more serious when Pathet Lao support for Vietnamese Communists aided the creation of the Ho Chi Min Trail that ran through northern Laos.

This attracted US bombing and with it much propaganda advantage and increased support for the Pathet Lao, but they were not able to takeover fully until the 1975 Communist victory in Vietnam created the opportunity for a bloodless coup.

Like Vietnam, they introduced collectivization of farms, nationalization of industry, 're-education' of previous opponents and similar measures. This caused some 10% of the population to flee to Thailand and the economy suffered so badly private property and other economic reforms were introduced in 1980.

The end of the Cold War also essentially ended links with Russia and in 1991 a new constitution gave Laotians much greater freedoms at home and abroad. By then, all potential to spread communism to nearby countries had gone in the face of severe problems at home, along with any wish to do so.

An old saying, possibly Danish, tells us that it's hard to make predictions, especially about the future. And so it was with the Domino theory. The world changed in ways few could anticipate in 1954 and, in the end, the dominos

didn't fall as it was then logically feared they might.

Some were prevented from falling by very decisive, often demanding efforts. Others fell but are standing up again because communism in action proved to be a dreadful and unsustainable way to manage human affairs and they had to change to survive.

The abstract concepts that attracted so many to fight and often die for Communism did not produce the Utopia their backers so fervently believed they would. Instead, they turned out to be impractical imaginings and fantasies that created great suffering.

This also happened with the other great ideologically based 'ism' of the last century: national socialism, the creed behind Hitler and the Nazis. Just why these totalitarian regimes bought death to millions instead of the utopia they sought is debatable, but informed speculation is possible.

It could be that their ideologies produced certainties that in turn led to the ends justifying the means, no matter how terrible. The very worst of human behavior could then be justified in the name of ideological purity.

Could be – I don't know for sure. But I do know that all the ideologically based 'isms' of the 20th Century failed. I also know that liberal democracy is not an 'ism', an unproven abstract concept. It is a tried and proven system of government.

And while the 'isms' were failing, liberal democracy survived and prospered. And that is a good thing for our troubled world, and reason enough to be glad we won the Cold War.

The author recently visited Cambodia and Vietnam and met many people willing, even anxious, to talk about the hardships and suffering when the Communists first took over. But most did so confidentially, concerned that their governments might object to such frankness with foreigners. Accordingly, they have not been named.

However, their stories had a consistent theme, with many similar examples of incompetence, brutality and the mindless application of communist doctrines and ways. These personal accounts reinforce the wide range of written material on the web and in various books. This too tells a largely consistent story. There is now no reason not to know what happened, or for our high school history books not to tell the whole story; it is well documented and easily available at the click of a mouse.

Doug Hurst



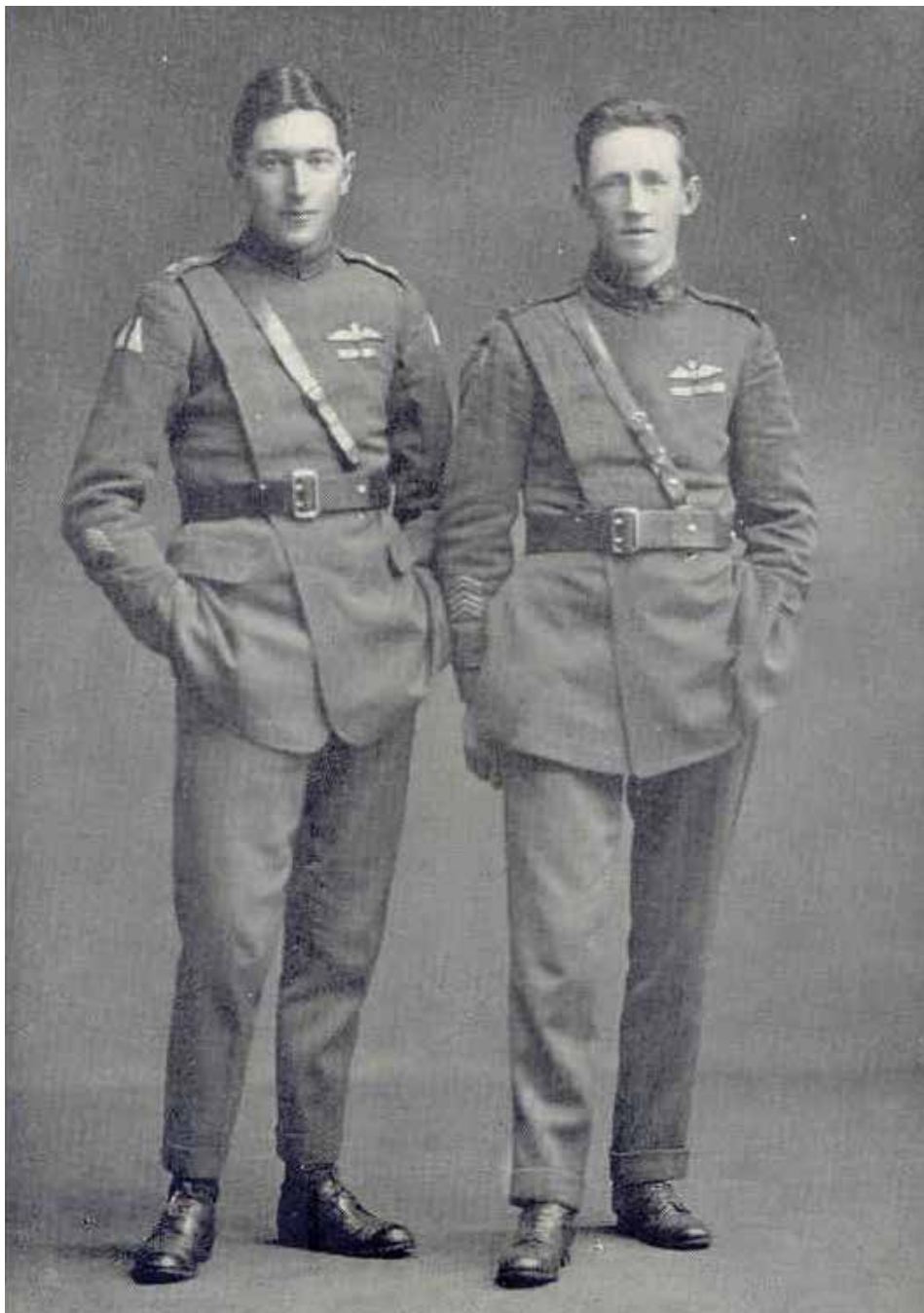
THE GREAT FLIGHT OF THE VIMY

The Smith Brothers pioneering flight from England to Australia in 1919

Ross Smith of 1SQN AFC, his brother Keith and two mechanics from 1SQN AFC, were the first to fly into Australia from overseas. They were met by Hudson Fysh, the author's father, also from 1SQN AFC. 2019 will be the centenary of this significant flight.

A little after 3 o'clock in the afternoon of 10 December 1919 – 99 years ago – the Smith Brothers' Vickers Vimy touched down on the landing ground prepared at Fanny Bay, Darwin, by their old Light Horse and then Australian Flying Corps comrade, the 24 year old Hudson Fysh, the officially appointed Arrival Organiser. Twenty eight days out from England they had won the race to be the first aeroplane to reach Australia from England under 30 days. It concluded what Hudson Fysh described in his book *Qantas Rising* as 'one of, if not the greatest flights in aviation history'.

Moreover, they had qualified for the Australian Government's prize of £10,000, a considerable fortune in those



Lieutenants W.H. Fysh and P.J. McGinness, 1919

days. The cheque was duly presented by the Prime Minister, Billy Hughes, when they reached Melbourne.

It was not for another nine years that the Pacific Ocean would be conquered by the courageous and skilful flight of Kingsford Smith and Charles Ulm and their crew. It was this achievement and his subsequent adventures that gave Kingsford Smith his place as an Australian folk-hero.

Kingsford Smith's deeds and those of his colleagues such as Ulm, 'Scotty' Allan and P G Taylor, in those later years, greatly overshadowed the flight of Ross and Keith Smith in the public mind. But, there was little doubt amongst

those in aviation, and who had spanned that extraordinary pioneering period, that Sir Ross McPherson Smith, KBE, DFC and two bars, MC and bar, was foremost amongst them. But for his untimely death in 1922 testing a new aeroplane for Vickers, he was destined to be the leading figure in that great age of Australian aviation. His fine character, combined with high intelligence, administrative skill, competence as a pilot, energy and endurance, were qualities which impressed all who were associated with him.

As Kingsford Smith was to capture the imagination of the public to a greater extent than Ross Smith, so Lindbergh,

in 1927, in his flight from The United States to France all but obliterated the magnificent feat of Alcock and Brown who first flew the Atlantic in 1919 a few months before the Smith Brothers flew to Australia.

It is not the intention here to debate the question of what makes heroes. It can only be said that the Smith Brothers and Alcock and Brown achieved their moments of glory in an age when the long range aeroplane had not been developed, and airframes and engines were more unreliable than when Kingsford Smith and Lindbergh flew into history.

Kingsford Smith's Fokker, 'The Old Bus', was a tri-motor with an endurance of 50 hours, blind flying instruments and radio. Lindbergh's 'Spirit of St Louis' was specially designed by him for the task. Further, both Kingsford Smith and Lindbergh were attended by a blaze of publicity that was unknown in earlier years. When Lindbergh took off from Roosevelt field in the start of his journey to Paris, 40,000 Americans stood silent in Yankee Stadium with their hands over their hearts. There were nine people in the party that watched Ross Smith leave the snow covered ground at Hounslow on 12 November 1919.

Be that as it may, the Smith Bros flight was no casual enterprise. Although they were in a race with a number of others

for the rich prize, they were not merely demobbed airmen talking up backing for an adventurous means of returning to Australia. It was a meticulously planned undertaking conducted by Ross Smith with all the considerable skill and experience at his disposal.

The genesis of his successful attempt was in Palestine when as Captain Ross Smith MC and Bar, DFC and two Bars, Australian Flying Corps, he was chosen from among all Empire Flying Corps to command a Handley Page bomber by the British AOC, General 'Biffy' Borton, in Allenby's final campaign against the Turks.

'Biffy' Borton's exploits, and those of his brother 'Bosky' VC, unfold in a proud and touching book, My Warrior Sons, a record of correspondence with their father, the old Colonel Borton. These medieval and peculiarly British attitudes to the war delayed the end of the Age of Chivalry by at least five hundred years.

At war's end Ross Smith then flew General Borton from Cairo to Calcutta to 'shape the route' to India. 'Biffy' Borton's professed objective was to see the Viceroy's Cup run in Calcutta. "Then let us fly on to Australia to see the Melbourne Cup" Ross Smith replied. Although this suggestion was not exactly taken up by the General, he, with Ross Smith sailed from Calcutta in February 1919 to survey the route through Burma,

Siam, Malaya, the Dutch East Indies and Borneo, laying in stores as they went for an anticipated flight to Australia.

Their plans were rudely interrupted by the necessity to withdraw the aeroplane to the Northwest Frontier to subdue the unruly Afghans.

The disappointed Ross Smith had his hopes lifted by the announcement of the Australian Government's prize of £10,000 for the first Australians to fly a British aircraft from England within 30 days.

Ross Smith had selected, as his two mechanics on the journey to India, SGTs Bennett and Shiers from No 1 SQN, AFC. Returning with them to England as quickly as possible he set about arranging for a suitable aeroplane. His old friend 'Biffy' Borton approached the Vickers Company who agreed, after some delay, to supply a Vimy IV.

The aeroplane had been built in quantity for the RAF rather too late to see active service. Four became civil aeroplanes of distinction. The first was the machine used by Alcock and Brown to fly the Atlantic, and the fourth and last achieved immortality as G-EAOU, the



W.H. Fysh-Trooper



Original uniforms, AWM



Lieutenant W.H. Fysh-Pilot

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DATE	LOCATION	STATE	ORGANISATION NAME	TIME
Mon 28 May	Moree	NSW	Moree Aero Club	10am - 2pm
Tue 29 May	Orange	NSW	Orange Aero Club	10am - 2pm
Wed 30 May	Wagga Wagga	NSW	Wagga City Aero Club	10am - 2pm
Thur 31 May	Albury	NSW	Riverina Aviation College	10am - 2pm
Fri 1 June	Parkes	NSW	Parkes Aero Club	10am - 2pm
Sat 2 June	Bankstown	NSW	Bankstown Flying School	10am - 2pm
Tue 12 June	Moorabbin	VIC	Avia Aviation	10am - 2pm
Thur 14 June	Parafield	SA	Aero Service	10am - 2pm
Sat 16 June	Bunbury	WA	Bunbury Aero Club	10am - 2pm
Sun 17 June	Jandakot	WA	Thunderbird Flight Training	10am - 2pm
Tue 19 June	Alice Springs	NT	Alice Springs Aero Club & Air Charter	10am - 2pm
Thur 21 June	Charleville	QLD	Charleville Airport	10am - 2pm
Mon 2 July	Southport	QLD	Southport Flying Club	10am - 2pm
Tue 3 July	Gympie	QLD	Gympie Aero Club	10am - 2pm
Wed 4 July	Emerald	QLD	Emerald Airport	10am - 2pm
Thur 5 July	Mount Isa	QLD	Marker Aviation	10am - 2pm
Fri 6 July	Mareeba	QLD	North Queensland Aero Club	4pm

winner of the Australian Government's great prize.

Built at Weybridge beside the Brooklands racing circuit it was a fabric-covered bi-plane powered by two Rolls Royce engines of 360 hp. It had a normal range of 450 miles which could be extended by fitting extra fuel tanks, cruised at 84 mph and weighed 12,500 lbs all up. It was described as 'the fastest weight-lifter of the age'. Extra tanks in G-EAOU extended the range to 1000 miles for Ross Smith's journey.

Feverish preparations ensued. In addition to his two mechanics Ross Smith recruited his elder brother Keith who had been with the RAF. He became assistant pilot and navigator.

The route was planned, aerodromes appeared in the East Indies by the extraordinary cooperation of the Dutch authorities, and the Australian authorities commissioned Paul McGinness and Hudson Fysh to do the same from Darwin south. Finally, all was ready by early November.

The gallant Frenchman, Poulet, had left already on 14 October in his Caudron G4 bi-plane in defiance of the Australian/British aeroplane conditions of the race. With great restraint Ross Smith delayed his departure by a further week to ensure all supplies would be in position en route.

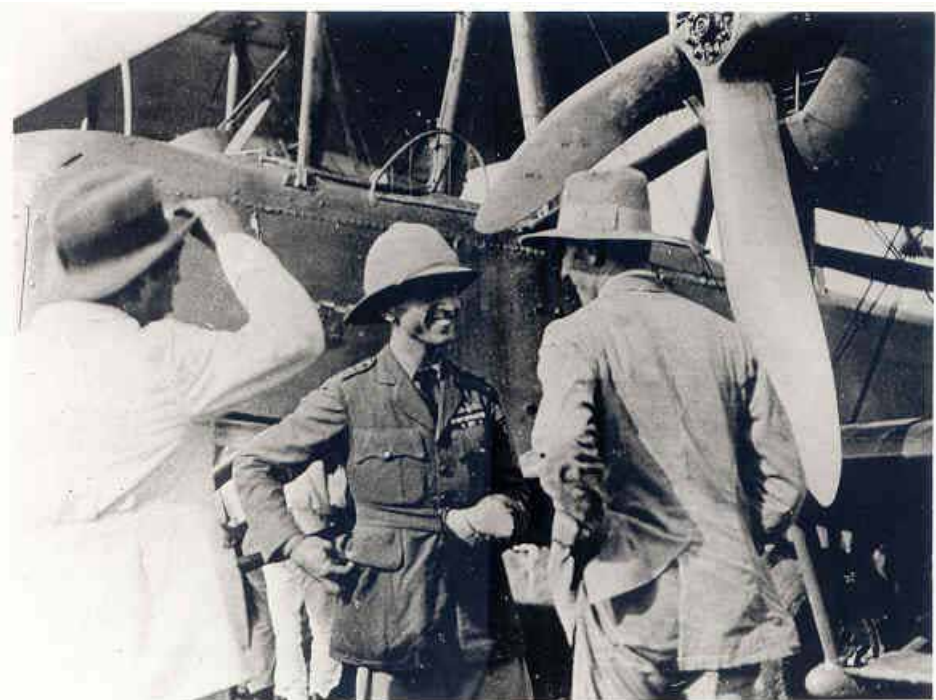
On 12 November at 0905 hours with a forecast which proclaimed the weather was totally unfit for flying, and a few friends to bid them God speed, they headed off into the clouds. Twenty eight days later they were greeted by Ross Smith's old Light Horse and Flying Corps comrade, Hudson Fysh, at Fanny Bay, Darwin. The story of the journey itself is told in Ross Smith's book '12,000 Miles through the Air'.

For Hudson Fysh, it inspired his vision of connecting Australia to the world, a vision that was to further encourage the founding of Qantas already in the minds of he and his dashing partner, Paul McGinness who was to hare away from it all in 1922. Here were the beginnings of nationhood.

John H Fysh



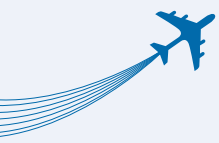
Vimy on landing, Darwin, 1919



Hudson Fysh and Ross Smith, Darwin, 1919



Ross and Keith Smith's Vickers Vimy aircraft. State Library SA



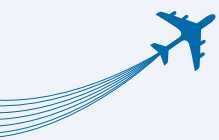
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Record of Luck

This account of Lyne Skinner's war years was written in 2008 by Dr Doug Hoile, a former Spitfire pilot, doctor and author, using Lyne's notes from his diary and many conversations.

In September 1939, Murray Lyne Skinner was 18 years and 4 months old and employed in the firm of Executor Trustee Ltd, located in the centre of the city of Adelaide. He describes his position in the firm as messenger boy, inkwell filler, postal clerk and general gofer. One of his more exciting recollections as daily lunch: a brown toasted sandwich with brain and walnut filling. In his own time he studied accountancy by correspondence through Hemingway and Robertson.

Lyne had been a top ranking student at Woodville High School, specifically in mathematics, rather than the sciences, and continued education beyond intermediate level at Muirden College, Adelaide, which specialised in subjects such as book keeping and shorthand, useful to the world of finance. Perhaps this was an inherited leaning, or perhaps he was treading in the familiar footsteps of his father, the Manager of the Port Adelaide branch of the Bank of Adelaide, and his brother John, a chartered accountant in another firm.

The second name of 'Lyne' came to light when new father Skinner, at the time a bank branch inspector, was away in the country. A host of suggested names for the baby had produced no result.

So looking back through the family tree, it was discovered his mother's brother was Lyne Rogers, born in 1843, captain of four masters sailing between England and Australia bringing supplies and people, returning with native grass parrots and budgerigars, among less lively things Australian. Apparently there was an eager market.

In the light of times to come one might imagine something prophetic in the name. Murray Lyne Skinner preferred to be known as Lyne. He would say 'Lyne-spelt L-Y-N-E as in a straight line! To add fuel to prophetic imagination, Lyne later lived with his parents in Woodville, the street name - 'Beaufort.'

Lyne recalls, in his very early days, keeping scrap books of his boyhood interests. One of these was cricket, a family passion. Father Skinner was a member of the SA Cricket Association. He and the boys' mother regularly took their sons to Adelaide Oval, where, as 12 and 10 year olds they were junior - later to become full members. Brother John and Lyne kept complete and accurate score books of all games as they sat in the row below Arnold Ewens and Victor Richardson as they were doing the broadcasting, and were often

called on for statistics from their records. The name of Vic Richardson is well known to cricket historians, particularly South Australians, as a former Test Captain of Australia and grandfather of the Chappell brothers - also as a great character off the field.



Lyne, Perth 1940

Another scrapbook interest was pioneer and aviators. Immortal names such as Amy Johnson, Bert Hinkler, Kingsford Smith and Jimmy Melrose were at the time bywords. Actually flying, of course, was in the same class of dreamland as opening the innings for their country.

The boys did a lot of walking, frequently covering the tram routes along the Woodville to Richmond district, sometimes to the lowlands of the Port River. And in those early days, when the family was renting before buying the Beaufort Street house, they found themselves right opposite the grounds of the Port Adelaide District Lacrosse Club. Both tried, joined in practice, continued, and were playing in A grade until the events of 1940.

Later interests included dancing. Lyne tells of the 'cheap night' at the Grosvenor Hotel building on Mondays, where one could learn, and dance, for '2 bob' (two shillings). He recalls, as one of them, the shy ones being swept up into the country barn dance where he was on a level with the bolder - his first, and innocent, contact with girls.

Right up until that September, life was comfortable and largely predictable. But on 1 September 1939, in defiance of Britain and France, Hitler's German Army invaded Poland. And on 3 September, Australia, as a member nation of the British Empire, followed England in declaring war, a mere 20 years after the end of the 'War to end all Wars.'

There was in those post WW1 years an innate feeling of duty to the 'mother country' in young people born to a generation with vivid, often painful memories of that last conflict. And though the new war was in a far distant other side of the globe, there was immediate pressure, real or otherwise, on imaginative young men to serve their country in this. And as news came of the bombings of London, then of British troops in the gravest of danger in France, the pressure call sounded increasingly loud in receptive ears.

Lyne remembers telling his mother he thought he ought to join up. Mother had always seemed the parent to go to, as father usually seemed to be asleep with his paper in the evenings. She advised waiting until older brother John made his decision, which occurred in June 1940, at nearly the same time.

He recalls little of the conversation between them, except John felt the



Lyne, foreground with Spitfire and ground crew

compulsion as he, and both mother and father were unsurprised at their intention. Probably, at that time, few parents of such young men were, however much must have dreaded hearing the words.

The act of enlistment was almost comical. They went together to the city recruiting base for the Army, certain there must be a shortage of personnel with their credentials in finance, accountancy and management. And were told to come back at some later date, as the office was too busy to accept anybody for some time.

"No room for clerks with our experience in the Army mate?"

"Okay, let's try the Air Force."

"In the Legislative Chambers, North Terrace, isn't it John?"

"Yep."

"Okay, let's go."

"Leaving certificate, eh?" This from another paper shuffler, this time under a RAAF roundel, also not in uniform. "Medicals okay?" The medical had taken all of five minutes. "You're both aircrew. Fill in these papers."

The papers included the authority to wear a badge denoting wearer was awaiting call up for aircrew and instructions to attend lessons in morse code. The badge was new, but soon quite well known, wearing it a boost to at least self respect as the call to arms became overt and clear, the sidelong glances aimed at healthy young men not already in uniform more pointed. The morse code instruction was easily handled over the next few weeks.

During the period of waiting came the news of the 'miracle of Dunkirk' (the rescue of 330,000 troops from the beaches of Normandy) and Churchill's famous "Never Surrender" speech, at the same time warning of an impending invasion of Britain. This news was shortly followed by the Battle of Britain, from July to October - the war was getting serious.

Life went on as usual, except some time in the near future it wouldn't. They were committed now to being airmen. Like those RAF guys maybe? Involved in heroics, or being shot down!

Oh well, they were committed now, Lyne at least. He was not sure of John. He was older, and didn't say much. Had that attitude, and was resigned to letting things happen. It was out of his control.

On 5 December 1940 came the call up. John and Lyne Skinner were in the RAAF. Mustered at the same Legislative Chambers, they were marched straight away the short distance to the SA railway station, and for three days and two nights a carriage full of potential airmen were in the trans-Nullarbor train to Perth.

Strangers to each other and probably more excited than any would confess, much of the time was used playing poker, telling yarns and singing. Most of the half dozen or so in Lyne's compartment were several years older, and the young Lyne, who was yet to have a beer in a pub, here learnt from bawdy songs and conversation some previously unknown facts of life.

A good deal of the three days was

Feature Story

spent trying to sleep. There was little of that, a couple of smaller bodies having the advantage of fitting into luggage racks above the seats. Then on arrival, the whole group of about 60 was shuffled into buses for the RAAF station at Pearce - 5 miles or so out of Perth.

They were to learn this was an Initial Training School, one of several Australian entrance schools into the Empire Air Training Scheme. Their discovery on arrival was somewhat dampened by being immediately assembled on the parade ground for their first lesson - a half hour of marching, and being introduced to the never to be forgotten language of an ex-Army SGT drill instructor.

First lesson over, uniforms issued and civilian clothes summarily discarded, the 60 were marched to the medical section for injections, probably against tetanus, typhoid and diphtheria and vaccinated against smallpox. Many found this even more torture than lesson one, Lyne included, although he insists he was not of those who had to be dragged across the room or fainted - just close.

The two month course at Pearce taught the basics of such subjects as theory of flight and navigation, mapping, wireless transmission and reception, the elements of aircraft construction, power plants and recognition of flying friends or foes as yet to be encountered.

And physical training, marching and drill, with and without WWI .303 rifles - and more marching.

At the end of the two month course the 50 or so graduates did their final march through the town of Pearce to

entrain for their next posting and did it very well - and very proudly.

Those, the majority, who had been singled out as pilots went on to No 9 Elementary Flying Training School at Cunderdin, about 200 miles east of Perth. Others, from some obscure sort of selection in most cases seemed to work, were posted off to navigation or wireless and air gunnery schools. There were more pilots than others combined, for a reason that was to become ever more apparent.

Lyne was among those assigned to EFTS to learn to fly an aeroplane. At last! Despite very limited experience in even driving a car due to severe rationing of petrol.

The Tiger Moth was a biplane, little advanced from WW1 combat aircraft in appearance and performance. And although now far from a war machine, the Tiger, as it was affectionately known, was excellent for initial instruction. Two seats, one behind the other, the learner in front with excellent forward vision. The teacher, out of sight at back, was able to coax, praise or yell at his pupil at will, which he did, depending on his nature and maybe the present or previous pupil's real or perceived dumbness. Perhaps also on the degree of last night's revelry.

The basics of the Tiger's controls and principles of flying soon became clear to the willing beginner, height from ground second nature, judgement of it enhanced by experience, enterprise without foolhardiness encouraged; the dangers of the stall instilled, as was how to avoid and how to recover when

necessary, and how to use for landing.

Pupils were taught the sky never hurt, but the ground could - and frequently did. In the Tiger, a wonderfully forgiving little aeroplane, 'prangs' were invariably from pilot error or overconfidence. The latter, it was cautioned, would be punished more severely in the next stages of training with the increased power of service aircraft. So be warned, was the message, learn and live.

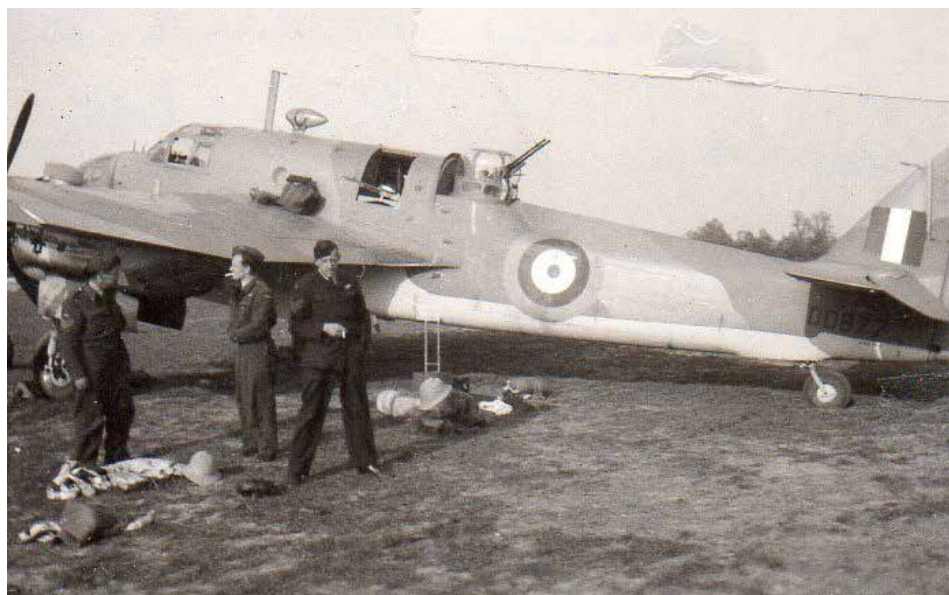
Lyne flew solo after 8.5 hours dual. He remembers the occasion, an event anticipated by the 50 with degrees of excitement from borderline terror to something of a non-event. Lyne landed (delete as a pupil) as had been practised over and over. Then after one such landing, a reasonably good one as most had now become, the instructor got out, leaned into the front cockpit, and said mildly "do it again." Lyne wasn't quite sure he had actually left his seat, but did not look behind and 'did it again'. No big deal. Always, though, in retrospect, a memorable day that first solo.

The remainder of time at EFTS was largely fun, exploring the capabilities of the aircraft and the wonders of flying - looping, rolling, climbing, diving. Flying up to and around clouds. And away down again to below treetop level, buzzing farm houses far enough from base to avoid being seen. As if farmers didn't report - and instructors didn't hear!

Again, on graduation, a march through the town again with pride, in finding how the civilian population - mostly the ladies and children, of course, their own men already somewhere away - treated the lads in uniform.

The next step, after two month's Elementary was Service Flying Training School. But although there were SFTSs in Australia, with a week or so and a couple of hours' flying to go in Elementary, Lyne and four of his graduating mates - Bob Cowper, Kel Barclay from Adelaide, Ken Terry from Kalgoorlie, and Keith ('Pampas Bull') Murdock from WA were told to prepare to go to Canada for their next stage. The five were the first from WA, and among the first of a steady stream from Australia, to continue training in Canada. These schools were to take their pilots up to the standard required for Operational Training Unit in England. And would grant their passes, their 'Wings.'

On Lyne's final leave from Cunderdin, his mother and father met him and John



Lyne with Beaufort



Lyne in Malta 1943

in Perth after travelling over by train. Mr Skinner had suffered a stroke, but was able to come and enjoy. They had a happy, if at times tearful, family reunion, the older Skinners clearly more aware - certainly more fearful - of the grim possibilities in flying than the younger generation. Certainly than the younger of the young.

The meeting had minor drama of its own. At the time of his parents' booking of train and accommodation at the Criterion Hotel in Perth, Lyne's posting had not been known. Nor had it been known he had been granted 14 days pre-embarkation leave on completion of course- the compassionate leave granted for a young man to spend with family in his home town and environment. Perhaps the last for years, perhaps even forever.

Nor had it also been known railway employees would stage a 14 day strike at exactly that time! So, leaving John to go on to SFTS at Geraldton, the three were obliged to walk the streets of Perth until the next train in 12 days, arriving in Adelaide at 7am, in time for Lyne to catch the Melbourne Express at 7pm the same day, thence on to Sydney and Transit Camp, Bradfield Park, North Sydney. So much for the 14 days pre-overseas posting home leave.

Ken, Terry and Lyne now became even firmer friends, re-joining in the transit camp and, as it eventuated, staying together until getting their

wings at McCleod, Alberta, Canada, and thence on to England. Sydney was a further experience, but such new and distant places were becoming commonplace, the norm even extending to the next instalment - travel overseas.

21 April 1941

One more train to Sydney's wharf area and the 'SS Awatea', a civilian passenger ship bound for Auckland, where it was to become a troop ship for a Kiwi Army contingent bound for the war zone. Lyne remembers the trip to New Zealand's capital as a boisterous one. Bars open, young women in holiday mode, young men far from home, constant traffic to and from top deck cabins. Probably for purposes he was yet to figure out.

25 April 1941, Auckland, Anzac Day

The RAAF detachment participated in the annual march to the Cenotaph to a memorable reception from the city's public. On return to the ship, leave was granted to all, that was, except Leading Air Craftsmen Terry and Skinner, who were designated to stay aboard and record all personnel going ashore.

They watched the leave takers being met on the dock by generous people, including bright eyed unchaperoned young women doing their bit for the war effort by hosting their 'brave visitors.' Which, in their various ways, if one could believe the boasting accounts of returnees, they did extremely well. Those returnees had to be recorded in by Lyne and Ken. To the last one to their unmitigated chagrin.

Still fuming about the unfairness of it all, hosts (and hostesses) now well gone, the two LACs were permitted shore leave next day and left ship for a walk up Queen Street, Auckland's main. There they were politely stopped by a family who introduced themselves as Mr and Mrs Laurie, out strolling with their teenage daughter Marion and a younger son. The Laurie's took the boys home, gave them an evening of home care, a bed, and showed them around Auckland next day - a fitting reward.

Which they did again. And more, for Lyne and Rita, in 1980 - great people. And the gods, it seemed, had not all been lined up against one airman - at least in 1941.

From Auckland, via Suva, to Vancouver, the ocean voyage in itself another new and wonderful experience and another march. This time through the city to the applause of Canadian citizens. They, like their Australian counterparts, invariably came out in force to warmly welcome and cheer on men in uniform. Then by train on to McLeod, Alberta, and SFTS to fly Avro Ansons.

The Anson, affectionately called Aggie, was built in England in the 1930s as a twin engine light bomber, but had already passed its use by date for that purpose. Its longevity was due to its docility in handling as much as to its durability, a safe and friendly aeroplane. It remained in service for training and various lesser functions for the duration of the war.

Lyne's instructor was an American from Nebraska named 'Click' Aspegren, and describes him as "wild as they make 'em". He claims as true that he was with 'Click' when they looped an Aggie over the Waterton Lakes, a huge expanse of water on the border with USA.

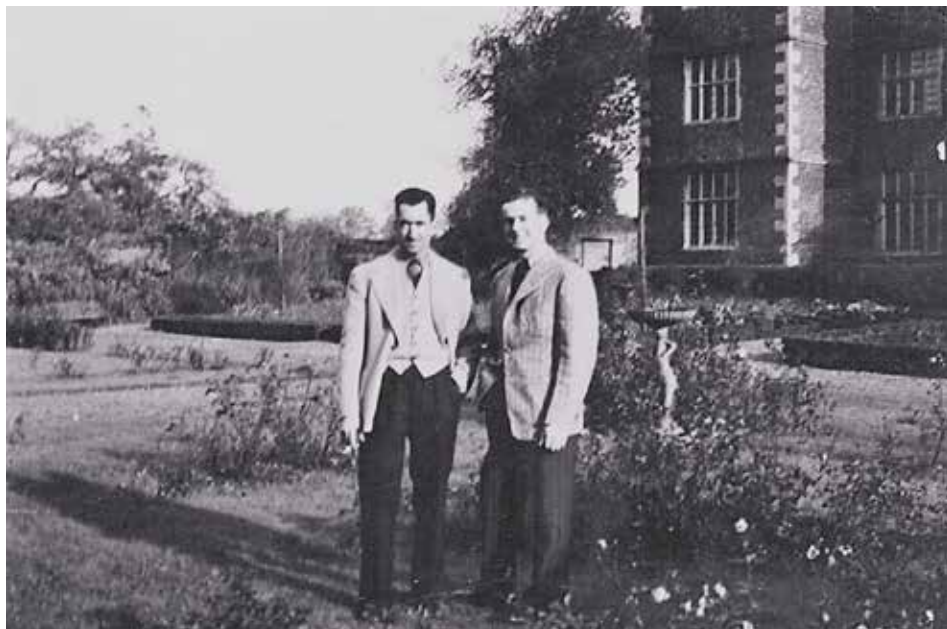
He also swears he (Lyne) was directed to throw out a roll of toilet paper on the top of the loop for 'Click' and Aggie to cut it at the bottom. He did and 'Click' the pilot did. About the equivalent of Grandma doing a standing back somersault and a similar trick with the paper.

Lyne completed the course in August 1941 with 'above average' signed in his log book and LAC Skinner was presented with his 'Wings' and promoted to Pilot Officer.

He and Ken Terry, similarly enriched and adorned, took off to use their new wealth on 14 days leave, visiting Quebec, Montreal and Toronto. The wealth disappeared when Lyne left his money belt on a hook behind the toilet door in their hotel, never to be seen again.

Luckily, as he recalls, his father had the foresight to provide him with an introduction to a related bank manager who was able to provide him with necessary funds.

Another minor misfortune was being close to, but unable to cross, the border to Niagara and the Falls, as the USA, not yet being at war, could not allow any wearer of a foreign uniform into its territory. Civvies okay, uniforms no. Bad luck Ken and Lyne!



At Doddington Hall

Leave over, and leaving behind Canada's big cities and their very attractive young ladies, who Lyne asserts, without detail, were prepared to 'do anything for the brave young men in uniform'. They were ordered to proceed to their next post.

This was at Summertown, on Prince Edward Island at the mouth of the great St Lawrence River, to do a Navigator's course - No. 13 Course. Navigation, particularly for those committed to flying multi-engine aircraft, where flights would be long and often at night, was a vitally important step in training.

A considerable part of this involved lying on one's belly in a faithful old Aggie, the first time for Lyne flying as a passenger, wanting to give up his breakfast, but knowing that doing so would involve cleaning up the mess. This had to be done while taking measurements of wind lane deflection, then new to them, and a remaining mystery to Lyne, and a part of the course he was extremely relieved to complete. Introduction to snow was another and far more pleasant first before being passed on to the business site of action - England.

So, train to Halifax to board the 'Louis Pasteur', a large liner built for the North American coastal trade. The ship had a single large high funnel and rode high out of the water, which rendered her unsuitable for sailing in the convoy under the protection of naval escort. So she went it alone, met the North Atlantic at its best, and rolled to the limit. And Lyne loved it. He may not have had good

'air legs,' but the 'sea legs', or stomach, made no complaint. He shrugged off fear of torpedoes and thought the trip was great.

Landing at Gourock, Scotland, a one time small fishing town had grown into a busy yacht building and repairing community, now very much a wartime port. Lyne and Ken boarded one more train to go right through England to Bournemouth. This, another seaside town brought into service, had been commandeered as a transit location for Australian airmen 'new boys,' there to await further posting.

Told such movement might not be for weeks, the two were dismissed on a seven day leave pass and given an address - Doddington Hall, Lincoln. They decided to take up the offer and, after one more train trip, arrived at what could only be termed a castle- with a capital C, there to be welcomed by the lady of the house.

It was a great building, like those seen on the movies, and was virtually one huge museum with ornate wall hangings and large portraits of 'gentlemen' in 17th or 18th century gear, beautiful ladies likewise.

(Come on, man, give up! impressed? The garden was laid out in the shape of the top of the castle. Okay, anything in flower? Evidence of decline? Possibly war caused neglect?) Author's questions to Dad!!

The resident lady even had a young lady escort and two beautiful dogs and Lyne can produce a photo to prove it. She had a telegram recalling them to

base immediately, but didn't give it to them until the next day.

A day's brush with the aristocracy saw them back at Bournemouth to await their next station -14 SFTS, Lyneham, Wiltshire, some 30 miles inland. And at seeing the name 'Lyne,' had a passing thought - was his destiny catching up with him? If so, which way? He let it pass.

Another thought, not for the first, or last time, and one shared in various degrees by so many in so many places. He was a young man, yet to be out of his teens, just over a year ago destined, one may have thought, for a humdrum ordinary life. Yet here he was, a few weeks off his 20th birthday, had learnt to fly, travelled halfway around the world and was about to learn how to put his new knowledge to deadly purpose. And what was most extraordinary, was accepting each step along the way as not being extraordinary. His life was out of his hands, and it seemed normal. Virtually all decisions were made for him. He simply did as he was bidden. No questions asked. No thought of questioning.

Still with Ken Terry, he was to do an advanced training course there, flying Airspeed Oxfords. The 'Oxbox' was another outdated bomber, slightly higher powered than the Anson with twin Cheetah engines of about 330 hp. It was somewhat more manoeuvrable than the Aggie and used by Coastal Command prior to conversion to flying boats or torpedo bombers in association with the Royal Navy. The course therefore concentrated on into wind take offs and landings, powered landings, high and low flying over water and further tutoring in navigation.

Thence to No. 13 Operational Training Unit at Chivenor, near Barnstaple, Devon, nearer to water, the mouth of the Severn as it flows west into the English Channel and the Atlantic Ocean, for a conversion course to Bristol Beauforts. These were versatile aircraft powered by twin 1100hp engines capable of mine laying, conventional bomb or torpedo dropping and used extensively in operations and training from 1940 to 1943.

Discovered too late for many, the Beaufort had a fault, believed to be in tailplane construction, resulting in unexplained and, at the time, inexplicable serious crashes, usually when in the hands of trainee and invariably passed

off as pilot error. A cemetery at Chivenor and one at Sale in Eastern Victoria, where similar operational training was carried out, bear sad testament to the consequences. Heanton Hill, a small mountain in line with the end of the runway at Chivenor, accounted for many of the fatalities there.

Lyne visited the cemetery, grimly, one would think appropriately, on the very hill with Rita, his wife, during a tour of England in 1980 and found the RAAF section beautifully kept, which prompted him to send a letter of appreciation to Heanton Church. He received a warm and perhaps surprised letter of thanks in reply.

His arrival at Chivenor, on Christmas Eve 1941, was not exactly as anticipated. On checking in at the guardhouse, he was immediately nailed as an officer (probably the only one left on station that day) and an officer was required: "In the rules, Sir," he was told.

He was required to conduct a burial party up to the cemetery on top of the hill. The funeral was for a marine "hailed out of the water the previous day", this was the response to the obvious question.

Lyne located the grave on his visit with Rita and passed his respects to the marine along with the Aussie airmen, wondering if anyone else had done the same for soldier or fliers. Or may still be doing the same, for one or all, reverently, perhaps regularly.



Lyne, Ma Dilley & Mary

So began the final course prior to operational flying, fortunately oblivious to the faults of the Beaufort. After 150 flying hours, 100 of them on multi engines, it was almost back to the drawing board getting acquainted with the far greater power of the Beaufort, its quirks and capabilities plus learning formation flying, one engine flying and emergency landing in event of necessity, bombing - 'stick' bombing' - is a set of 5 or 6 or more dive bombing, instrument flying and photography.

One of his more hair raising recollections of these exercises was off the town of Lynton in the Bristol Channel, practicing bombing a moving target towed by a speedboat.

With a crew of three - RAAF SGT Johnny Lewers as navigator and RNZAF SGTs Ted Small and Ray Todd, all senior in age to 20 year old new captain PO Skinner. Their task was to make six runs, practicing dropping down- and cross- sun. Lyne made five runs and came in up-sun i.e. from the opposite direction of previous approaches 'to trick the enemy'.

However, the next crew thought he had finished the exercise and was clear of the area and made a regulation run. As he dived in from 1500 to 200 feet and released the last bomb, Johnny Lewers shouted from his position in the nose, "There's a bloody bomb going past!" Lyne looked up from the target to see the missile's Beaufort carrier also going past at a closing speed of some 600 knots. An instant, but heart stopping and unforgettable sight.

He landed safely, if automatically, nerves still tingling, taxied in shakily, exited the aircraft through the upper hatch and, stepping down via the wing, slipped, fell to the ground, and on getting up started shaking like a leaf. One of the boys yelled "Get an ambulance!" but Lyne recovered sufficiently to say "I'm okay."

He had learned one more lesson, would never need another like it. Reporting such an incident or going to hospital was a 'no-no' for him and crew. Either might mean "no more flying for you, pilot officer!" and/or splitting up the crew if the powers that be so wished. The boys, to his eternal gratitude, (said they didn't wish. It was) decided to keep quiet.

Lyne recalls one other episode with embarrassment, and again, relief. He had to pick up a Beaufort from the

manufacturer's factory strip at Fulton - and promptly pranged it. A brand new aeroplane. The aircraft had to be taxied for a good half mile over very rough ground to reach take off point on the strip. Ground crews, aware of potential damage to the undercarriage, left in the safety locks, F-shaped metal pegs, with two prongs they inserted into the oleo leg gear to strengthen it over the bumps to be removed prior to take off.

PO Skinner obeyed a control order to expedite take off as the air, now free of traffic, had another kite coming in. In doing so, he forgot about the inserts.

Take off was fine, the gear retracted as usual, landing went smoothly. But on the downwind leg of the approach, pilot should throttle right back to check all okay with landing gear at which a warning horn would sound if all was not well, that under cart was not properly down and locked. But, what with eyes on barrage balloons floating about in the fly paths of a strange airport, and not being part of normal cockpit drill, that check was neglected. So, no horn, no warning.

Landing was smooth, taxiing, no problem. On braking, though, one leg collapsed and the Beaufort fell down. Embarrassing. Good for a laugh in the mess. But with a wing damaged, the other sticking up for all to see at a peculiar angle and an engine damaged - punishable.

The good part, no report was made. So no court martial for careless damaging of Her Majesty's aeroplane. Once again, no black mark for PO Skinner. Luck was favouring him.

And one more lesson, learning that learning never finished., starting from basics. You always do your cockpit drill. And every pilot needs that great co-pilot- PO Luck.

They were crewed by "those higher powers who threw a correct numbered heap of the various categories of aircrew in together and let 'em sort themselves out." It worked extremely well.

Further flying from Lyneham for the next 4 months saw them at Portreath, Cornwall, to prepare for their first operational flight, to Gibraltar, thence into the Mediterranean.

Come 14 May 1942, this their first 'op' was memorable, for the wrong reasons. They encountered strong head winds and after 2.5 hours flying, navigator and pilot - as captain, always the latter's decision in the air - opted to return to base.

Feature Story

They had previously done cross country exercises, one to Northern Ireland, one to Scotland, to check fuel consumption, confirming makers' recording of maximum of 7.5 hours duration at cruising speed. At this speed and the reduction in sea miles covered due to the wind, they estimated there was not enough fuel to get them to destination still with the required 1 hour of fuel to cover emergency - as in diversion from Gib if it were under attack. Spain was neutral territory and could not be considered, which meant there was nothing but sea for an emergency landing. Hence the decision and the first 5 hours of ops was logged with no enemy yet in sight.

Almost immediately on return, Lyne was admitted to hospital with tonsillitis. And as he was due to be out of action for some days, the all Australian crew approached him, asking his permission for them to join another pilot and proceed to the Middle East, hoping from there perhaps to be sent further south. The Japanese were now making a nuisance of themselves in the South Pacific and some of the troops were being transferred nearer home. Some actually all the way!

His record must have looked suspicious to one zealous medico - a young pilot and an aborted first mission, followed closely by a trip to hospital with a minor complaint, were enough to have him sent to a Gleneagles psychiatric unit. Diagnosis - lack of moral fibre. Lyne was to discover this on his records many years later.

A quick check with a doctor there resulted in a pass and a few days' holiday. Albeit a somewhat lonely and frustrating one, loss of a crew, uncertainty, and if this was early summer, he'd rather be in winter in Adelaide.

25 May, next posting. Turnbury, still in Scotland and similar work on Beauforts, but with a new crew, aiming to culminate in a return to Portreath, the jumping off point once again for Gibraltar, then on to Malta, which was constantly in the news under threat of being starved into surrender.

Flying over England, Scotland and Wales was by now a daily occupation. Its much vaunted and well earned greenness, beautiful views of hills and lush valleys, great castles and picturesque villages was becoming almost old hat. At the time, all seemed natural, part of the job. You went where

you were put, did as you were told, and that was that. The fact of having birds' eye views of magnificent country so vastly different from one's own, left only a year or so ago, then going on to where a war was really being fought was no less natural. It was simply what happened, you did what you were trained to do! Others of his age had survived the same a few weeks or months earlier and achieved the goal, many never to return. But that was others. They had simply been unlucky.

At Turnbury, Lyne was approached by a RAF SGT Navigator, Wally Daft, who in turn introduced him to other RAF SGTs Bill Millward and Don Marsden to form a crew. A crew that was to stay together until late December.

Turnbury was an operational training school for crews, Lyne appointed as a Staff Pilot. His own previous ops training gave an advantage in crew selection. Rather, he modestly confesses, it was probably the principal reason his new crew selected him. And from his point of view, they had selected well, merging into a well knit team.

Flying again consisted of practice bombing, formation flying and photography, with the strongest accent on navigation, including several flights over Northern Ireland and night navigation. They formed a close and efficient partnership and friendship.

Then after another consumption test, when they stayed airborne for 7 3/4 hours, it was back to Lyneham and Portreath for Gibraltar. A daunting prospect, but surprisingly on looking back from advancing years, accepted as little more than an obvious step to adventure.

The latter part of the journey was over an area used by enemy aircraft returning from service in the Atlantic protecting their Navy. Being totally unarmed for weight reasons, the southbound crew felt very pleased to have seen none of them. Destination reached, with further relief, and mock surprised congratulations to Wally Daft, they were forced to fly around the south of the legendary Rock, probably due to bomb damage to the main strip, and put down on the little Isthmus joining Gibraltar to the mainland. Landing had to be cut very short, thankfully well practised and vigilance for pedestrians was essential when taxiing.

Finally, on 11 August 1942, they were able to stretch legs after very close

to the maximum 7 3/4 hours in the air, only to be held up for three days before continuing to Malta.

13 August, Gibraltar to Luqa, Malta - 6 3/4 hrs. Looking back, Lyne is now surprised at how flying over the fabulous Mediterranean Sea meant little more to them than constantly watching out for enemy aircraft, and relief at no sightings. Then in to the landing area over wrecked and burning ships, Navy and merchant, lifeboats running about, buildings flattened, seeing first hand what war was really about. That was accepted as a natural development too, where the training had been leading.

Landing, parked, at last relaxed any safe landing was an achievement, this more than any so far. He stood up through the top hatch to peel an orange. They were near the end of a strip, out of the more frenzied action, and kids came out from bushes to pick up the peel and chew it - emaciated kids, their ribs protruding. Before he could go down again and give them some whole fruit a security fellow came by and called "Name, next of kin?" Answered, he scribbled, said "You were lucky there's a break in the bombing," and loped off.

"Next of kin" and "A break in the bombing" - disquieting to say the least. He told the boys, they agreed and admitted they did indeed feel lucky, closed ranks, stopped the next likely passer by and asked to be pointed toward the mess.

The 'Pedestal' convoys came from both Gibraltar and Cairo, and were reputed to have 90% losses. But while he and the crew were there, the tanker 'Ohio' staggered into Valetta Harbour with oil enough to avoid the island's demise as a British possession.

Malta needed their aircraft, so Lyne and crew were flown on to Cairo in a DC3, the 'Dakota,' the perennial workhorse, and hardly a liner. Benches lining either side, gear throw on the floor in the middle, no safety belts or straps.

It happened that the retired Governor of Malta was on the same flight, and although they were unable to speak with him, they learned he had been about to surrender the Island that day as supplies were too low for it to survive. It had been saved by the Ohio, limping in, wedged between two destroyers.

The Middle East Pool was at Almaza, out of Cairo - 22 PTC (Transit Camp). When Command said "We want your aeroplane," they also said "That's where

you go until we tell you to go somewhere else."

The boys were warned, and heeded the warning, always to go in groups, and never outside the main streets when on leave in Cairo or Heliopolis. They were told of locals spraying some sort of muck through tubes simply to stop their victim, then gathering round to help and relieving him of camera, money, or any other easy pickings.

Ordinary Egyptians, in their strange garb, were openly interested in uniforms. A few thousand years had bestowed on them more sense than regulations had on casual travelling airmen in RAF or RAAF blues. Many were even more interested in 'baksheesh', one way or another. Moving in groups was distinctly advisable

On 24 Sept the posting arrived to No. 5 Middle East Training School, Shallufa, Egypt - a training school for dropping of torpedos. The torp was 14 feet long and 14 inches in diameter.

Exercises were in navigation over water and successful dropping, the latter mostly on the Red Sea - 25 drops for the course. The crew by this time was thoroughly settled. Wally Daft, who had been a bugler in the Salvation Army, was invariably reliable in his navigation, and an easy man to get on with. Billy Millward, a butcher by trade, was a big, easy going bloke who generally operated the rear guns. Don Marsden was the WAG, wireless operator and top air gunner.

17 Oct had them in 47SQN RAF, at Shandur, further north in Egypt, where they took off and landed, with torpedo, 14 times, 3 on unsuccessful searches, 11 on standby at Gianacalis, Gambut (Tobruk), or Berca (Benghazi) - no drops.

On the last leg of one search north of Tobruk, looking for a target for the 'fish', they had a blip on their ASDIC screen indicating surface craft 50 nautical miles out of their search pattern and reported it on their return. A big operation next day resulted in an enemy convoy destroyed.

On 15 Jan 1943, Lyne and crew had their one and only mine laying venture - a scary one - not fun. Collecting a 1,000 lb US made mine from Shallufa, they carried it to Berca (Benghazi) to top up fuel, and on to Luqa (Malta). One stop, 9 hrs 15 mins flying time.

That, at least, was the plan, eventually executed. But when coming in to land on Berca - more an open field



Lyne with Wally Daft, Billy Millward, Don Marsden, Luqa, Malta Nov 1943

of compressed desert than a strip - at some 5 to 10 feet off, with Lyne ready to pull back throttles and drop on for a nice three pointer, the starboard engine failed to respond. It still roared at approach revs, still lifted the wing, and refused to do what the throttle handle told it.

There was no option but to advise control of the problem, cut the motor and get part way off the strip on one motor. Air control was in American hands. They had just taken control, no one knew who was what, and except for a lot of buck pass shouting there was no one doing anything. Minor chaos reigned.

Lyne and Navigator Wally Daft arranged for Wally to get out and remove a cowl. He could then manually operate the throttle to get them to the engineering section. A few minutes, and it was on to refuelling station and off to Luqa. And from Luqa, at night, to La Guellette in Tunis Bay - 4 hours' night flying - where they dropped the mine in the designated area, and returned - Luqa, Berca, Gambut and Shandur. Another 7 hrs 40 mins in the air in close to celebratory mood in the lightened Beaufort.

Luqa was one of several makeshift bases on Malta and its equally rocky little sister island. Those bases served the RAF in some of the most ferocious air combat of the war. There is a monument in Valetta to over 2300 who

did not return. And they were duly recognised in the most prestigious way possible (along with the island's people) by its award of the George Cross.

As the war seemed to be moving northward, leaving them behind, and they were doing little apparently useful, the boys suggested joining 203SQN, which was short of air crews, to see some action. Lyne made the application.

This resulted in a posting on 21 Jan 1943 to No. 203SQN, RAF, which was equipped with the American built Martin Baltimore, based on Benghazi. The Baltimore was a twin-engined, narrow bodied aircraft used for low level reconnaissance over the Mediterranean Sea. Navigator sat in front of and below the pilot, both having about one and a half shoulder width of room, wireless op and gunner behind.

From their strip at Benghazi, Lyne and crew logged 32 hours flying time. Mainly familiarisation flights in the Baltimore - a docile aircraft from the pilot's point of view, from base to Misurata and Apollonia along the Libyan coast, the last two flights short trips out into the Mediterranean on anti-sub patrols.

14 March saw them in 69SQN, based on Malta, again flying Baltimores and searching for unidentified shipping, in particular watching out for dinghies with surviving aircrews after sea ditching



Brothers John and Lyne Skinner

and providing submarine lookout for convoys. Nearly all flying was below 100 feet, occasionally up to 1000 feet if looking for a dinghy.

At Luqa, Malta's RAF airfield, all aircraft were parked in U-shaped bays, camouflaged and roughly guarded to protect them from shrapnel. Aircrews were accommodated elsewhere, whether by design, for convenience, their safety, or all of the above combined with gratitude from the populace remains a mystery none wanted to probe.

Lyne and co were housed in the Meadowbank Hotel in Sliema, on the northern shore, across the harbour channel from Valetta. The Dilley family, of Ma and two daughters, Doreen and Mary, lived in a flat in Windsor Avenue, back to back with the hotel, and were always available for a cuppa and cake - the latter scrounged from equally willing friends to "feed our Air Force boys." And the girls joined in swimming in a rock pool across the esplanade from the Meadowbank.

War, quite a few airmen agreed, wasn't all bad.

They were bussed from 'mess' at Sliema to Luqa (about 4 or 5 miles) and had a daily ration of a teaspoon of sugar and two slices of bread, plus links (sausages with little meat). Food, they discovered, was even more scarce than in England. War, they also agreed, wasn't all that good, either.

Lyne's logbook records a short flight on 5 April, an air test for a fault in changing petrol tanks in a Baltimore. In the test they 'lost' an engine. Having feathered, he was forced to make a single engine landing on strip 160, with a valley at one end and a quarry at the other. On approach, he realised he had erred in judgement, and at 300 feet was coming in too high.

Rather than going round again on one engine, as per rulebook, he side slipped in and landed nicely to be greeted by a rotable Squadron CO,

'Wingco' Robby MacKay, who was, behind his back, a 'time expired' airman with little knowledge of modern aircraft.

However, Wingco was about to fly an air test just before putting Lyne on the carpet and clumsily damaged a wingtip while taxiing. Lyne was let off with a red faced lecture.

Returning from another anti-submarine patrol after dark, searching for shipping or dinghies, the wireless ceased working and they were unsure of position. Sea, nothing but sea all around. No stars, no sky above. No radio contact. Flying on, blind, silent but for roar of engines - scary.

Variable winds had made navigation difficult for Wally Daft, but there was no option but to rely on him. And as fuel was running low, ditching in sea in the dark was becoming a real possibility. When a light appeared ahead, the big question was - Malta or Sicily?, friend or foe? It was decided to fly 220 degrees and if Malta didn't appear in 10 minutes, it had been left behind. However, the wireless came on air again, it was Malta in sight and all was well.

And a bitter sweet event a week or two later. On 14 April, Lyne was grounded with a boil on the shin, and WOFF Benson took over as captain of his crew on a routine W patrol. Take off was at 0400, the object to fly east and north to cross Sicily at dawn and search in the Naples-Rome area, but were met by Dornier 210s. They came off the worse in the encounter. Don Marsden was badly hit. Billy Millward brought his bleeding body down from the turret, took over and shot down a Dornier, but failed to save Don. Billy was awarded a DFM and the pilot a DFC.

Shortly after, Lyne was Duty Officer supervising air traffic when SGT 'Seagull' Schulma of the South African Air Force returned after being attacked in the Straits of Messina. He swerved off the strip, probably from a holed tyre, and rammed head on into a Hudson awaiting take off. Lyne as DO was obliged to supervise ambulance crews collecting the dead. Meanwhile the Navigator was jammed by the Hudson's wing sticking into the Baltimore's front seat, with petrol dripping all around. By now the Base Commander GPCAPT was in charge, and asked the NAV, an Aussie, what help he could give. The instant reply came back, "For Christ's sake, you can get me a cup of coffee!"

His total operational hours on

Baltimores to 30 November 1943 - 296.

Total operational hours on Beauforts - 52.

Number of operational sorties - 75.

Leave was not hard to take, being billeted in the Duke of Bronte's villa, which Lyne remembers as being on the left hand side of the road leading up to it from Taormina, on Sicily's east coast. The road was a series of Zs, the villa 3 storeys high facing the sea and magnificent view, single storey at the rear cut out of rock. Not much to do less in the way of food. But servants! Very happy ones at replacing detested Germans.

An even more memorable recollection was of being flown to Catania, a little south down the coast, on the way to the house of rest. He was passenger to one SQNLDR Bell in a Mosquito, arguably the best twin engine aircraft of its time, powered by Merlin engines similar to those of the Spitfire. SQNLDR Bell showed him some of its capabilities, the outstanding feat being the feathering of one engine and pulling up vertically some thousands of feet. He fell in love with the plywood constructed machine and determined it would be his carrier into his next tour of ops. He was yet to work out how.

Normal practice after a nine month tour was to rest aircrew in non operational duties for a similar time - when and where and if practicable. Lyne was again assigned piloting trainee navigators and wireless operators (NAVs and WOPs) for nine months, flying Ansons. This was at 75OTU, Gianacis, 50 miles south west of Alexandria - more or less familiar Egyptian territory for him. He took his consignments over Palestine, Cairo and Alexandria, to teach, to relieve the monotony of desert, to recharge and to sightsee.

On one return from Cairo and its wonders after last light, he noticed the starboard engine was losing oil and smoking. He had to nurse it by reducing power and relying on the other, but it was soon clear it was very doubtful if he could make the 'drome at Gianacis.

Even so, though there was nothing between but sand, there was nowhere else to go. His passenger was an Army Colonel, a medical officer, who was asked to lower the undercart, which in the Anson meant turning a handle some 120 times. The sweating doctor had nearly got it down when they hit the sand a kilometre short of Gianacis.

Perhaps getting gear down had not been a good idea. Well, Lyne saw from the air next day they had been fortunate to hit a flat piece of desert and had missed a 10 foot ditch by a few feet. The doctor was not pleased, but he did offer to check Lyne for injury. And once again no enquiry was made, no action taken.

On finding out how he could get on to a Mosquito squadron, despite its being such a versatile aircraft, he learnt they were being used almost entirely for photo reconnaissance in this area, which suited Lyne, having done some work in that sphere. Furthermore, he learnt that advanced photo recce training was done only on Spitfires. A downer - he was a multi pilot.

Since his single engine experience was only on Tiger Moths, Lyne thought he must get some hours up on singles to qualify. And since he was now a FLTLT and a flight commander and there was a Boulton Paul Defiant - a lumbering two-seater with only one power plant - available for wireless air gunner training, he would help the WAGs by flying the Defiant and towing drogues for them to shoot at. Making a good fellow of himself and building up 37 odd single engine hours, apparently sufficient to apply for the posting.

November 1944 began the next phase of Lyne's flying career. Sent to 74 OTU at Petah Tiqva, Palestine, he was to do No. 13 course in photographic reconnaissance, and after some dual in the American built Harvard, a fore and aft single, carrying pilot and supervisor-instructor, he was sent off in a Mark Ib Spitfire.

One of the most exciting events in a fortunate pilot's life, the first take off in the world's most legendary aeroplane. Opening the throttle in a cockpit with barely enough room for one and feeling the surge was (still is) a peak of excitement. Warned on the greater power and torque from the Merlin engine, expected veer to right was quickly corrected by strong press on left rudder pedal and on gathering speed at a rate previously unknown, firm forward pressure on the 'stick' (control column) got tail up and 15 feet or so of nose down as quickly as possible to give forward vision before easing it back at about 100mph (160 kph) to lift off and climb, at a rate hard to believe, in what seemed no time at all to be miles above a shrinking yet expanding earth.

And oxygen had been turned on,

mask in place, as aircraft and pilot would be taken to 28,000 or 30,000 feet, the height at which most photo recce was to be carried out. Oxygen was necessary in any flight of more than a minute or so over 14,000 feet, forgetting it a potential disaster, hence turning it became an essential part of pre take off cockpit drill.

The flip, he was told, was to get any desire to do aerobatics out of his system before flying with cameras. That was a definite no-no. Lyne, however, remembering how he had had difficulty keeping his breakfast down and raising a querulous "Great!" for an enthusiastic instructor initiating him into the glories of rolling, looping and flying up side down hanging from straps in a Tiger, used the hour to practise take offs and landings.

Aerobatics aside, the feeling of belonging, being part of a magnificent machine, was immediate, the knowledge of control over such power awesome. By the end of the second hour he felt familiar enough to look forward to the future. And he'd taken the first step to getting in that Mosquito - a Spitfire each side!

Then back to work. Given Mark IV PR Spitfires, with noticeably more power than the 1b, he took them up to learn the techniques of using cameras of 5", 8" and 14" focal length housed vertically or at a slope, the 36" always vertically. The latter shoots meant approaching target in the line of the shoot, compass bearing adjusted to allow for wind velocity and direction.

The starting point, which of course would be directly underneath, had to be judged by virtually standing on a wingtip to ensure correct position over it, then getting back to straight and level, maintaining run to previously estimated end of shoot, then rolling to stand on wingtip again to check the run had been accurate. In practice, and later, reality, if not right on track, to do it all over again in a re-run.

The act of standing on a wingtip required practice, as Lyne recalls. Joystick (control column) must be tipped smartly to full (say) left to get the Spit vertical to ground to be able to see target, at the same time pushed slightly forward and held there for the moment to sustain direction, as elevators are now practical rudder and rudder is elevator, so right pedal must be used momentarily to hold altitude. All movements, plus the reverse to get back into run position, must be made in the matter of a second

or so to maintain level flying, height and direction. The position check comes in the middle of the exercise. All the while keeping constant lookout for 'Jerry'.

Practice and operational photography was almost invariably performed between 22,000 and 28,000 feet, depending on the focal length of the cameras and use - ie. whether taking vertical single photos, mosaics, obliques or line overlaps to cover small or large areas - and degree of detail required.

These Mk IV PRs had no guns, no armament, no centimetre thick armour plate behind and under pilot as in fighters. The reduced weight gave them just that much more speed and manoeuvrability to evade rather than tangle with any enemy. Cameras were all behind pilot, the thumb button to operate them on the control column in place of gun triggers.

It was a requirement to fly from Petah Tiqva over Suez, Alexandria, Port Said, Cyprus, Tyre and Damascus, exotic and dreamily interesting places, perhaps to be studied in a later life. In 1944-5, not much more than spots in bare desert on maps.

34 sorties and 52 flying hours completed the course. A posting to 683SQN, RAF, San Severo, Italy, was the destination on completion. 683's SQN motto was 'Nihil Nos Latet' (Nothing to us stays hidden). The squadron was actually formed from 69SQN - Lyne's one-time squadron on Malta - in late February 1943. B Flight - Lyne's old flight - became 683SQN, specifically invented as a PR Unit.

In early January 1945, Lyne's first operational flights in the Mark XI PR were up the coast to Venice, across the country to Genoa and Spezi, once to land and refuel at Florence, returning over the Central Alps. These purpose built Spitfires, with no ammunition bins in the wings, had in their stead extra fuel tanks in the leading edges, thereby doubling normal range. These magnificent aeroplanes, even with full tanks, could outrun anything they might meet, specifically enemy fighters with their weight of guns etcetera and intent to use them.

It was indeed a custom modified fighter powered by a Rolls Royce Merlin 60 or 70 series engine of 1655hp and had a top speed of 422mph (665kph), cruising speed 370mph (590kph) and service ceiling of 40,000 feet (13,000m). Faster and lighter than any aircraft of

Feature Story

either side in operational use. Their purpose - to photo every road, rail, canal, shipping channel or whatever route enemy forces were taking in their withdrawal up the 'leg' of Italy.

Sorties were usually carried out at 28,000 feet, and Lyne only twice met another prowler at that altitude. Both were recognised as Lockheed Lightning's (American P38s) and being unsure of their pilots' aircraft recognition skills and notorious national enthusiasm on the trigger thumb, he decided not to get close and waggle wings in friendly fashion, but to use the advantage he had in his throttle hand - comforting advantage.

For all those advantages, there were hazards. Returning from one sortie over the Alps on 25 January 1945, Lyne felt his engine was running rough, and at the same time was informed that base at San Severo was clouded in. He decided to call "Mayday", the code for help, to be guided down through ten tenths cloud to what could only be, to him, a strange airfield. Following calm instructions from unknown controllers down into and through a dead white world, he could pray his altimeter corresponded exactly with that of the controller. And add another prayer for the unknown voice's calm skill. Talked from 25,000 feet through completely blanketing whiteness, at 500 feet he was told to circle in a rate 2 turn, descend slowly, and look for water.

At 300 feet, altimeters spot on, he broke through and could suddenly see beyond his wingtip. Water it was. And he could see for miles! And discovered he was in a bay with a white beach almost surrounded by high land. And he began breathing again. There was even an airstrip! He landed, had a change of all plugs, and took off for home.

You could trust mayday. He had been told that, half believed it, now fervently did. And it was fortunate that by this time all of lower Italy was in Allied control. The strip he had landed on was Falconara, one with which he would become more familiar.

A regular sortie from San Severo was the 'Flying Flap'. At 25,000 feet to photo an area behind the retreating German armies. It was important to locate the self-propelled guns they were firing from behind their lines over the heads of our front line. This was designed to keep our troops awake, rattle their morale, and with luck on their part to do damage

to behind line services. On these trips a large area had to be covered at first photographic light and the pics got back asap. This meant heading for home some 25 miles, cutting all corners to get negatives off to PHoto Interpretation Section for reading by the Army, mostly American. They seemed to have fewer air forces in Italy than the British, but many more land units. PHIS had a gypsy like truck waiting just off the strip to pick up and develop pics, on their part wasting no time to get them where needed.

On one of these jaunts, Lyne returned to base in more than the usual hurry and did a 'split-arse' approach. Cutting out standard down- and much of the cross-wind leg to come in to the circuit at about 300 feet, put flaps and wheels down and do a tight turn onto the ground. In the Spitfire, with its huge engine, vision to the chosen landing spot in that near vertical attitude in the steep turn was fine - and the move much more fighter pilot like, more satisfying, than regulation! - but was virtually nil anywhere else.

Down to 100 or so feet Lyne suddenly found another Spitfire not only making a slower approach right beneath him, but another in front coming from the opposite direction. He saw them collide, shearing wings off, and could only gun his own motor to overfly them, land short, brake hard, taxi in and deliver his magazine.

On 28 January 1945, Lyne, now a flight commander in 683SQN, was sent to head a Detachment operating from Forli, on the south edge of the Po valley, south of Rimini. He was soon OIC of 6 aircraft, 6 pilots and 60 ground crew as units moved up Italy with the war.

In Forli, the detachment was housed in two, two- storeyed units - one whole unit for the erks' sleeping quarters, the top floor of the other for pilots', the lower a common mess and living space. He thinks they had a local cook, certainly Italian kitchen staff providing reasonable food, good service, and cleaning. There was also a makeshift bar upstairs where pilots and guest officers played an invented dice game in which losers, hilariously no winners, bought drinks.

The latter consisted of one bottle of gin or scotch between all 10 or 12 stayers to 2100 hrs, then tapping of a keg of marsala until bar closed at 2200hrs, consumption depending on likelihood of flying next day. The latter was frequently called off if bad weather

was predicted, usually accurately, as snow could have them grounded for a week at a time.

Boredom was a problem in those circumstances, with occasional relief gained from going to movies - 'flicks nights.' These were as much a penance as a high spot, waiting for up to two hours in a darkened hall for the Japanese motor to get the projector working, and sitting through an old and often lousy film. Non-smokers were soon unwilling smokers and both became noisy, vociferous comments ranging from plain crude to hilarious. But it was better than twiddling thumbs.

Sorties varied from 40 minutes to 2.5 hrs covering the needs of the US Army, East side, under Colonel Leadbetter, asap as usual, the purpose - to note any and all enemy troop and equipment movements by road, rail or water by taking mosaics, line overlaps or oblique photographs, whatever required, to pinpoint the retreating German Army's rear firing guns for our gunners to direct their fire. The flights were generally at 25,500 feet.

Lyne did record, in his logbook, a climb with camera to 38,500 feet. And discovered that Earth is undoubtedly round. And a long way down from 7.5 miles. And one feels very lonely up there, with an odd sense of comfort and relief in winging over and returning to an occupied planet.

To save valuable time for the PHISs to get their information quickly, or perhaps have an excuse for a little showing off, the small contingent used split-arsed approaches for preference. And the 'erks,' as ground crews had come to be affectionately known throughout the RAF, were ready on the taxi strip, one to grab the magazine and tear off with it, one to hop on a wing and guide aircraft and pilot, blinded by 16 feet of Merlin, to their parking bay.

The sorties were for the most part over the war zones of the 'thigh' of northern Italy, some easterly to Dubrovnik and other cities of Croatia, and daily coverage of the coastline to Trieste and the major towns of the North - Venice, Padova and Bologna. His logbook records other targets for line overlaps and mosaics - Imoga, Luga, Gemona, Alfonsine, Parenza, Padoa, Fiume, Pola, Udine and Campoformido.

Squadron moves northward with the war had them flying from Ferrara (north of Bologna), Treviso (north of

Venice) and Udine (at the top of the Gulf of Venice) to photo roads in Ljubljana, Trieste, and as far as Klagenfurt and Graz.

Lyne recalls further flying education. How to land on what was left of runways spattered with bomb holes. Mostly filled in, a hidden and perhaps worse hazard. The trick was to fly in nose high, wheels down, full flap, near stall, with high engine revs, thereby reducing stalling speed and then cutting motor to drop a three pointer (left wheel, right wheel, tail wheel) on a likely patch to make a short run on brakes. All with strictly limited forward vision.

They made it most times. On one, an unfamiliar strip, he suddenly caught sight over his right shoulder of a chimney flashing past above him. You could always learn. If you were lucky.

Yet, as widely as Lyne and his brother pilots travelled, as freely and easily as they could rattle off those names, theirs was a limited kind of travel. There are 5,280 feet in a mile and their view was usually from 25,000 feet and more - 5 miles. From above, no binoculars and they were at work, had a task to perform. Watch to be kept for enemy fighters. They were not on a Cook's tour.

683SQN was also the squadron noted for one of its commanders, the famous WGCdr Adrian Warburton, who had briefly been Lyne's CO in 1943. Warbie's exploits have been well written up. A pilot of extraordinary skill and matching courage, rewarded (insufficiently) with a DSO and Bar, DFC and 2 Bars, DFC (US) Military.

Those as close to him as Lyne, also recall him as being 'as mad as a march hare.' Others have labelled him crazy, stupid, reckless. He was all of those and more. A brilliant pilot, absolutely fearless, and great leader as well as a quiet spoken, likeable individual.

And oh so lucky. Where so many

boys succumbed on their first op, he arrived home with bullet and shrapnel holes almost as a matter of course and probably with another kill or impossible picture to his tally.

One of his memorable tricks was taking pot-shots with his issue revolver at the tiny attachments on the front of small statues of little boys lining the esplanade on the way home from the Sliema Dance Hall. And cursing himself when he missed, he was such an excellent shot. Yet he was quietly spoken, in no way arrogant, and had the respect of all.

But Warbie disappeared on a solo flight from London to Italy in 1945. His aircraft and remains were found in 2002, 'til then buried deep in snow in mountains near Munich. Evidence, holes in the aircraft, suggested he had been shot down by an Me262. His phenomenal luck had finally run out.

From bases up the coast as fighting moved on, flying was often cancelled because of the weather. The flyboys would then commandeer a gharry and go out into the country to find a farmhouse. They were invariably welcomed, more warmly when it was made known they were looking for eggs and chickens, much more so when chocolate and real silk, from damaged parachutes, were produced for payment. They would then, with a lot of laughter and excitement, quite likely be sat at the only table, bare of cloth or ornament, while the hidden for years demijohn would be hauled out from its concealment under the hay in the next room - the barn. Which was a half door away, the revelation and extraction accompanied by cheers and the flapping and squawking of indignant fowls. The new conquerors were different from the last!

One of Lyne's last flights was to check whether or not a bombing raid had missed its target, the dock area. He



Lyne, ANZAC Day 2018

was able to demonstrate that it had been seriously hurt, his own oblique showing a 170 foot wide hole where the target, the 'Otto Leonhart' carrying mines and heavy artillery ammunition, had once been. One bomb only, had fallen outside the restricted area. Historic Venice remained intact.

The 'erks took delight in welcoming German groups coming in from the sea, unaware that the city was in allied hands. They relieved them of watches, cameras and their German currency before advising them to find an MP of either side to tell them what to do and where to do it.

On May 22nd, Lyne's detachment was now supernumerary and he flew across Italy to Naples where he applied for and obtained, a posting back to the UK. However, he was informed that no Australians were permitted to go west as there was still a war in the Pacific. So back to Guado and Foggia on May 23rd, and Venice, the nearest recreation point, the Hotel Danielle its 'centre'. That was to be the last time he had a Spitfire 'strapped to his bum'.

Walking through St Mark's Square from the hotel to the gharry one evening in late May, a loud voice on the 'tannoi' repeatedly declared, 'La Guerra Europa il a finita'. Peace had finally and officially been declared.

In October Lyne returned to Australia on the 'Strathmore' and in November 1945, Lyne was discharged at the Daws Road Disembarkation Depot in Adelaide as a Squadron Leader, having had 1114 hours of flying.

And he never did fly that Mosquito.



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Recently launched, the Foundation is a registered charity and a deductible gift recipient. Donations above \$2 are tax deductible. The Foundation will enable the Society to expand our level of benevolence.

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Magpie 41 Painting Presented to AWM

On 14 March 1971, Canberra bomber A84-228 of No 2 Squadron, Magpie 41, was hit by a Soviet SA-2 Guideline surface to air missile (SAM), when flying near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) in South Vietnam. The pilot, WGCdr John Downing, the CO, related that they were turning on to their target run at Khe Sanh when a terrific explosion hit the aircraft. Intelligence reports stated that 57mm and 100mm were active in the area, but no mention of SA-2s.

John confirmed a SA-2 severely damaged the right wing; a second SA-2 flew past, but did not explode. John yelled to navigator, Al Pinches, "... that we were ejecting." Al jettisoned his hatch and ejected, closely followed by John, who ejected through the canopy as the Canberra started to break up.

They both ejected safely from about 14,000 ft and descended through the low cloud into the jungle. They last saw 228 disappear through the cloud. After spending a night in the jungle, they were rescued next morning by a rescue UH-1 helicopter and flown to the US Surgical Hospital at Quang Tri.



Canberra A84-228 in better days, South Vietnam, 1969.
Photo Bob Howe



Canberra A84-228 as depicted after the SA-2 hit, from the painting by late John Marshall. *Photo Lance Halvorson*

The artist, the late John Marshall, painted the ejection event in the late 1970s, but its existence was only discovered in the 1980s when an ex-2SQN pilot, then SQNLDR Barry Carpenter, discovered it on the artist's web site. Barry bought the painting and loaned it to 2SQN for safekeeping. After considering a commemoration event, he contacted ex 2SQN navigator, Bob Howe, who arranged the presentation.



Bob Howe addresses the guests at the presentation.
Photo AWM

On the 47th Anniversary of the event, 14 March 2018, the painting was presented to the Australian War Memorial Director, Dr Brendan Nelson, on behalf of the painting's owner, Barry Carpenter, by WGCdr John Downing who was flying A84-228 when shot down. The painting of the loss of a No 2SQN aircraft in South Vietnam on 14th March 1971 records a unique event in the history of the RAAF. It was the first and only time to date that an RAAF aircraft had been shot down by a SAM and the first and only time that a crew had successfully ejected from a RAAF Canberra.



CAF AIRMSHL Leo Davies, Brad Pinches, John Downing and AIRMSHL David Evans (Retd) at the presentation. John points to the cockpit which depicts him just before ejection - Al Pinches has already ejected. *Photo AWM*

Immediately following the event, current 2SQN members and Association members attended the Last Post Ceremony at the Australian War Memorial. CAF, AIRMSHL Leo Davies, WGCDR John Downing (Retd) , CO 2SQN WGCDR Jason Brown and Arthur Rennick (2SQN Assoc Secretary) laid wreaths.



Arthur Rennick and CO 2SQN WGCDR Jason Brown at the Last Post ceremony, AWM, 14 March 18. *Photo AWM*



CAF AIRMSHL Leo Davies, John & Louise Downing and Dr Brendan Nelson at the Last Post ceremony, AWM, 14 Mar 18. *Photo AWM*

Following the ceremonies at the War Memorial, the 2 Squadron and Association members held a reunion dinner at the Canberra Yacht Club. Sixty members and wives attended the dinner.



Col Gardner discusses his time with 2SQN at Phan Rang with Peter Ekins; both served in 2SQN in 1967. *Photo Lance Halvorson*



John Downing and Graham Bickle, 2SQN Radio Officer at the time of John's ejection in 1971. *Photo Lance Halvorson*



The painting of Canberra 228 which was on the reunion cake at the Canberra Yacht Club. *Photo Col Gardner*
Lance Halvorson

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Although ultrasound cannot be heard by humans, at high frequency it can still cause direct damage to human ears. On a side note, the boxes also act as a great perching place for birds.

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Centenary of the RAF and 97th Anniversary of Formation of the RAAF

The RAF commemorates its centenary in 2018 and the RAAF celebrates its 97th year since formation in 1921. To mark these significant milestones, joint events were held during March in Canberra. Air Force Association National President, GPCAPT Carl Schiller (Ret'd), Board members and the ACT Division President, Judy Webster, attended the ceremonial service at the RAAF Memorial on ANZAC Parade.

AFA veterans then attended a RAF veterans talk/panel discussion in the BAE Systems Theatre, where veterans answered questions on their service in WWII, the Cold War and Vietnam. Following the talks, AFA members then attended the dusk Last Post ceremony at the Australian War Memorial.

The day's commemorative events concluded with a dinner in ANZAC Hall at the Australian War Memorial, surrounded by aircraft that made history for both services. The National President, Carl Schiller, VP Lance Halvorson and ACT Division President, Judy Webster, all attended the dinner. During the dinner, CAF presented the Air Force Association Trophy to No 44 Wing.



Former Chief of Air Staff, AIRMSHL David Evans (Retd) with FLTLT Courtney Symons at the RAAF Memorial during the commemorative ceremonial service. *Photo CPL Nicci Freeman*



A member of Australia's Federation Guard at the RAAF Memorial during the commemorative ceremonial service. *Photo CPL Nicci Freeman*



Dignitaries and guests participate in a commemorative dinner under the wings of "G" for George at the AWM. *Photo SGT Amanda Campbell*



No. 44WG is presented with the Air Force Association Trophy at the commemorative dinner, AWM. Air Force Association President, GPCAPT Carl Schiller (Retd), WGCDR James Veino, GPCAPT Patrick Cooper, AIRMSHL Leo Davies AO CSC. *Photo SGT Amanda Campbell*



A Lockheed Hudson and a Spitfire fly over Canberra to commemorate the Centenary of the RAF and the 97th anniversary of the formation of the RAAF



CAS, RAF, ACM Sir Stephen Hillier addresses guests at the AWM Commemorative Dinner

Australia receives next three F-35As

Australia has taken delivery of the next three F-35A aircraft from Lockheed Martin.

Minister for Defence Marise Payne and Minister for Defence Industry Christopher Pyne congratulated Defence and Lockheed Martin on reaching the important milestone.

Minister Payne said the F-35 program is on track to provide Australia with a fifth generation aircraft at the forefront of air combat technology.

Australia is the first international partner to accept jets with Block 3F capability

"These latest aircraft are fitted with the program's final software system, which unlocks the aircraft's full war-fighting potential including weapons, mission systems and flight performance," Minister Payne said.

"The stealthy, advanced F-35A is a step change in the Australian Defence Force's capabilities, giving Australia an edge against the emergence of advanced capabilities in our region. Australia is the first international partner to accept jets with Block 3F capability, and this is another key step towards introducing the aircraft into service before its arrival in Australia in December this year." Credit -Australian Defence.



F-35A Lightning II JSF. SGT Shane Gidall

Defence Reserves Council Employer Support Awards

The Defence Reserves Support Council QLD, State Employer Support Awards, are held annually and recognise the contributions of small, medium and large business that employ Defence Reservists.



Mr Francis Rigby, representing Financial Advice Matters and his employee, CPL Phil Boys, with the South QLD Employer Support Award for Medium Business Category held at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre. Photo SGT Ben Dempster

FLTLT Newton Commemorative Ceremony

FLTLT William Ellis 'Bill' Newton was the only Australian airman to receive a Victoria Cross for action in the South-West Pacific and the sole recipient by a RAAF pilot flying in a RAAF Squadron during WWII.

A commemorative ceremony including a memorial unveiling and dedication service to honour the memory and actions of FLTLT Newton on the 75th Anniversary of the awarding of a VC for his actions was recently held at RAAF Base Richmond.



CAF, AIRMSHL Leo Davies AO CSC and William Newton Jnr, a descendant of FLTLT Newton, unveil the Plinth during the commemorative ceremony. Photo CPL David Gibbs

Battle of Bismarck Sea Commemorative Service

A commemorative service marking the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bismarck Sea was recently held at RAAF Base Richmond. The event commemorated the service of No.s 11, 22, 30 and 100 SQN personnel, together with the United States Army Air Force fought in the Battle of the Bismarck Sea from 02 - 04 March 1943. The battle destroyed a Japanese convoy of troopships, removing any likelihood Japan would be able to regain the initiative in the New Guinea land campaign.



ACAUST, AVM Steve Roberton, DSC, AM, and guests assist in unveiling the plinth during the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bismarck Sea commemorative service. *Photo CPL Casey Forster*

Air Power Conference

The RAAF conducted its biennial Air Power Conference in Canberra during 20-21 March 2018 on the theme of 'Air power in a Disruptive World'. The Conference attracted more than 1300 delegates drawn from national and international Air Forces and other military organisations, Government, Industry and academia.

The Conference provided an opportunity for the defence and security communities to explore how geo-political strategy, environmental change and technology-based innovation are both disrupting and driving change across every level of national security.



CAF, AIRMSHL Leo Davies AO CSC, talks with General Yoshinari Marumo, Chief of Staff of Koku-Jieitai (Japan Air Self-Defense Force) at the Air Power Conference, Canberra. *Photo FSGT Mark Eaton*



Minister for Defence, Senator Marise Payne, addresses the Air Power Conference in Canberra. *Photo CPL Dan Pinhorn*



Delegates representing various nations at the Air Power Conference, Canberra. *Photo CPL Dan Pinhorn*

Royal Guard for Prince Charles

The ADF provided ceremonial support to Australia's largest sporting event in a decade, the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, during April, 2018.

About 140 personnel from Australia's Federation Guard travelled to the sunshine state to provide a Royal Guard to welcome His Royal Highness, Prince Charles, the Prince of Wales and his wife Camilla, the Duchess of Cornwall.



HRH, the Prince of Wales and LCDR Shannon Martin inspects the guard at Old Government House, Brisbane. *Photo LS Nadav Harei*

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OP ATLAS - 2018 Commonwealth Games

RAAF personnel assisted Queensland Police Service with security in the lead-up to and during the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, during April.

RAAF and QPS personnel searched vehicles entering the Athlete's Village and other sporting venues on the Gold Coast for suspicious items to ensure public safety. The RAAF contribution included full-time and reserve members from across the nation.

RAAF support to security for the Games included F/A-18 Hornets and support staff, and was just one aspect of ADF support to the Games, which encompassed more than 1000 personnel from all three services.



QLD Police Service officer Senior SGT Mick Trapnell and CPL Gabrielle Gross give a big 'Borobi salute' mimicking the official 2018 Commonwealth Games mascot, a blue Koala bear named 'Borobi' while working together in the Athlete's Village.

Photo SGT William Guthrie

ANZAC Day 2018

As many people paused at Dawn Services and ANZAC Day commemorations to remember those who have served Australia in the past, they also reflected on the sacrifices of those who are still serving, and those whose battles continue.



Air Force personnel, ANZAC Day 2018, Sydney.

Photo CPL David Gibbs

Approximately 2300 ADF members are currently deployed on operation, continuing the Anzac spirit whilst serving Australia's national interests at home and in many countries around the world.



LAC Timothy Day kneels at the grave of his late Great-Grandfather, Private John Mooney, AIF, at the Vaulx Hill Field Ambulance Cemetery near Bapaume, France in the lead up to 2018 Anzac Day Commemorations. *Photo LSIS Jake Badior*

Potent Force

Australia's JSF program has taken another significant step forward with the acceptance of the next three Australian F-35A aircraft from Lockheed Martin. The three aircraft are joining Australia's first two F-35A jets at Luke Air Force Base in Arizona, where RAAF pilots and maintainers are currently training and instructing.

Defence Minister Marise Payne and Defence Industry Minister Christopher Pyne congratulated Defence and Lockheed Martin on reaching the important milestone.

Senator Payne said our F-35 program was on track to provide Air Force with a fifth-generation aircraft at the forefront of air combat technology. "These latest aircraft are fitted with the program's final software system, which unlocks the aircraft's full war-fighting potential, including weapons, mission systems and flight performance," she said.

Courtesy Air Force News.



An F-35A at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona

Support for members and their families

Defence has a wide range of support programs in place, which all members and their families can access to help them cope with the challenges of the Defence way of life.

Defence Community Organisation (DCO) has more than 170 staff Australia-wide and programs and services are delivered nationally and from local offices, in all states and territories, including an Amberley office on base.

There is a wide range of services and programs available to help you and your family to make the most of military life:

24-hour support

If you need support, help, or advice at any time, the Defence Family Helpline operates 24-hours a day, seven days a week and is staffed by qualified human-resource professionals including social workers and psychologist. Call 1800 624 608.

Partner employment

Funding is available for initiatives that contribute to the immediate employability of partners when they relocate due to their ADF partner's military service.

Dependants with special needs

Families who have dependants with special needs can get information and practical assistance to reduce the impact of relocation.

Support during deployment and time apart

An integral feature of Defence life is time apart from families due to deployments, training or other Service requirements. DCO services seek to inform and prepare ADF members and families for these times and to make these experiences positive and strengthening ones for the family.

Childcare

DCO maintain a network of childcare centres around Australia, with priority of placement for ADF families. Those facing difficulties accessing childcare, like when they move to a new area or change their work or care arrangements, can also access an individual case management service to help them find childcare.

Children's education

DCO has dedicated Education Liaison Officers to provide advice to families, and school-based aides and mentors to support Defence children through changing schools and times of parental absence.

Emergency and crisis support

DCO provides a range of practical and emotional support programs for families facing emergency or crisis, including assistance in time of illness, injury, domestic crisis or bereavement. Members and their families can access 24-hour support, social work and assessment, or referral from the all-hours Defence Family Helpline.

Community connection

Families seeking to connect with or contribute to their local community can get personalised advice or access our directory of Defence and community-run activities and events in

our local area.

Funding for community groups

Not-for-profit community organisations running programs in support of Defence families can apply for financial support. There are a number of such groups operating in the area around Amberley.

Transition to civilian life

DCO provides a range of practical guidance and administrative support to help those planning to transfer to the Reserves or leave the Australian Defence Force make a seamless transition to civilian life. It's an important process that families are encouraged to be part of.

Support for Reservists

The families of Reserve members can access a broad range of support services, when the Reservist is on continuous full-time service or away on deployment or exercise.

Parents

DCO offers information and support services for parents of ADF members to help them understand and manage the challenging aspects of having a son or daughter in the Services.

Supporting the Amberley community

DCO provides grants to local not-for-profit community groups delivering support and services for Defence families in their community through the Family Support Funding Program.

Through this program, DCO supports the local Amberley Defence Communities Inc, who feature a range of smaller community groups. Other community groups supporting Defence families in the area include the Leichhart One Mile Community Centre, The Little Blessings Toy Library and the Defence Empty Nesters.

Amberley Defence Communities Inc

ADC Inc is for families of Defence members at Amberley. All families are welcome, with babies, children, teens, fur kids or no kids. Everyone is welcome!

Amberley Playgroup

Amberley Playgroup meets twice a week on Wednesdays and Fridays from 9.00-11.00. The first visit is free then \$2 per session. The playgroup meets at 25 Goddard's Road, Yamanto, at the rear of the Citipointe Church.

Amberley Craft Group

The Amberley Craft group welcomes new members to bring along your own project, or join in on whatever is happening on the night. Come and teach us a new craft, learn new crafts or simply have a cuppa and a chat and meet some new friends.

Little Blessings Toy Library

The toy library service provides families with toys and games they may not otherwise be able to afford, or have the room to store. The toy library is also ideal for parent groups and birthday parties where a few extra toys come in handy.

Defence Empty Nesters No Kids – DENNKS



CPL Hanley and family

A social group for single members, members posted without dependants unaccompanied and couples with no kids, who meet once a month at various locations and events around the Ipswich region.

Meet your local DCO team

DCO Amberley team is made up of military personnel and civilian staff, providing a range of assistance and information including support for children to settle into new schools, partner employment and help for families experiencing crisis or emergency.

Military Support Officers are uniformed officers who help with advice and assistance with military matters and support local ADF commanders with member welfare support.

Defence Social Workers are qualified professionals who are knowledgeable about the ADF and the lifestyle of its members. Defence Social Workers are able to help members and their families address personal, relationship or Service related issues. They can provide assessment, short-term counselling services or referral to support and resources in the local area.

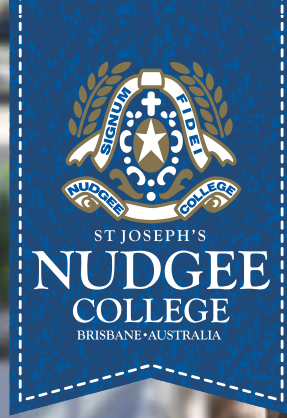
Family Liaison Officers have extensive knowledge of the Ipswich area and help members and their families connect with the services and support they need. They are also proactive regarding welcome activities and assisting families settling into a new location.

The Amberley team regularly holds information sessions about topics that affect ADF families like, partner employment, relocation or deployment advice, Kid and TeenSMART program. They also host social events like monthly coffee catch ups, dinner nights out and family fun days.

More information

The DCO Amberley office is at Building 726, Hudson Road, RAAF Base Amberley. Call 1800 624 608 or email defencefamilyhelpline@defence.gov.au for an appointment.

Follow Defence Community Organisation on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for updates and information from your local Amberley team. You can also email dco.amberley@defence.gov.au to be added to the DCO Amberley monthly bulletin email distribution list.



An education that will liberate hearts and minds

St Joseph's Nudgee College holds a special place within Catholic education both within the state of Queensland, across the nation and beyond our shores. The College has a grand reputation that has been built by successive generations of students, Christian Brothers, staff, parents, Old Boys and community members over the past 126 years. Not only is this rich history celebrated, the current generation of students, staff and families seeks to build upon it.

This is achieved on a daily basis by students who are taught, cared for and challenged by teachers who want the best for each student. The holistic education, personal development and wellbeing of each student remains the key focus of the College. At Nudgee College, a rich diversity of educational opportunities is offered - in the classroom, in sport, in cultural pursuits and activities - as well as in faith development and social justice initiatives.

The College is positioned on a 136 hectare campus with a range of facilities that provide an engaging environment to learn, to grow, and to be challenged.

As a leading Catholic school in the Edmund Rice Tradition, Nudgee College strives to develop young men of big hearts and good character.

Over 1,550 boys and young men call St Joseph's Nudgee College their school. For over 250 of these students it is also their home as boarders. Nudgee College Boarding is committed to providing our boys and young men with a unique educational experience that will shape the rest of their lives.

Our recently completed Bathersby Boarding Village is a contemporary and inviting home away from home for our boarders, and has become the heart and soul of the College. The high quality of this residential facility complements the high quality of care provided by our professional staff.

"We knew that Nudgee College Boarding could provide so many more opportunities. Not just in normal everyday education, but in a way that would expose Tom to new challenges, that could help him to grow into a young man who will leave an indelible footprint on his surrounding world." - Nudgee College boarding parent, 2017

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Future submarine builder commits to gender parity

Designer and builder of the SEA 1000 Future Submarines program Naval Group has stated the intent to achieve a 50:50 gender ratio in its workforce.

Brent Clark, interim CEO of Naval Group, said at the DMTC Annual Conference in Canberra recently that the ambitious target reflected a commitment to create a balanced workforce across all elements of the \$50 billion Future Submarine program.

Naval Group (then DCNS) was announced as the successful tenderer for the program in April 2016.

The SEA 1000 Future Submarine program will equip Australia with a dozen state-of-the-art submarines, replacing the current in-service Collins Class submarines.

The Australian subs will be based on the design reference of Naval Group's French-built Shortfin Barracuda and will be the most complex and largest defence acquisition project in Australia's history.

The submarines, to be manufactured at the Osborne Ship Yard by Australian workers, will require 1,000 new specialist engineers to be engaged, Clark said, plus a raft of support staff

Total workforce is expected to eclipse 2,500 once the program hits full production across shipbuilding and the wider supply chain. Construction of the new subs won't get under way until 2022 and will run into the late 2040s to 2050s timeframe; with the first sub set to enter service in the 2030s.

In striving to reach a balanced workforce, with 50 per cent female participation, Clark said the company had some work to do as it transitions from the design to build phase.

"We know attracting the right people won't be easy. It is, in fact, very difficult ... [and] Naval Group is committed to diversity. We are aiming to have a 50:50 gender diverse workforce. At the moment women represent 43 percent of our employees.

Clark said the test will be in a few years when the company is building up the numbers of people involved in production of the submarine, "however we remain committed to meeting that challenge".

"Naval Group makes a commitment to workforce diversity from the outset. [We] will devote much effort to partnering with education and training providers before construction begins to ensure we have the necessary expertise in place and to ensure those people get appropriate on-the-job training," he said.

"We will take the best we can get and train the best. A shipyard is as diverse an employer as any you can imagine."

Speaking of the need to identify and retain the best talent to meet the rigorous demands of the Future Submarine shipbuilding regime, Clark said the company has a planned and focused approach to buoy its talent pool – and to identify critical skills gaps.

"As well as drawing workers from the existing maritime workforce – as work on other programs winds down – and through the federal government Naval Shipbuilding College program, Naval Group envisages drawing skilled workers from the former South Australian car manufacturing industry and the oil and gas industry for retraining, as they have transferable skills," he said.

Clark said ex-defence and naval personnel with engineering and trade qualifications will potentially also be

attracted to the Future Submarine program on their retirement from the services and on seeking a career change.

"I stress the on retirement part, we will not be poaching people from the ADF. HR strategies will be aligned with maximising the capacity of the existing workforce and shaping the ramp up of the future workforce," he said.

Courtesy Defence Connect.



Collins Class Submarine, HMAS Farncomb, departs Fleet Base East, Garden Island, Sydney. *Photo ABIS Kieran Dempsey*

New CDF announced

Prime Minister the Hon. Malcolm Turnbull, MP and Defence Minister the Hon. Marise Payne, MP, recently announced Chief of Army LTGEN Angus Campbell, AO, DSC, would succeed ACM Mark Binskin, AC, as CDF in July.

In the media event held at Parliament house the other announcements made were:

Vice Chief of Defence – VADM David Johnston AM will replace VADM Ray Griggs AO CSC who will retire from the ADF in July.

Chief of Navy – RADM Michael Noonan AM will replace VADM Tim Barrett AO CSC who will also retire from the ADF in July after a 42 year career.

Chief of Army – Major General Rick Burr AO DSC MVO.

Chief of Joint Operations – AVM Mel Hupfeld AO DSC.



CDF ACM Binskin AC addresses media with Prime Minister, Defence Minister and CA LTGEN Angus Campbell AO DSC, naming him as incoming CDF. *Photo Jayson Tufrey*

Government appoints Defence Export Advocate

Former Minister for Defence David Johnston has been appointed as the first Australian Defence Export Advocate.

The role will provide international advocacy on behalf of local defence industry to help secure export sales and contracts.

Minister for Defence Industry, Christopher Pyne, congratulated Mr Johnston on his appointment and looked forward to working closely with him to help secure export successes for Australia's defence industry.

"This appointment will greatly expand the Government's reach in promoting Australia's world class defence industry," Minister Pyne said.

"As a former Minister for Defence, Mr Johnston brings a wealth of experience and knowledge of Australian defence industry to this significant role."

Minister Pyne said the Bushmaster vehicles are one example of an Australian defence industry success.

Courtesy Australian Defence Magazine.



Australian Bushmaster Protected Mobility Vehicles from 2nd Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment.

Photo LSIS Jake Badior

B-52s arrive in Darwin

A number of USAF B-52 Stratofortress Bombers arrived at RAAF Darwin during Easter to participate in Enhanced Air Cooperation (EAC).

RAAF Base Darwin hosted the bombers while they took part in training activities with the ADF in designated military airspace near RAAF Base Williamtown until early April.

The USAF B-52 Bombers, from Pacific Air Force's Andersen Air Force base in Guam, trained with F/A-18As and PC-9s as well as ADF Joint Terminal Attack Controllers.

The training provided the ADF with a valuable opportunity to integrate RAAF aircraft and ADF personnel with USAF B-52 Bombers in close air support scenarios.

EAC training exercises are designed to increase the ability of Australian and US air forces to operate together and to enhance security cooperation in the region. The training provided the ADF with a valuable opportunity to integrate RAAF aircraft and ADF personnel with USAF B-52s in close air support scenarios.

EAC builds on a broad range of combined air exercises and training activities between the United States and Australia, which regularly involve visits by US military aircraft to Australia.

Australia and the United States commenced Enhanced Air Cooperation in February 2017, adding an extra dimension to the Force Posture Initiatives.

RAAF Darwin hosted USAF B-52s in 2012, 2014 and 2016.

Courtesy Australian Defence Magazine.



US Air Force B-52 Stratofortress Bombers arrive at RAAF Darwin to train with the RAAF as part of EAC.

Photo CPL Terry Hartin



Two B-52s at Darwin. *Photo Defence*



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and Oaks Metropole, you are perfectly positioned to explore the world-famous Great Barrier Reef, kick back on one of the many white sandy beaches or relax in a stylishly appointed hotel room, studio, one or two-bedroom apartments. Situated just a short drive from the Townsville Barracks, you are well placed to discover your new surroundings at your own pace.

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As Australia's only tropical capital city, Darwin prevails as a hot spot for everyone, with lush parklands and waterfront restaurants blending with outdoor markets, art galleries and museums steeped in a rich history. Oaks Elan Darwin, is the ideal place to set up during your relocation. A spacious property boasting hotel, one and two-bedroom apartments right in the heart of the city on the harbour. Relax and enjoying getting to know the city.

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Resorts is not only the ideal destination for your relocation, but the only choice for your next holiday. Whether your travelling with the girls, the boys or the extended family, you can find a location for your next city escapes, beach getaway or regional adventure.



Cadet of the Year

Over the weekend 17-18 February, at the NSW Boys' Group Air Activities Centre at Camden Airport NSW, the annual selection of the League's Cadet of the Year (COY) took place. Unfortunately, this year there were no female candidates in the selection process however we are confident there will be candidates nominated next year.

The candidates for this year's consideration were:

NSW Boys		
Darby THOMPSON	Sgt.	Sutherland Shire
Queensland		
Rhys SHARP	L/Cdt	Bundaberg
South Australia		
James SOAR	Sqn.Sgt.	Gawler Airfield
Victoria		
Troy NORTON	Sqn.Sgt.	Bertwick

The cadets arrived bright and early at Sydney Airport for a visit to the sites of Sydney including the Maritime Museum as well as enjoying a ferry trip on Sydney Harbour and visiting the Opera House and other sites.

That evening they were joined by the League's Federal Staff and Group Executive Commissioners for networking and dinner. This year the League also welcomed two guests, Lea Veasic, who is the Administration Officer of the Regional Aviation Association of Australia, holder of a CPL and a committee member of Women in Aviation – Australian Chapter and

Margaret Sullivan, who is a former AWPANZ President and also a CPL holder. She is still very active in the AWPANZ and also a member of Women in Aviation.

After dinner, and as part of the Cadet of the Year evaluation process, all candidates were required to make a 15 minute presentation to enhance their opportunity to be selected as the League's Cadet of the Year. This year the topic of their presentation was "Why I joined the Air League, what has it done for me and what can I do for the Air League".

The Sunday activities commenced at 0800 with a return to Camden Airport and, for the COY candidates, included flying conducted in the League's own aircraft VH-UNL operated by the NSW Boys' Group Air Activities pilot, and member of Moorebank Boy's Squadron, 2nd Officer Stavros Skarmoutsos.

Around the flying schedule were conducted uniform inspections, knowledge assessments and individual panel interviews, the results from which are entered in to a weighted analysis matrix to ascertain the successful candidates.

Any of the nominated candidates would be able to represent our Organisation, at both Group and Federal levels, with pride and they should be very proud of their performance. Their families, Squadrons and Groups who assisted them with their preparation should be very proud of their involvement and performance. All were, and are, winners.

After lunch the results were announced in front of the League's senior Officers. The winner this year

Australian Air League

was Squadron Sergeant Troy Norton, Victoria Group.

On behalf of the AAL, we extended hearty congratulations to Troy and commiserations to his colleagues who were not successful but whose participation was excellent.

Chief Commissioner Ian Rickards receives Australia Day Honour



Chief Commissioner Ian Rickards of the AAL was awarded the Medal (OAM) of the Order of Australia in the General Division in the Australia Day 2018 honours for service to the youth of Australia through aviation programs.

Ian first joined the Niddrie Squadron of the AAL in 1968 where he was soon appointed as the Squadron Adjutant. Over the subsequent years he held a number of appointments in the AAL and was soon promoted to the Victoria Group staff where he was responsible for the areas of administration, operations and management.

In 1992 Ian was promoted on to Federal staff of the AAL as the Finance Commissioner, then between 1997 and 2002 Ian was appointed the Group Executive Commissioner of the Victoria Group. Finally, in 2007 Ian was appointed Chief Commissioner of the AAL, this role is the senior Officer of the League and is responsible for the day to day management and operation of the League.

During his service with the League, Ian learnt to fly and gained his pilot's wings, he is a Life Member of the League and was awarded the Distinguished Service Award as well as the Meritorious Service Award and later a bar to his DSA.



COY candidates check out an Aero L-39 Albatros used for adventure flights. L-R Sqn Sgt Troy North, L/Cdt Rhys Sharp, Sgt Darby Thompson and SqnSgt James Soar

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LIFESTYLE

Hervey Bay boasts a sub-tropical lifestyle, which is idyllic and laid-back. The Airpark is in a rural setting that is relaxing and peaceful that will never be built out.

Conveniently located close to Fraser Island & Lady Elliot Island, and the Gateway to the Great Barrier Reef.

FEATURES

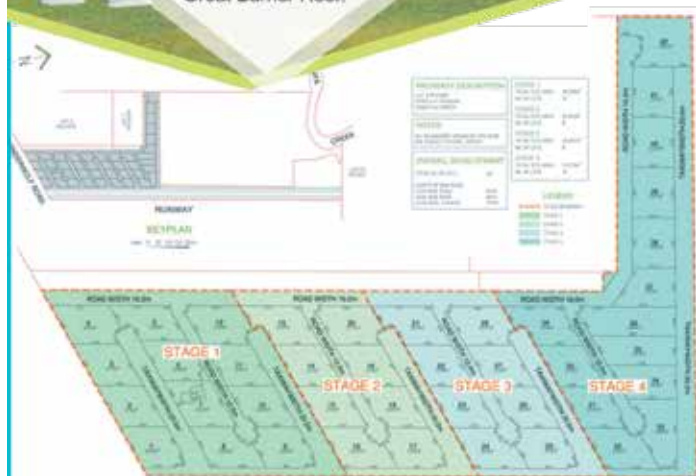
- 8 mins drive to Hervey Bay CBD.
- Residential Airpark (150 acres).
- Zoned Rural, Airpark Residential.
- DA Approval for 42 blocks.
- All blocks over 2000m² and have taxiway access to a 1500 metre runway.
- EOI received on some blocks.
- Operational Works Engineers Drawings completed.
- Existing Development Consent and Planning Agreement, ensuring satisfactory arrangements with all state agencies.



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Hervey Bay Airpark on the Fraser Coast

Hervey Bay Air Park is 150 acres in size and is situated 8 minutes from the Hervey Bay CBD. The big picture sees it located on the east coast 250 km North of Brisbane via the Bruce Highway. The layout has been carefully designed to take advantage of the attractive natural rural environment with the grass runway (1,500 meters long) direction aligning to the prevailing winds.

The Fraser Coast is an aviation paradise, it offers some of Australia's best flying conditions in terms of terrain and weather. Hervey Bay and the Fraser Coast provide a full range of community and residential services and access to some of the most picturesque and exciting environments in Queensland. Whether you're flying passion includes camping, fishing, touring or just relaxing on the beach, the Fraser Coast is your ideal destination.

Hervey Bay Airpark offers a unique residential opportunity for the aviation enthusiast.



You will have the ability to own your own home and provide storage for your most prized possession, your aircraft. Your property will have direct access to a 1500 meter runway via a taxi way that runs along your properties boundary. All lots have access to the taxi ways so you will be able to have a house and a hangar on your own freehold site. This will have you living the dream and including your passion for aviation.

Hervey Bay is one of the fastest growing regions in Queensland and is 30 min flight to Brisbane and 1 hour 30 minutes to Sydney on any one of the

daily jet services.

This development has DA approval by Fraser Coast Council for 42 blocks over 2,000 m².

The property needs a developer to complete and sell the individual blocks. Runway information:

Situation: Lat 25.22.21 S and 152.49.17 E

Elevation: 46 feet / 14 meters

Runway Direction: 10/28

Runway Length: 1432 meters

Runway Width : 55 meters

Surface: Grass

Visit to Belgium and Villers-Bretonneux

A group of AAFC have a deeper understanding of the sacrifice made by ANZACs on the Western front, following a two week tour of Belgium and Villers-Bretonneux.

A highlight of the tour for the Cadets was involvement in a Menin Gate service in the town of Ypres, Belgium.

The buglers of the Last Post Association, local men with different professions connected with the Ypres volunteer fire brigade, have been honouring the dead of the Menin Gate in a nightly ceremony since July 1928.

The AAFC are drawn from all states and territories with the exception of WA.



Leading Cadet Alexander Campbell at the Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing in Ypres, Belgium, after taking part in a Last Post service. *Photos CPL Oliver Carter*

Below: AAFC during a Last Post service at the Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing in Ypres, Belgium.



Duke of Edinburgh's International Award renews agreement with AAFC

First issued to the AAFC three years ago, the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award's National Award Unit Licence Agreement has now been renewed for another three years, demonstrating the relationship between the two youth development organisations remains as strong as ever.

"The licence re-signed on 03 April will enable us to continue having a single, consistent, cost-effective and national approach to our involvement in the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award, leading to more efficient outcomes for all involved," said WGCDR (AAFC) Tim Lowther, Director of Operations for AAFC.

"Although we've been involved with the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award for more than 30 years, the licence agreement signed three years ago, has greatly improved coordination between our two organisations, as well as delivered cost savings which in turn have benefited our members."

"Since founded in 1956, more than eight million people in over 140 countries & territories, including about 775,000 Australians, have participated in the Award, which encourages and recognises practical experiences and life skills to create committed global citizens and help equip young people for life," said Peter Kaye AM, CEO for the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Australia.

At present, nearly 40,000 young Australians are undertaking the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award, including a record 948 active participants across all three Award levels in the AAFC.

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award is a leading youth development program, empowering young Australians aged 14-25 to explore their full potential, regardless of location or circumstance.

Both leaders agreed there was a good fit between the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award & the AAFC.

"Each participant learns a skill, improves their physical wellbeing, volunteers in their community and goes on an adventure," said Peter Kaye. "Through a challenging journey of self-discovery, participants are equipped and empowered to achieve their personal best, learn to take responsibility for goals and choices, make real contributions to their community, learn important life skills, overcome barriers to success, and increase career opportunities."

"The AAFC is one of the most dynamic, effective and satisfying youth programs available, and is open to young people from age 13, with many of the Award's requirements achievable through regular involvement and commitment within our programs," said WGCDR (AAFC) Lowther.

AFC get to do things most other young people only watch on television, including learning to fly aircraft solo while still in their mid-teens, using civilian and military rifles, going bush wearing camouflage uniform, operating military radios, using field signals, learning cooking and survival skills; as well as enjoying interstate and international travel. They also study aeronautics, navigation, meteorology and radio communications, first aid and music.

Importantly, AFC receive tertiary-level training in leadership, decision-making, initiative, self-discipline, time-management, clear thinking, public speaking, management and administration while in their teens and long before they enter the workforce, making them very attractive to potential employers.

Many public figures ignited their involvement in community affairs through service in the AFC, which continues to be fully supported by the RAAF.

"In partnership with the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award, the AFC is a real game-changer for Australia, giving young people autonomy, responsibility, skills and courage so they can effectively help lead Australia in every facet of government, business and community life, well into the 21st Century," said WGCDR (AAFC) Lowther.

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FRIDAY: Evening Airshow

SATURDAY: Full Airshow



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warbirdsdownunderairshow.com.au

On the 12th and 13th of October 2018 the fourth Warbirds Downunder Airshow will take place at Temora Aviation Museum, NSW.

This event brings together the largest gathering of warbirds in the Southern Hemisphere for a two-day celebration of Australian Aviation history.

Event visitors will get an unforgettable, up close and personal experience.

Together with your friends and family, we invite you to share the exhilaration of hearing and seeing these amazing aircraft fly over the site of No. 10 Elementary Flying Training School. This School, set up by The Royal Australian Air Force in May 1941, was the largest and longest-lived of the

schools established under the Empire Air Training Scheme during World War II.

At the event, we aim to facilitate a connection between visitors and Australian veterans, through the art of storytelling. We'll be sharing many personal stories from veterans from our archives and welcome the opportunity to hear your stories too.

This event is like no other, and we hope your visit will inspire you to return again and again to the museum with other friends and family after this event.

For more event information and to book your tickets visit: www.warbirdsdownunderairshow.com.au

We look forward to welcoming you in October!



75th Anniversary of 78SQN

On 20 July this year it will be the 75th anniversary of the formation of 78SQN

On that day in 1943 the squadron had a few tens of ground staff, a handful of pilots and no aircraft. Formed as a fighter squadron they were expecting to fly Spitfires, instead, in August, the first of the Kittyhawks turned up - an aircraft they came to admire and venerate.

In this aircraft they notched up over 1,000 operational hours each month from June to September 1944.

In June they exceeded 1,400 operational hours, the most for any squadron in 78 Fighter Wing

and better than any of US General Kenny's fighter squadrons at the time.

During June they were involved in the last major combat by the RAAF in the SWPA.

During that combat they recorded the highest number of aircraft shot down by a RAAF Squadron in the SWPA, as well as the highest number of aircraft shot down by an individual pilot, Gordon White.

A week later they were involved in shooting down the last Japanese aircraft of the New Guinea campaign for the RAAF.

In November 1944 the squadron became home to the only indigenous fighter pilot, Len Waters, in the RAAF's 97 year history.

After the war, the squadron converted to Mustangs. Many of the pilots who passed through during that time, went onto distinguished careers in Korea.

An example was James 'Jim' Flemming, who served in 78SQN, four months before it was disbanded. He served with distinction in Korea and had a rewarding career after that conflict, retiring with the rank of Air Vice Marshall.

At the end of March 70 years ago, 78SQN was disbanded. They have never been reformed.

Gordon Clarke.

Author of "This Smuttee Squadron" - The History of 78SQN RAAF during and post WW2.

www.78squadron.com.au

email: admin@78squadron.com.au



78SQN Kittyhawk Fighter Squadron

Queensland Air Museum

F-111 A8-129 on display

QAM has received welcome news. F-111 A8-129 will be part of QAM displays for at least another 5 years!!

This is great news for aviation enthusiasts and general QAM visitors alike. Many thousands of visitors each year have had the experience of getting close to this aircraft and marvel at its size and magnificent design features.

A bit of F-111 history;

- First conceived following the American CIA U-2 spy plane was shot down over the USSR. Besides being a major break down in USA – USSR relations and a step into the 'cold-war', it highlighted the USSR had surface-to-air missile capacity at more than 60,000 feet, hence the need for a supersonic bomber, and the F-111, with its unique swing-wing capacity, became a high priority.

How big is an F-111?

- Length; 73'6" (22.4 metres)
- Wing span; Spread 63' (19.2 m) Swept 32' (9.75m)
- Maximum take-off weight; 45,300 kgs

Performance of F-111?

- Maximum speed; Mach 2.5 = 2,655 kph.
- Range; almost 6,000 kms
- Plus, a range of devastating armaments with different fitment option between F-111 versions and logistical needs.

The F-111 was either greatly revered or greatly discredited. The Australian fleet never fired a shot in anger but were regarded as a huge deterrent in the South-East Asian area for three decades. Once described as the "White Elephant" in the sky due to huge maintenance required to keep the fleet flying -180 hours of maintenance for every hour of flight. It was their maintenance requirements that saw the F-111 fleet retired in 2010, ten years ahead of schedule.

QAM's F-111 is on display every day of the year.

Australia's largest and best display of vintage aircraft all in one fantastic location next to the Caloundra Airport on the beautiful Sunshine Coast.

With more than 75 historic aircraft and many other displays, QAM is the spot to spend several memorable hours or take advantage of a visit during one of our Engine Run Days or the Open Cockpit Weekend.

QAM is a 100% volunteer organisation and welcomes visitors every day of the year (except Christmas Day).

See our website www.qam.com.au for details.



F-111 A8-129 on display at QAM

Rathmines Commemorative Walkway

RAAF Base Rathmines was one of the largest Flying Boat bases in the Southern Hemisphere. Situated near Lake Macquarie NSW, it was an ideal site for various aircraft from its initial formation in 1939.

Aircraft housed there when it was operational included Seagull Flying Boats, Catalina, Dornier, Dolphin, Walrus, Martin Mariner, Dornier Do 24K and Kingfisher.

The Base also served at various stages as a repair centre, training base, and officers training school.

The site was sold to Lake Macquarie Council in 1962 with the original Rathmines site heritage listed by the NSW Government. Now most of the buildings have been removed or demolished by Council.

Along the waters edge now exists a walk/cycle way of 1.7km which we consider a commemorative walkway would be appropriate and also to feature various plaques and half busts in recognition of the first 18 Flying Boats that operated there as well as the units/ SQNs that were there. Acknowledgement of the role service people played at Rathmines would also be relevant.

The walk / cycle way starts from the South Gate entrance past the Music Hall (Former SGTs Mess), Scout Hall, Christadelphian Bible School (former OTU and Workshop Hanger), Catalina Club (previously Rathmines Memorial Bowling Club and former Officers Mess), bowling greens, old fuel jetty, Catalina Memorial, boat ramp (former flying boat launching ramp), Catalina Conference Centre (Former RAAF hospital), 'F' jetty, through Styles Point to Overhill Road.

Communication has been ongoing with local council over the years to upgrade the walk/cycle way with no firm commitment to date, even though we have supplied signatures of support and other representation.

We request readers input to support this proposed Commemorative Walkway by contacting us: friendsofrathmines@gmail.com

Alec Howard / Chris Cordingley



A sample of the proposed half busts



Aerial view of Rathmines Base when in operation



Proposed location for a commemorative walkway at the former Rathmines site



Catalina Memorial at the former Rathmines site.



Part of the existing walk/cycle way



Nursing staff at the former Rathmines site



Existing memorials at Rathmines



Existing memorials at Rathmines

RAAFA Kawana Waters Branch

QLD Division of the RAAFA conducts branch meetings on the 2nd Saturday of each month at Kawana Waters Life Saving Club house.

Activities include monthly meetings, subsidised lunches, bus tours and many other social activities.

Why not become a member if you are an ex-Air Force person living in our community?

Contact Secretary Lance at 07 5443 2775 for further information.

50 years of the P3

In order to celebrate 50 Years of the P3 Orion, we are looking at holding several events on the weekend of 16 - 18 Nov. At this stage we are gauging interest so we can co-ordinate events to properly commemorate this historic occasion.

Providing your email will help us keep you informed. We have setup a website to capture as wide an audience as possible.

<https://50yearsofP3orions.eventsmart.com>

The website has limited information at this stage, however there is a survey so you can register interest and keep up to date with what's happening. Feel free to let others know.

Temora Aviation Museum – June Long Weekend Showcase

The Temora Aviation Museum's June Long Weekend Aircraft Showcase event on Saturday 9th & Sunday 10th June 2018 will feature all serviceable aircraft from the Temora Aviation Museum's collection, which includes the Supermarine Spitfires, CA-13 Boomerang, Cessna O-2A, Gloster Meteor, Lockheed Hudson, Wirraway, Tiger Moth and Ryan STM S2.

At Temora you can get closer to the action as you witness a themed selection of Australia's ex-military flying history come alive.

Aircraft Showcase promises to deliver a full day of entertainment for all generations, including:

- Flying displays demonstrating the aircraft's capabilities
- Informative commentary and music
- Guided tour of static exhibitions
- Interviews with pilots and veterans
- Children's activities and playground
- Engineering workshop tour
- Pilot meet and greet

Our Mess Hall serves freshly cooked food and a selection of cold refreshments. Barista coffee is also available and you are also welcome to bring your own picnic to enjoy in our shaded seating or grassed areas.

June Long Weekend 2018 Aircraft Showcase Admission Prices (Single Day)

Adults: \$25.00

Adults (over 65 years): \$20.00

Child (3 – 16 years): \$15.00

Family (2 adults & 2 children): \$65.00

June Long Weekend 2018 Aircraft Showcase Admission Prices (Two Day Pass)

Adults: \$40.00

Adults (over 65 years): \$30.00

Child (3 – 16 years): \$25.00

Family (2 adults & 2 children): \$95.00

<https://aviationmuseum.com.au/event/june-2018-aircraft-showcase-2-2-2/>

The Temora Aviation Museum does not accept any liability for cancellation or alterations to published display content or programs. Children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult at all times.



Southern Knights. Peter Harper (TAM)

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Please see website for further details.

www.ageingaircraft.com.au



Air Force History

27 Mar 1917 - 4SQN AFC arrived in the UK

No 4 Squadron -- the last Australian Flying Corps (AFC) Squadron to be formed during WW I -- was established at Point Cook, Victoria, in late October 1916. Fully mobilised by 10 January 1917, the unit embarked for England on 17 January, arriving at Plymouth, UK, on this day. The squadron was then sent for training to Castle Bromwich, near Birmingham. After familiarisation with a variety of aircraft, the squadron was equipped with Sopwith Camel fighters. In the United Kingdom the squadron was designated No 71 (Australian) Squadron, Royal Flying Corps (RFC), and would retain this designation until it reverted to its original title on 19 January 1918. The squadron arrived in France on 18 December 1917 and established itself at Bruay. It was assigned to the 10th Wing of the Royal Flying Corps, and operated in support of the British 1st Army, undertaking offensive patrols and escorting reconnaissance machines. The unit's first patrol over German lines took place on 9 January 1918, and its first air combat action occurred on 13 January 1918.



4SQN Air Mechanics, Clairmarais, 16 Jun 1918

27 Mar 43 - C-47 crash claimed 23 lives



Plaque unveiled at Archerfield, 2001

On this day, the RAAF suffered 20 of its members killed when a C-47 Dakota crashed on a pre-dawn take-off from Archerfield aerodrome, outside Brisbane, bound for Sydney. The aircraft (A30-16) was from Townsville-based No 36 Squadron and had on board a RAAF crew of four and 19 passengers. Sixteen of the passengers were from the RAAF (including three members of the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force), one was an Australian

Army officer and two were officers of the US Army. There were no survivors from the crash, which totally destroyed the aircraft. A court of inquiry into the crash found that, due to rising fog, the pilot did not realise when the aircraft entered into a left-hand turn and failed to take corrective action. As a result, the Dakota stalled soon after take-off and ploughed into thickly wooded country about a mile south of the aerodrome's southern boundary.

27 Mar 44 - 2SQN Hudson lost in Indonesia

On this day, No 2 Squadron Hudson A16-230 departed Hughes Airfield, NT, on a reconnaissance mission of the Banda Sea in the Netherlands East Indies (Indonesia). The aircraft failed to return and the crew of five - Squadron Leader John Scott, Pilot Officer Don Beddoe and Flight Sergeants Ian King, Bruce Wallace and Keith Wright were reported missing. After crashing at sea, the crew made it ashore they were cared for by natives until betrayed to the Japanese. The four remaining crew - Pilot Officer Beddoe had been shot by the Japanese - were eventually interned at the Tan Toey (Tantui) POW camp on Ambon and executed on 16 August 1944.

Extensive information on the fate of all five airmen is available from the National Archives of Australia.

27 Mar 53 - 77SQN in last air combat in Korea

On this day, two Gloster Meteor Mk8 jets of No 77 Squadron, flown by Sergeants George Hale and David Irlam, were conducting a road reconnaissance over North Korea near Sinmak when Hale saw what he thought was a lone MiG-15. It was only as he dived into the attack that he realised he was opposed by three enemy aircraft. In the ensuing dogfight, Hale's cannon fire sent one MiG down on its back, belching black smoke and shedding bits of fuselage as it dropped from view. Immediately confronted by another pair of MiGs, he scored hits on one of these also and saw it trailing white smoke as it climbed away from him. Having expended all his ammunition, Hale broke off contact. This was the last time that 77 Squadron aircraft engaged in aerial combat in Korea, and indeed the last time that any RAAF unit has been involved in air-to-air fighting since.



SGT Hale with his Meteor 'Halestorm'

27 Mar 02 - Aerial refuellers deployed to Kyrgyzstan

On this day, the first detachment of about 70 personnel from No 84 Wing arrived at Manas airport outside Bishkek, the capital of the former Soviet republic of Kyrgyzstan, as part of the international coalition formed in response to terrorist attacks against the United States on 11 September 2001. Operating from Ganci Air Base, a tent city set up alongside the Manas airfield, the RAAF detachment's two B-707 aerial tankers provided an air-to-air refuelling capability for the more than 350 coalition fighter aircraft striking into Afghanistan, seeking to topple the Taliban regime there which had provided a terrorist haven. The detachment included air and ground crews from No 33 Squadron, and personnel from 84 Wing, No 1 Combat Communications Squadron and No 381 Expeditionary Combat Support Squadron. A changeover of replacement personnel arrived in June, before the detachment withdrew in September.



B-707s deployed to Afghanistan

28 Mar 43 - Football legend killed in flying accident

On this day Squadron Leader Keith ('Bluey') Truscott, Commanding Officer of No 76 Squadron, was killed in an aircraft accident while on a training flight over Exmouth Gulf, WA. Truscott's popularity as a player in the Melbourne football team had attracted great publicity when he enlisted in 1940, and ensured that the RAAF persevered with training him when he proved not to be a natural pilot. Serving with No 452 Squadron in England, however, he demonstrated prowess in air combat and quickly qualified as an ace, earning



Bluey Truscott in a 76SQN Kittyhawk, Milne Bay Sep 42



Bluey Truscott

the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) and Bar. Returning to Australia in 1942, he joined No 76 Squadron equipped with Kittyhawks and went to New Guinea, where he took command. After serving at Milne Bay and Darwin, his unit was transferred to a quieter area in WA. He was making a mock attack on a low-flying Catalina when he misjudged his height and crashed into the sea.

28 Mar 44 - Aboriginal pilot awarded the DFC



PLTOFF David Paul

On this day, the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross to Pilot Officer David Paul, an indigenous Australian pilot who had been serving in North Africa with No 454 Squadron, was gazetted in London. At the time of the announcement Paul was a prisoner of war in Germany, having been shot down by Me-109F fighters over the Aegean Sea on 4 December 1943 while making the final trip of his operational tour. Surviving the crash, he was plucked from the sea and became a prisoner

of the Germans. He had enlisted in the RAAF in January 1941 and trained under the Empire Air Training Scheme in Rhodesia. After his release from Stalag IVB POW camp at Muhlberg in 1945, he returned to Australia and joined the New South Wales Police Force, becoming a detective sergeant. He also served in the RAAF Reserve and reached the rank of Squadron Leader.

28 Mar 10 - RAAF Vietnam Plaque dedicated

On this day, a crowd of some 250 RAAF Vietnam veterans (many from interstate), family and friends gathered at Pt Cook for a ceremony during which a plaque dedicated to those RAAF personnel who lost their lives during that service and honouring all the personnel and units who served in Vietnam between 1964 and 1975. Funded by the RAAF Association (Victorian Division) in consultation with the RAAF Vietnam Veterans Association (RAAFVVA), the gathering was joined by more than 30 members of Melbourne's Vietnamese community, many of them also veterans.



29 Mar 44 - Recaptured escapees murdered after 'Great Escape'

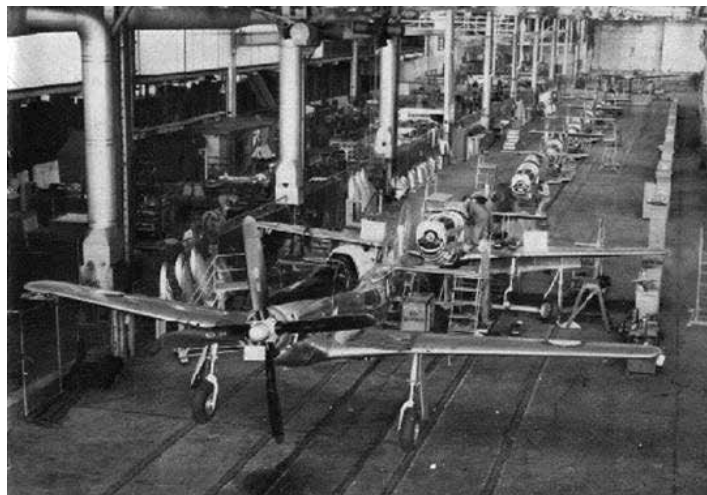
After 76 prisoners from Britain and Commonwealth countries escaped by tunnel from Stalag Luft III, a German camp for captured Allied airmen outside Sagan (now in south-west Poland) on the night of 24/25 March 1944, the Gestapo — the Nazi Secret Police — was ordered to kill 50 of the 73 men recaptured. Five were nominally Australian, although only three wore RAAF uniform. Three were murdered on this day. Squadron Leader James Catanach, who enlisted in Melbourne in August 1940 and served with No 455 Squadron, was killed at Kiel while making for Denmark. Squadron Leader John ('Willy') Williams, RAF, and Flight Lieutenant Reg ('Rusty') Kierath -- both members of No 450 Squadron who had attended the same school in Australia -- were killed in Reichenberg jail after being arrested near the border with Czechoslovakia. The remaining two were retaken in the Sagan area and died around 30 March, although details of their fate are unknown.

29 Mar 70 - Only Caribou lost to enemy action in Vietnam

On this day, Caribou A4-193 from No 35 Squadron became the first and only RAAF aircraft of this type lost as a direct result of enemy action. The transport had landed at 9am with the first of five loads of drums of helicopter fuel at That Son, a South Vietnamese Army training base close to the Cambodian border south-west of Saigon, when it came under accurate mortar fire from nearby hills. The aircraft suffered a direct hit on the starboard wing from the second of nine rounds which crashed around it as the crew evacuated and sought cover. None of the crew members was hurt, and during a lull in the attack were flown out to another base. The aircraft left behind sustained further mortar hits when the base came under renewed attack early the next morning; the Caribou was set on fire and completely destroyed.

30 Mar 51 - Australian built Mustang in action in Korea

On this day, the first Australian-built North American P-51 Mustang fighter went into action in Korea. Until then, the Mustangs flown by No 77 Squadron in that conflict were from the 299 aircraft imported from the US during WW II.



Mustangs in production in Australia

Local manufacture of this type had begun under licence at the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation factory in Melbourne during the last year of the war, with the first of 200 aircraft coming off the production line in mid-1945. Only four of the CAC Mustang variants -- known as CA-23s -- were sent to No 77 Squadron to replace losses, and A68-121 was the first to join in operations. This milestone for Australia's aircraft industry came barely a week before the RAAF unit was withdrawn to Japan to convert to jet aircraft. After A68-125 was lost in a crash, the three remaining CAC machines returned to Australia.

30 Mar 52 - 1AFTS formed at Point Cook



2FTS Crest

The forerunner of No 2 Flying Training School (FTS) -- No 1 Applied Flying Training School (AFTS) -- was formed at Pt Cook on this day. In August 1947, No 1 FTS -- which had been known as No 1 Service Flying Training School under the wartime Empire Air Training Scheme and disbanded in 1944 -- was re-established at RAAF Point Cook, Victoria. In response to demands for more aircrew to fulfil Australia's commitments to the Korean War and Malayan Emergency, RAAF flying training underwent significant change

in 1951-52. No 1 Initial Flying Training School at Archerfield was concerned primarily with teaching students ground subjects including aerodynamics, physics, mathematics, engines, meteorology, radio, armament and general service knowledge; and conducting the twelve-hour flight grading on Tiger Moths to 'weed out' at an early stage trainees who were unlikely to reach military flying standards economically. Those who passed flight grading went to No 1 Basic Flying Training School (BFTS) at Uranquinty, where they flew a further forty hours on the Tiger Moth followed by fifty on the Wirraway. By the time students left BFTS for No 1 AFTS at Point Cook, the major flight sequences of general, instrument and night flying, formation and navigation had been covered, all accompanied by endless and demanding simulated emergencies. In May 1958, No 1 AFTS relocated to RAAF Base Pearce, WA, to

re-equip with De Havilland Vampire jet trainers and -- with the introduction into service of the Aermacchi MB 326H 'Macchi' trainer -- No 1 AFTS was re-titled No 2 FTS on 1 January 1969.

30 Mar 79 - First two Boeing 707s received

The 707 family of airliners had begun as the Boeing model 367-80, built as a private venture to demonstrate the potential for jet commercial and military developments. The prototype flew on 15 July 1954, and a developed version -- the Boeing 717 or KC-135 -- was ordered in large numbers as a US Air Force tanker. The basic civil production version was the Boeing 707-120, which developed into the enlarged long-range 707-320 Intercontinental, which first flew on 31 January 1962. Qantas ordered this airliner as the 707-338C, and received the first of 22, VH-EBN, in February 1965. The 707 was replaced at Qantas by the 747 in the 1970s. The first two RAAF Boeing 707s -- ex-Qantas 707-338C models VH-EAD and VH-EAG -- were received by the RAAF on this day as A20-624 and A20-627, and were initially operated by No 37 Squadron with C-130E Hercules at RAAF Richmond.



Boeing 707 A20-624

31 Mar 88 - RAAF Museum formed as an official Air Force unit

The RAAF Museum is the official museum of the RAAF, the second oldest air force in the world. It was formed in 1952 at the instigation of the Chief of Air Staff, Air Marshal Sir George Jones, who saw it as a much needed facility to collect and preserve aircraft, memorabilia, photographs and films which helped to form a record of the then 40 years of Australian military aviation. The museum displays aircraft of significance to the RAAF from its inception as the Australian Flying Corps to the present. The Museum constituted as a formal unit of the RAAF on this day, with an establishment of six personnel.

31 Mar 89 - RAAF Base Tindal opened

On this day, RAAF Base Tindal was officially opened by the Prime Minister, Bob Hawke. Originally known as Carson's Airfield, Tindal was planned during WW II and constructed between 1942 and 1944. It was to be one of three airfields



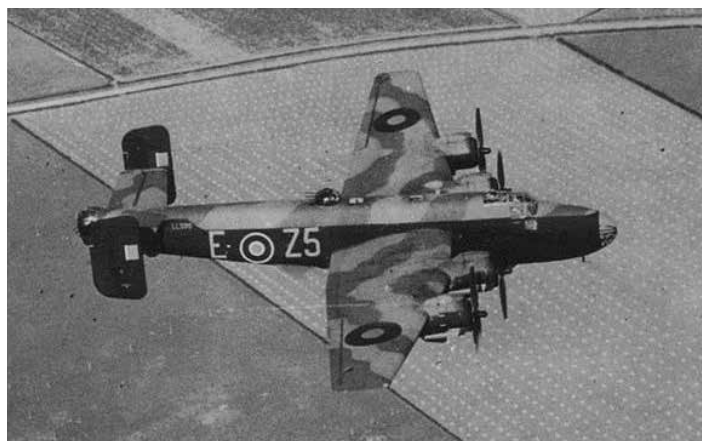
RAAF Base Tindal
Crest

between Katherine and Daly Waters designed to operate heavy B-24 Liberator bombers, but no aircraft squadrons were based there during the War and the Base was never used operationally. The Base is named after Wing Commander Archie Tindal who was killed in action in 1942 during the first Japanese air raid on Darwin. Between 1963 and 1970 the airstrip at Tindal was re-constructed and extended by more than 300 officers and men of No 5 Airfield Construction Squadron at a cost of seven million dollars. Tindal was

then a bare base acting as a back-up airfield for Darwin, and -- after the departure of No 5 Airfield Construction Squadron -- was used only for exercises, both by the RAAF and Army. In 1982, Tindal was named in preference to Darwin as the base for No 75 Squadron F/A-18 Hornets; its advantages are strategic, operational and environmental. Located over 300 kilometres inland, and outside the cyclone belt, it is a secure base for operations and for support of other bases in the north and north-west of Australia.

31 Mar 01 - 462SQN reformed in Canberra

On this day, No 462 Squadron -- a wartime squadron operating Halifax aircraft which specialised in disrupting German air defence systems through the employment of diversionary raids and various radio countermeasures -- was reformed in Canberra. The squadron's operations played a critical role in drawing German attention away from real raids. It continued in this role until its last operation was flown on the night of 2 - 3 May 1945. After the end of the war in Europe, No 462 Squadron continued training and was also employed in a transport role, which included the repatriation of Allied prisoners from Europe. It disbanded for the second and last time on 24 September 1945. No 462 Squadron's current role is exploit, and protect against exploitation of, the information domain and supports operational commanders in providing a secure information environment to support air operations. The squadron -- part of Air Force's Information Warfare Directorate of the Air Warfare Centre -- moved to Adelaide in January 2012.



462SQN Halifax UK 1944

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17 Apr 41 - RAAF Meteorological Service formed

On this day, all members of the civilian Bureau of Meteorology, except a number engaged exclusively in civil duties, were enlisted in or appointed to the RAAF's newly-formed Directorate of Meteorological Services. When war started in 1939, the Commonwealth had transferred operational control of the Bureau to the Air Board, but administrative responsibility remained with the Department of the Interior. This arrangement proved so cumbersome that in April 1940 the function was transferred to the Department of Air. When the RAAF formally established its service, the Bureau's director since 1938, Mr Herbert Warren, was appointed to the rank of GPCAPT and led the new organisation. By 1 May 1943 this had grown to 199 officers, 321 assistants and 301 charters — of whom nearly a quarter were members of the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force. The RAAF Meteorological Service reverted to civilian status in 1946.



RAAF Meteorological Service badge

17 Apr 43 - 34SQN Dragon Rapide missing

On this day, No 34 Squadron De Havilland Dragon Rapide A34-47 departed Mascot Airport enroute Melbourne via Forest Hill (Wagga), NSW. The flight was expected to take 2 hrs 40 mins, with arrival at Wagga being anticipated at approx 1230. The last positive sighting of the aircraft was made at 1007 by an observer at No 18 Searchlight Battery, Chester Hills NSW. Following several sighting of the aircraft, the last probable sighting of this aircraft was made by a Volunteer Air Observer Corps (VAOC) spotter, Catherine Adams, at Werombi, NSW. She stated in the subsequent Court of Inquiry



Dragon Rapide A34-53, Mareeba QLD, 19 Mar 44

that she observed an aircraft (fitting the description of the Dragon), flying approx 1.5 miles (2.4 km) SE of Werombi, and heading in a southerly direction. On 19, 20 and 21 April 1943, a number of Anson aircraft from No 73 Squadron (Camden) and No 3 Communication Flight (Mascot) conducted an intense aerial search of localities between Camden and Goulburn, including the Burragorang Valley and surrounding areas. They searches were hampered by poor weather conditions and were abandoned following the last search on 21 April 1943. No trace of the aircraft or those on board -- SGT Douglas Boyle (pilot), FLGOFF Geoffrey Lester, SGT Francis Doyle and US Marine Corps Lieutenants Umstead and Teague - has never been found.

17 Apr 45 – Last RAAF Bomber Command aircrew lost

On this day, three weeks before the end of WW II, Halifax MkVIII bomber MZ467 of No 462 SQN became the last Allied bomber shot down by a German nightfighter. The aircraft took off shortly before midnight on 16 April from Foulsham, on a bombing mission against Gablingen fighter airfield near the Austrian border. In addition to its load of incendiary bombs and flares, it was fitted with two long-range fuel tanks. MZ467 was attacked at 0340 near Augsburg by a Ju-88G-6, flown by Oberfeldebel Ludwig Schmidt and blasted with 200 rounds of 20 mm ammunition sending it into a steep dive. Of the crew of eight -- FLGOFF (RAAF), pilot; FSGT Windus (RAF), navigator; FSGT Naylor (RAF), bomb aimer; FSGT Foster (RAAF), wireless/air gunner; SGT Casterton (RAF), rear gunner; SGT McGarvie (RAF), mid upper gunner; SGT Gray (RAF), flight engineer; FSGT Tisdell (RAAF); wireless operator -- only three survived. Near Augsburg at 3.40 am, the Halifax encountered the Junkers; the bomber caught fire and exploded before it hit the ground. Lodder, Naylor and Casterton became POWs; the other five members are buried in the Durnbach War Cemetery, south of Munich. MZ467 was the last Halifax shot down in WWII and FSGT Foster and FSGT Tisdell were the last RAAF aircrew to die in an RAAF Bomber Command squadron in the War.



Undated photo, 462SQN Halifax MZ296 Z5-L, Driffield

This material is compiled from sources including the Directorate of History–Air Force, the RAAF Museum, the Australian War Memorial, ADF Serials and Peter Dunn. The Directorate of History–Air Force is not responsible for pre-1921 items. Whilst every effort is made to confirm the accuracy of the entries, any discrepancies are solely the responsibility of the originator.

RAAF MUSEUM POINT COOK

FREE ENTRY

The RAAF Museum, located at Point Cook, is home to an amazing range of historic military aircraft. A great chance to view these rare machines is at the interactive flying displays which are held every Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday at 1:00pm (weather permitting).

The Museum has a vast collection of historical material on show, including several hangars with static aircraft. It offers visitors an exciting experience and insight into the history of the Air Force.

Models, books, patches, clothing and mementos can be purchased at the Museum shop.

Public are invited to attend the Anzac Day Dawn Service on Wednesday 25th April at 6:00am at the Australian Flying Corps Memorial, Point Cook. See website for details closer to the date.

Open

10:00am to 3:00pm Tuesday to Friday
10:00am to 5:00pm Weekends & Public Holidays

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The Hon Michael McCormack
MP Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Minister for Defence Personnel Minister
Assisting the Prime Minister for the
Centenary of ANZAC
Deputy Leader of the House
Federal Member for Riverina
MEDIA RELEASE 15 February 2018

DELIVERING BETTER SERVICES FOR VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Veterans and their families are set to benefit with Minister for Veterans' Affairs Michael McCormack introducing the Veterans' Affairs Legislation Amendment (Veteran-Centric Reforms No. 1) Bill 2018 (VCR Bill) to implement several new initiatives which will deliver better services to veterans and their families.

"This Bill will create a new veteran payment to assist financially vulnerable veterans who have lodged a compensation claim for a mental health condition and are unable to work while their claim is being determined," Mr McCormack said.

"The determination of Qualifying Service will also be automated, removing the requirement for a veteran to make an application for the determination. This is a key part of a broader improvement strategy to ease the transition process for veterans, putting veterans and their needs at the forefront.

"We will also invest an additional \$7.1 million so we can deliver support services for veterans and their families through increased access to childcare, home care and counselling."

Mr McCormack said partners of veterans may be eligible for the veteran payment and veterans with dependent children may be entitled to the maximum rates of Family Tax Benefit Part A without being subject to the Family Tax Benefit means test while they receive the veteran payment.

"Australian Defence Force members who served in Japan after the cessation of hostilities at the end of World War II and before the formation of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force (BCOF) will be entitled to receive a Gold Card," Mr McCormack said.

"Veterans and their families are at the heart of communities around Australia — they have supported us and this Government is committed to ensuring

they receive and have access to support services they need.

The Hon Darren Chester MP
Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Minister for Defence Personnel
Minister Assisting the Prime Minister
for the Centenary of ANZAC
MEDIA RELEASE 22 April 2018

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS OUTSTANDING FRENCH SITES

Two of the sites on the Australian Remembrance Trail along the Western Front will be enhanced and preserved, ensuring the contribution of Australians in the First World War is never forgotten.

Ahead of the official opening of the Sir John Monash Centre, Minister for Veterans' Affairs Darren Chester announced funding of €95,000 (around A\$150,000) for projects in Vignacourt and Naours.

"The small French village of Vignacourt has become famously associated with the Thuillier Collection, a large collection of well-preserved glass plate negative photographs of Allied soldiers from the First World War which was discovered in 2011 after almost a century," Mr Chester said.

"Following the discovery of the fantastic Thuillier Collection, which includes some 800 images of Australian soldiers, interest in Vignacourt's part in the war is very high and that is why the Australian Government is providing €75,000 (around A\$120,000) to complete new visitor facilities. This is in addition to the A\$440,000 already contributed to Vignacourt as part of the Australian Remembrance Trail.

"The importance of this discovery and the work here to preserve the story of the Thuillier's and their extraordinary collection cannot be overstated."

The other site to receive funding is the Naours Caves, a three-kilometre long complex of tunnels which became a tourist attraction for soldiers in the area during the First World War.

"In 2015, more than 2000 individual inscriptions by Allied soldiers were found in the caves, of which more than 730 Australian names have been so far identified," Mr Chester said.

"These inscriptions are a wonderful

historical record and the Australian Government is proud to contribute €20,000 (A\$30,000) to help secure, protect and preserve this important part of our history.

"This is a very special place, and we will work closely with the local authorities over the coming years to ensure a positive visitor experience at this key stop on the Australian Remembrance Trail along the Western Front."

Further information on the Australian Remembrance Trail along the Western Front, including a Traveller's Guide, can be accessed on the Sir John Monash Centre website.

ADVOCACY, ENTITLEMENTS AND SUPPORT (AES) SPOT¹

Introduction

In my last three articles, I have been discussing some of the influences impacting on the delivery of advocacy services to veterans and their families/dependents. Since the Autumn article, the wick has been turned up significantly. Of the 24 recommendations in the 2017 Senate Inquiry into Suicide by Veterans, three related to the delivery of advocacy services and/or the training of military advocates. In this article I would like to explore the inquiries. That have resulted from these recommendations. The views I express are my own and do not necessarily reflect those of the National Council.

Australian National Audit Office

Although the ANAO is more focused on DVA's internal systems and has closed its invitation at the end of March, its efficiency audit is no less crucial than the other two inquiries. Its ToR (Terms of Reference) address two questions. Paraphrasing:

- Question 1: How efficient are DVA's business systems and processes in supporting the delivery of services to veterans and their dependents.
- Question 2: How efficiently are DVA's compensation, support and health services delivered to veterans and their dependents.

As a Member of ADSO, Air Force

¹ Article was prepared by R.N. (Dick) Kelloway, National VP, accredited Level 3 Compensation and Level 2 Wellbeing Advocate.

Veterans Information

Association joined in the submission to ANAO. To put this into context, ADSO now has 19 members and represents the interests of around 90,000 ex-service personnel. Its voice is therefore not insignificant. The ADSO submission addressed the following key issues and concerns:

- Acknowledged the improvements arising from VCR (Veteran Centric Reform Program), and especially 'Project Lighthouse' (the investigative and design processes that led to the business case which justified an additional appropriation in FY2017-18 for VCR).
- Noted that improvements included internal culture change, MyService (a wizard-based on-line claims form for all with a PMKeyS number), computerisation of files and scanning of all hard copy documents on receipt by DVA, and opening of mental health support through Non-Liability Health Care (NLHC) for all personnel with one-day's continuous fulltime service and automatic issue on discharge of a White Card for mental health care.
- Emphasised the importance and value of the open consultations and long-term business process re-engineering inherent in VCR and the crucial need for continued funding so that the gains to date and change momentum are not squandered.
- Expressed concern about the inefficiencies within DVA and difficulties for veterans and dependents arising from the complexity of entitlements existing in three Acts and internal systems that are independent of each other.
- Recognised the unpopularity of SoP (Statements of Principles) in some quarters, but their strength in clarifying the relationship between service and condition, and the need for them to be extended to DRCA.

- o Noted the hurt and suspicion that among younger veterans exacerbated by the barrage of adverse comments on social media, and the need for DVA to broadcast frequently and loudly its good news stories about improvements in claims processing.

Productivity Commission

The PC 'Inquiry into Veterans' Affairs' Legislative Framework and Supporting Architecture for Compensation and Rehabilitation for Veterans (Serving and Ex-serving Australian Defence Force

Members)' has been tasked by the Treasurer to '*examine the effectiveness of the governance, administrative and service delivery arrangements that support the legislation (the 'supporting architecture')*'. In more detail, the ToR stipulate investigation of:

- o whether the arrangements reflect contemporary best practice, drawing on experiences of Australian workers' compensation arrangements and military compensation frameworks in other similar jurisdictions (local and international);
- o the use of the Statements of Principles as a means to contribute to consistent decision-making based on sound medical-scientific evidence; and
- o whether the legislative framework and supporting architecture delivers compensation and rehabilitation to veterans in a well targeted, efficient and veteran-centric manner.

As a member of ADSO, AFA is engaged deeply in preparing a submission on behalf of the 19 members, but will also be submitting in its own right. National President Carl Schiller has circulated a draft framework of responses ('Talking Points') to all Division Presidents, with the request that the framework be considered by Division Committees and forwarded to all Branches.

ADSO has already submitted a part-submission entitled the future of advocacy, which should be available on the PC website by the time you read this article. A summary of that submission's key points follows. For those who would like to read the full submission (and others) the URL is: <http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/current/veterans/submissions#initial>

The key points in ADSO's future of advocacy submission are:

- o The transition from TIP (Training and Information Program) to ATDP (Advocacy Training and Development Program) has already initiated the professionalisation of advocacy services, with further advances from 01 July 2018 when CPD (continuing professional development) and QA (quality assurance) begin.
- o Professional advocacy will be marked by its accepted norms: honesty and integrity, specialised knowledge, advocacy skills, national standards of competency, self-motivated learning and skills development, self-regulated performance grounded in critical self-

analysis and accountability.

- o Australia's veterans' legislation is the unique product of its unique societal values, military traditions, veterans' needs, and budget constraints.

- o Professionalisation of military advocacy needs to be holistic, engaging governance, professional ethics, training and professional development, performance standards, and professional indemnification.

- o Professionalisation would be best advanced by the creation of an independent professional body that governs, manages and administers military advocacy on behalf of ESOs.

Independent Scoping Study

Hon Darren Chester MP, Minister for Veterans' Affairs, announced the Scoping Study on 16 April 2018. Being led by Mr Robert Cornall, AO, the Scoping Study is comprehensive. The URL, including ToR and Mr Cornall's biography, is: <https://www.dva.gov.au/consultation-and-grants/reviews/veterans-advocacy-and-support-services-scoping-study>

It is to examine the following:

- range of advocacy and welfare services currently provided by both volunteer and paid professionals from the ex-service community, government and the legal sector;
- current challenges and barriers in accessing entitlements and services and the impact they have on veterans' wellbeing;
- needs of different veteran cohorts for professionalised advocacy support and the potential benefits to each cohort;
- different models for professionalised advocacy both within Australia and overseas to determine the most suitable model so veterans have:
 - o a sustainable, consistent and reliable advocacy service which is scalable based on demand;
 - o an efficient and effective service to assist them to access their entitlements so they can focus on more important things, such as rehabilitation and their civilian life;
 - o a level of service which, at a minimum, is comparable in quality and value with other cohorts accessing government entitlements;
 - o a service based on their needs, irrespective of age, and which adequately protects their interests; and
 - o access to advice on why their claim was unsuccessful and options for

appeals;

- governance and quality frameworks available to deliver performance driven professionalised advocacy and service models, including recommending the most appropriate frameworks and any partnerships required to achieve this outcome;
- roles and responsibilities of traditional, new and emerging stakeholders within the veterans' advocacy sector as it stands and under any future model, articulating the value and contribution of those roles and responsibilities in professionalising veterans' advocacy;
- costings for all models considered; and
- timeframes and strategy for implementation, including: key milestones, risks, change management and transitional considerations.

Again, ADSO will prepare a submission to the Scoping Study, as will AFA. As the Senate Inquiry into Suicide by Veterans included the recommendation that the Veterans Affairs Canada's Bureau of Pensions Advocates (BPA) be considered, we should expect that the ToR of both the Productivity Commission's and the Scoping Study's inquiries will follow-up on that recommendation. BPA's Factsheets are a good place to start if you would like to know more. The URL is: <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/about-us/organization/bureau-pensions-advocates/fact-sheets>

In brief, there are some rather significant differences between Australia's Military Advocacy practices and the Bureau's. Some of the key differences are:

- BPA does not provide:

- o support for primary claims;
- o wellbeing advocacy support;
- clients are denied attendance at higher levels of appeal (AAT and Full Court equivalents); and
- being embedded in VAC, there is (at least) a perceived conflict of interest.

The Senate Inquiry's recommendation arose for the advocacy of a cadre of veterans that argued adoption of the BPA model. Interestingly, although some of the cadre practice as volunteer advocates at both the VRB and AAT, they continue to advocate on social media for advocacy at those levels to be undertaken by lawyers. From personal experience, and from conversations with VRB Members and other advocates, the VRB is anything other than adversarial. While it is certainly inquisitorial, if the advocate has missed an argument or made a glaring error, the Board will suggest adjournment rather than make a decision on an incomplete or erroneous argument.

The AAT is, however, adversarial – albeit with the task of reviewing the claim and appeal *de novo* (starting from the very beginning). While not proposing that all AAT representation be by a lawyer, some other advocates argue that, as they are not legally qualified, they are at a disadvantage because they are contesting an AAT appeal against a barrister representing the Commission. From a future of advocacy perspective, the professionalisation of VRB advocates would benefit from their greater competency in applying legislation and case law. At the AAT level, the inclusion in advocates' training and development of para-legal units of

learning would certainly better prepare them for the adversarial nature of the Tribunal.

RAAF Firefighters Support

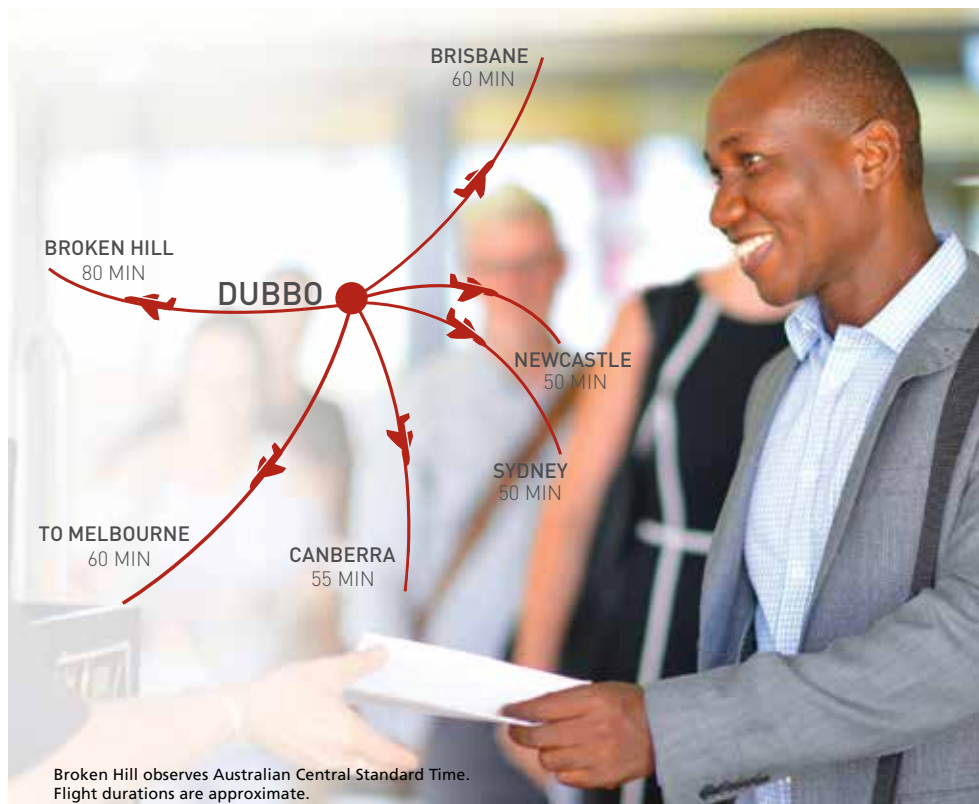
On a different tack: a group of RAAF firefighters have done a tremendous job in bringing to the attention of senior DVA staff the medical conditions that they relate to toxic exposure in firefighting foam. They have around 40 ex-RAAF personnel who receive their regular newsletter, and another 500+ personnel are understood to have been exposed to the same chemicals.

Research at Point Cook has apparently discovered the presence of well over 100 different chemicals in firefighting foam. While medical-scientific, epidemiological research has not yet validated an incontestable causal link between each of or certain chemicals, DVA and AFA are coordinating their efforts to assist the firefighters with their claims. Three current AFA Level 3 Compensation Advocates are being trained in the medical science, before facilitating the submission of claims.

Given the number of personnel that have been exposed to firefighting foam and that some are serving younger veterans, a key task will for the advocacy team will be mentor other advocates to provide ongoing support. I would welcome contact from any veterans who would like to undertake ATDP and firefighting foam-specific training. Similarly, AFA is vitally interested in hearing from any other ex-RAAF or serving personnel with toxic exposures.

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- Is small enough for everyone to know everyone's name (average class size in the junior school is 23)
- Has state of the art facilities
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Dubbo Airport

Situated in the heart of New South Wales, the Dubbo City Regional Airport offers unmatched access to the Central West Region and beyond. Dubbo leads the way for regional airports, with four major airlines providing around 200 flights per week and servicing more than 200,000 passengers each year.

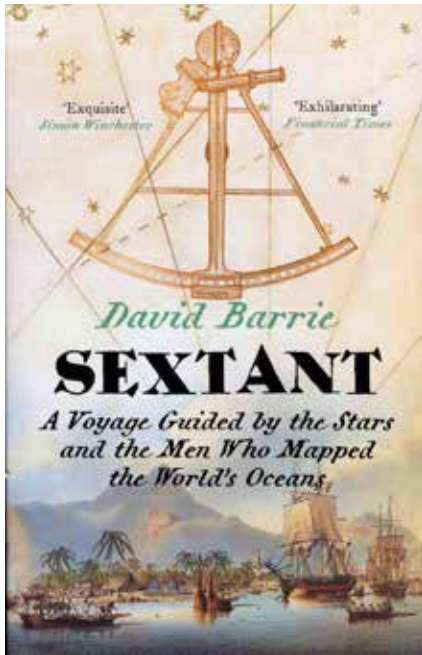
Escaping the city is easy with direct flights available from Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne and Newcastle as well as Canberra and Broken Hill. The airport operates 24 hours a day, 365 days per year with commercial flights, charter services, general aviation flight training and airfreight operations keeping the Region humming day in day out.

While in our Region visit the world famous Taronga Western Plains Zoo and marvel at the incredible beauty of unique animals from all corners of the globe – feed a giraffe, book a meerkat encounter or experience the life of the 'king of the jungle' in the brand new Lion Pride Lands exhibit.

Head to the Wellington Caves for an underground adventure - delve deep and unearth Australia's prehistoric past in spectacular caves and a preserved mine. Or drop by the Old Dubbo Gaol to walk in the steps of a 19th Century prisoner in the dead of night.



Check out www.dubboairport.com.au for flight information and bookings and head to dubbo.com.au to plan your great big adventure! Photo credit credit Rick Stevens



Sextant

Author: David Barrie

Soft cover: 333 pages, with 28 plates of B&W photos and maps

Publisher: William Collins Books UK, 2015

Availability: From all good book stores

Price: \$29.95

'Sextant' is the dramatic story of an instrument that changed history. Built around David Barrie's own transatlantic passage using the very same navigational tools as Captain Cook, 'Sextant' tells how one of the most vital navigational instruments was invented and used - and why the golden age of celestial navigation has now come to an end.

From Cook, Bligh and Vancouver to Bougainville, La Perouse, Flinders and Fitzroy, Barrie recounts the fortunes of the explorers who risked their lives in charting the Pacific, as well as the intrepid adventures of Slocum, Shackleton and Worsley.

A heady mix of history, science and adventure, this elegy to a lost technology is infused with the wonder of discovery and the sublimity of the cosmos.

'An excellent present for anyone even vaguely interested in the stars, or the history of exploration, or sailing small boats



over big oceans, or come to think of it anyone at all. And buy a copy for yourself while you're about it' *Marine Quarterly*

Sextants were used by navigators on RAAF transport and maritime aircraft during WWII and for many years after. Navigator courses were taught astro (celestial) navigation, initially on the Mk9 bubble sextant, until the 1970s.

Due to the pressurised cabins, C-130s and P-3s were equipped with the Kollsman (US) periscopic sextant, until replaced by inertial navigation systems in the 1970s. Canberra aircraft were equipped with the Hughes (UK) periscope sextant, but they were never used as the Canberra experienced 'Dutch rolling' (aerodynamic roll and yaw motion), which introduced gross errors into astro sights.

Astro navigation was regarded by many pilots as a mystery—it was indeed a science, verging on an art.

Lance Halvorson



Have you got a story?

Contributions by way of articles and photographs are invited from readers of *Wings* in the interest of promoting the Air Force Association.

Contributions should be sent to: PO Box 1269, Bondi Junction NSW 1355 or email wingseditor@hotmail.com

The RAAFA reserve the right to edit all articles submitted for content, length or format.

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Floatplane Endorsement

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There's no better way to hone your skills than on our Seaplane in stunning picturesque surroundings with one of the country's most passionate instructors.



Testimonials

Completing my float endorsement with Port Macquarie seaplanes has been a highlight of my flying career. The exciting flight profiles, combined with the raw 'hands and feet' skills that float flying demands, made for enjoyable and rewarding training. Judy and her team were professional, knowledgeable, and accommodating with nothing too much to ask. All of this in an idyllic location I highly recommend this training, whether it be for professional development or one for the bucket list.

FLTLT Billy Ward

I completed my float endorsement with Judy in August 2016 with my mate Rod Flockhart. My RAAF pilot course buddy Billy Ward recommended Judy as he had just completed his endorsement. When I approached Judy I was a captain on the C-17 with a background of 5000hrs of civilian flying. I had flown trikes, unpowered sailplanes,

hang gliders, tail wheels, two stroke ultralights, turbo props you name it. The addition of flying on floats was something I always wanted to do and Port Macquarie seemed the perfect backdrop. When we both rocked up Judy catered for us, letting us stay with her at her home and answer our mostly dumb questions about the finesse of operating on water. The weekend that followed was some of the best flying I have ever done, we got to fly in all conditions and even got to experience tight river flying. We only managed to scare Judy once or twice but she was more than happy to sit back and watch Rod and I learn. Without a doubt the float endorsement was the most enjoyable weekend of flying I had ever done, not only did I get to fly with one of my best mates, but got taught by a talented instructor. If you are looking for the next challenge I'd recommend heading to Port Macquarie and flying floats!

FLTLT Bodie Heyward

WAGGA
WAGGA
AIRPORT

Connecting, developing and supporting *our community*

Wagga Wagga boasts one of the busiest regional airports in New South Wales, with over 130 flights between Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and the Gold Coast each week, carrying approximately 220,000 passengers annually. The airport is a growing hub for commerce, employment, education and training in the aviation industry.

Wagga Wagga Airport facilitates the following services to Wagga Wagga and our surrounding region:



City of
Wagga Wagga

Wagga Wagga Airport is a facility of Wagga Wagga City Council.

waggawaggaairport.com.au