

The

WHISPERER

**The Newsletter of the Beaufighter and
Boston Association of Queensland**

MARCH 2005

THE RAAF COMMISSIONS ITS FIRST AIRCRAFT CARRIER



In keeping with Joint Operations the RAAF has just commissioned its first Aircraft Carrier.

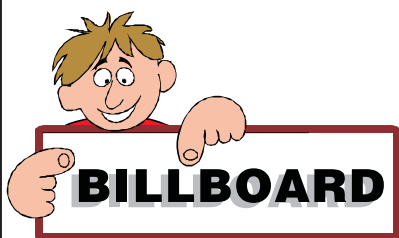
Designated CCV 01, Air Force Leaders acknowledged that sea trials are going very well.

One Air Force Official, who would not give his name, expressed senior leadership concerns concerning aircraft sortie generation, due to possible flight deck damage and recovery times.

For now RAAF officials plan on shifting classic Air Wing Operations to more Command and Control, "Special Operations" centric doctrine with limited helo night operations, until further testing can be completed within the next 5 years.

Testing deployments will be confined to the Whitsunday Islands and Port Douglas in order to maximise deployment cycles for senior leadership.

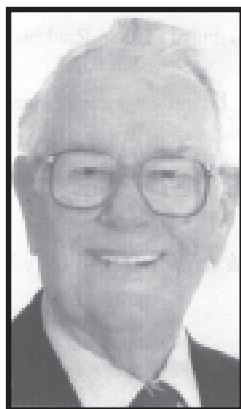
This item arrived by E-mail. The photo is from Worth1000.com. The text is by Don Ferguson from the Naval Association.



VALE CHARLIE KING



Pilot Trainee



Retired Veteran

Charlie joined the RAAF in May 1941 and passed out as a pilot at Tamworth and after serving in a number of Squadrons joined 31 Squadron and served with the Squadron at Morotai, Tarakan, Sanga Sanga, and Labuan until the Japanese surrender. He joined our association when it was formed and was a very active member. He was the only pilot in the association who flew Mosquitoes. In spite of the fact that he became very disabled after a serious stroke, with the aid of his lovely wife Bette, he attended most of our functions and took part in every Brisbane Anzac Day parade, but always in a vehicle Charlie passed away on 15th January 2005, his service was held at the Hemmant Cemetery.

Charlie you are sorely missed.

KEITH NICHOLSON

Keith passed away on 24th September after a long hard battle against his illness. He had spent most of the



post war years as president of the Bull Creek Museum, WA RAAFA and the constitution of a housing development for exRAAF personnel. He moved from West Australia to Victoria to have specialised care in 2003. Up until he became still had his own aircraft and enjoyed taking part in flying events. His contributions to the Whisperer were always appreciated,

Lest we Forget

Sick Parade

Stan Curran has had more than his share of medical problems in the last three months. His most recent problem happened when he had a fracture of the back and spent two weeks in Greenslopes Private Hospital. He is now back on his feet and doing pretty well.

Frank Beadle has also having a rough time and is presently undergoing further tests.

Ron Snell underwent surgery and has now made a goo recovery. Ron drives from Townsville to Brisbane to attend the AGM and take part in the Brisbane Anzac Parade with us. An awful lot of driving, Townsville to Brisbane and back to Townsville. Sometime back, he had the bad luck to cop a speeding fine.

2005 Barbecue and AGM

It was necessary to postpone the AGM timed for 9th January 2005, because of the high temperatures occurring at this time. The revised date is the 9th of March, which is the second Wednesday in March, which will be much cooler for we elderly folk who will be attending.

Anzac Parade Brisbane.

Our location in the parade is the usual one. We are to assemble at the corner of Elizabeth and William streets-opposite (Queens Park.) Members requiring transport please contact me SAP as it is important for me to write to the Anzac Parade Committee and reserve transport.

“Beaufighters in the Pacific”

Neville Parnell’s book, “Beaufighters in the Pacific” is now available. This is a greatly enlarged version of his previous book, he advises that this edition has more than three times the content that “Whispering Death”. Orders can be made to the author’s home address: 45 Lakeside Road Eastwood NSW 2122. The cost is \$60 plus Postage.

Beaufighter Lapel Badges

I have available a limited supply of very nice lapel badges in the form of a Beaufighter made by a firm in England. The badges are gold in colour and well made. The cost is \$15 and will be on a first in best served basis. To order one send me \$15 and I will post them out.



93 Squadron RAAF - The Green Ghosts

The RAAF began operating the Bristol Beaufighter in June 1942, and had in all five Beaufighter Squadrons. The Beaus created havoc with Japanese shipping from early March, 1943.

93 Squadron was, however, formed late in the War on 22nd January 1945, at Kingaroy in Queensland under the command of S/Ldr D.K.H. Gulliver. Its initial strength was five Australian built Beaufighters 21s. These were similar to the "TFX" without the "thimble" nose and dorsal fin. They were strike aircraft, rather than torpedo bombers armed with four .50in machine guns and four 20 mm cannon. An under fuselage rack, could carry a 2,000 lb bomb, and the standard rocket load was carried under the wings. The pilot operated the weaponry. Crew navigators also specialised in wireless operation and flight signalling, and were described as navigator-wireless operators, in the strike units. They handled navigation, reconnaissance, signals and post sortie photography..

The Beau fighters of 93 Squadron had an overall dark green finish. The relative silence of their engines and the Beaufighter's speed, had earned them the nickname "Whispering Death". 93 Squadron was unofficially known as the "Green Ghost" squadron. It remained at Kingaroy until July 1945, after which was posted to the RAAF's (Attack) Wing on Labuan Island, joining No 1 Squadron (equipped with Mosquitoes). This occurred during a period in which Australian Forces felt they were being placed in second string mopping up tasks, behind the main operation. They were overlooked but taking casualties as they operated against a virtually defeated portion of the enemy forces.

Advanced parties of 93 reached Labuan in late May, and operational components arrived in Morotai in July. They flew their first operational sortie from Labuan on 26th July 1945, two Beaufighters accompanying a 1 Squadron Mosquito on an armed reconnaissance over Rajang and Bintulu river areas of Borneo. They spotted and attacked with rockets a command building in Sibul (which according to later intelligence had a unit CO's briefing under way at the time). They then strafed part of Bintulu.

The remainder of 93 Squadron flew out of Kingaroy for Labuan. The Squadron was now at full strength. No 86 Wing commenced full scale operations on August 7th, sending eight aircraft to attack a Japanese merchant vessel at the mouth of Tabaun River. Having totally demolished his target, they conducted a sweep for targets of opportunity in the form of Japanese shipping, ending in a leaflet drop over Japanese troop positions.

On their return run, the sweep spotted a heavily camouflaged barge of uncertain identity. In case the barge was an Australian Commando unit among those known to be operating in the area, five Beaufighters were

detached to examine it. Seeing Japanese troops under the palm and bamboo cover, the aircraft strafed it with guns and rockets, sinking it.

An order was received on August 13th, suspending operations against the Japanese. It was rescinded the next day and the squadron resumed normal operations. Four Beaufighters carried out an armed reconnaissance of Kuching, whilst eight were assigned to attack the Trombool barracks complex.

The four Beaus sent to Kuching, made a low level attack on the airfield, each making a single pass along the strip. 22 rockets hit the strip, destroying aircraft and cratering the runway. The Trombool group of Beaus, strafed two trucks on the road from Trombool, attacked the barracks with rockets and cannon, and dropped leaflets.

On August 15th, a signal came that the Japanese had formally surrendered (following the use of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki). 93 Squadron was then assigned the task of leaflet dropping to inform the Japanese, the prisoner of war camps and the native population that the war had ended. Given the state of the Japanese communications at the time, there was some likelihood that some of the leaflets would not be believed.

Four Beaufighters were dropping leaflets in the Borneo region when, making a drop over a village, the crew of A8-129 heard a tearing noise and saw a Zero fighter flash past. The pilot, W/O Ellers, brought the badly damaged and vibrating aircraft back to base, but was unable to lower the undercarriage. He landed wheels up in the jungle to avoid damaging the airstrip, badly injuring himself and W/O Dunn, his navigator wireless operator. Following this and other incidents, the RAAF suspended flights over Japanese held areas until the news of the surrender could be communicated to the Japanese command in Borneo and Malaya.

This order lasted until September 11th. The following aggressive acts by bands of Japanese, 93 Squadron put up eleven aircraft as part of a show of strength. Later in September and into October, 1 and 93 Squadron, were assigned the role of sinking surplus barges off the coast with rockets. They then filled an escort role, taking off on October 19th for Oakey Queensland. Nine Beaufighters escorting fifteen Spitfires reached Oakey on the 29th, with seven of the Beaufighters.

On December 10th 1945, tragedy struck 93 Squadron. Their CO S/Ldr Gordon Gulliver was piloting a Beaufighter with a number of officers aboard, including the CO of 86 Wing. It was seen to career off the strip and hit two parked Mustangs, erupting in flames.

Late in 1945, the 93 Beaufighters were assigned to escort the Mustangs of 81 (Fighter) Wing en route for occupation duties in Japan. By December the Squadron

Continued on Page 4

Continued from page 3

was just a general duties unit, escorting Allied aircraft returning to Australia. The first formation flew from Labaun in March 1946, with 93 Squadron performing navigation and meteorological reconnaissance for Mustangs, and a Catalina provided air-sea rescue support. The last flights began in April, when, as the 93 Beaufighters returned, they were sent for storage at Narromine. The last aircraft returned on May 14th 1946.

The Squadron's disbandment parade was held on August 22nd 1946. The RAAF continued using the Beaufighter until the type's last flight on December 9th, 1957. An aircraft of No 1 Trials Flight at Woomera range, South Australia flew to RAAF Edinburgh, South Australia for retirement and disposal

Researched Peter White

MUD

By Squadron - Leader C. Tobin

I've heard the palm trees whispering to a travel-talkie moon,
And seen exotic orchids spilling on a lagoon,
These tropic charms are potent and will live in memory's eye,
But the thought to linger longest is the mud of Morotai

There's mud so past the axle that it takes the driver's seat,
Mud so penetrating that a man can't find his feet,
There's soupy mud and gluggy mud and mud that's on the high
There's every type of muddy mud on the Isle of Morotai
There's mud that smells of jungle rot and mud that
smells of slime, There's mud that's odoriferous of
some unearthly crime,

It smells of native villages that must have been a sty,
of python's breath, or worst than death that stalked through Morotai
It flows down from the mountains and climbs up from the sea,
It jumps upon your shoulders and sits upon your knee,
It dribbles in your mess-tin, your toothbrush it will try,

It's ubiquitous, iniquitous, is the mud of Morotai
It sleeps between your blankets and fastens on your soap,
It twines itself about your hair and turns it into rope,

The glamour of the tropics is one big bloody lie,
On the squelchy, belchy, reeking Isle of muddy Morotai.

COMMITTEE

Patron

Hon. Sir James Killen

President

Ralph Ind 5564 0181

V. President

William O'Connor 3286 1067

Secretary

Peter White 3287 5488

Email: petewhite@iprimus.com.au

Committee

Stan Curran 3388 6053

E-mail: currans@powerup.com.au

Jack Chamberlain 3848 2184



President's Corner

Dear Members,

One can only apologise for the heat wave which caused the cancellation of the 2005 Annual General Meeting. The hot weather is a repeat of last year & has caused Peter & I to rethink the timing & venue of the AGM. Peter is in the process of making further enquiries regarding a change of venue which, hopefully, will be air conditioned. Peter will advise you all shortly as to the result of his enquiries

The AGM held in January 2004 was well attended with 25 Members & Partners being present. The BBQ was enjoyed by all although, many found the weather a little too hot for comfort. I guess Rob Williams, who did the cooking, found it a little hotter than most of us.

We had a number of interesting events which occurred during 2004 probably the most noteworthy of which was that Peter received not one but two Moncrieff awards for his efforts on behalf of the Association which were very well deserved.

There will be a change latter this year in the manner in which the Association's Flying Scholarship will be awarded. Previously the award was to a Cadet from 219 Sqdn AAFC. However the Flying Wing of the AAFC at Archerfield is No.2 Wing & it seems more appropriate that our award should be made to a Cadet who is a member of that Wing. The Wing embraces all four cadet squadrons, and this change will open our scholarship to all those cadets who wish to become pilots in the RAAF. In addition the cost of our award of \$500 & to stretch the benefit of the award a little further & provide more flying lessons for the successful cadet, the latter's parents as a condition of the scholarship must match our \$500. This will give the cadet no less than 10 hours flying instruction. At the next AGM which, hopefully, will be quite soon, there be more to report to you.

Regards, RALPH

Here are some actual label instructions on consumer products :-

1. On a Swedish chainsaw

- do not Attempt to stop chain with your Hands or
genitals.

2. On a Japanese product used to relieve painful haemorrhoids

- lie down on bed and insert poscool slowly up to
the projected portion Like a sword-guard into
anal duct. While inserting poscool for
approximately 5 minutes, keep quiet.

RAAF BEGINNING 1921

It was the Commonwealth Gazette No 28 of Thursday, 31st March 1921, which formally announced the formation of one of the oldest independent air forces in the world, just three years younger than Britain's

Royal Air Force, and more than a quarter of a century older than the United States Air Force, which didn't gain complete independence from the US Army until after World War Two.

Under the Heading "Order by His Excellency the Governor of Australia", the Proclamation read in part:

"Now therefore I, Henry William Baron Foster. The Governor General aforesaid, acting with the advice of the Federal Executive Council, do hereby order that a force, to be called the Australian Air Force, be constituted as part of the Australian Military Forces as from the thirty first day of March one hundred and twenty one"

The simple title of Australian Air Force did not last long. In June 1921, King George V approved the prefix "Royal" and this was officially applied the following August. The formation of the RAAF was not the beginning of Australian Military flying. That had all started seven years earlier in March, when a Bristol Boxkite and a Deperdussin were test flown at Point Cook, on the shores of Victoria's Port Phillip Bay.



These flights were first conducted by the recently established Australian Flying Corps which, like its British counterpart (The Royal Flying Corps) was part of the Army and its personnel carried Army ranks. Investigations into the establishment of an Australian Aviation Corps had begun as early as 1910, (only a year after Bleriot had flown the English Channel, for the first time) and in early 1911 a Bristol Boxkite was demonstrated to army officials. In December of the same year an advertisement was placed in the Commonwealth Gazette calling for "the appointment of two competent mechanics and aviators".

Things began moving rapidly in 1912. Two BE.2a biplanes and two Deperdussin monoplanes were ordered in July, and in August, Lt. H A Petrie was appointed Australia's first military aviator. In September the formation of the Australian Flying Corps (AFC) and

Central Flying School (CFS) were approved by the Minister of Defence and in December a Bristol Boxkite biplane was ordered. Point Cook was selected as the site for the CFS and, until 1922 was the place where trainee RAAF pilots began their flying careers, at least in peacetime.

During World War Two, the demand for thousands of pilots resulted in the establishment of numerous elementary flying training schools around the country. The first four CFS students began their training at Point Cook in August 1914, just four weeks after the break out of World War One: all of them Army officers, of which Lt Richard William Williams would be the first to qualify for his wings. In the following November, Williams went on to be appointed the first Chief of Air Staff, a post he held on three separate occasions during his long and illustrious career. Air Marshall Richard Williams KBE CB DSO is regarded by many to be "father" of the RAAF

The Australian Flying Corps was the only Commonwealth air arm to see active service during World War 1, the traditions of fighting efficiency beginning in 1915 with the establishment of the famous Half Flight in Mesopotamia (Iraq) in response to a request from the Indian government for assistance.

The Half Flight went into action for the first time on 31st May 1915, from Basra. Later incorporated into the Royal Flying Corps, the Half Flight flew a variety of aircraft and suffered heavy casualties including the loss of two of the original four students, Lt G P Merz and Capt. T W White

Australian Flying Corps followed the Half Flight "over there" to join battle-No 1 in Egypt and Palestine (1916-1918 under the command of Richard Williams), Nos 2 3 and 4 in France (1917-19 18) and Nos 5 6 7 and 8 in the United Kingdom. The Squadrons operated a variety of aircraft including famous "scout" types such as the Camel, Snipe and Pup, the SE.5A and Bristol Fighter.



Continued on page 6

Continued from page 5

Some Australians made their mark in the Great War. The leading Australian air ace of the 1914-18 conflict was Capt R A Little, who scored 47 aerial victories whilst flying Sop with triplanes with the Royal Naval Air Service. Some of the other Australian pilots who flew with the British on active service would later become household names in civilian aviation. Among them

Charles Kingsford Smith, Bert Hinkler and P G Taylor. The top scoring AFC pilot of the war was

Capt. A H Coby of No 4 Squadron who flew Sopwith Camels and accounted for 29 enemy aircraft and 13 observation balloons. No 1 Squadron's Lt H F McNamara was awarded Australia's only air Victoria Cross in World War 1, for his heroic rescue of a downed comrade. A total of 46 officers and 2,234 other ranks served with the Australian Flying Corps in World War I along with another 200 pilots and observers who flew with other flying services. The die had been cast.

PETER WHITE

An Ordinary Day in Darwin

Below is an address given to the Australia Pacific Branch RAAF Association by member Dave Sieber for "Darwin Day 2001"

This is the true story of ordinary people. They were not super TV heroes in super aeroplanes flying to meet the super enemy, the Japanese. Just ordinary people going about their ordinary business, on an ordinary day that turned out to be extraordinary.

Allow me to introduce them:

There was Hurtle Bald - a Postmaster. There was Alice Bald - his wife. Their daughter, Iris, just 20, didn't work at the Post office, she worked at the Taxation office and normally with air raid drills she went to a trench near where she worked.

There were four other women telephonists in the busy post office:

Mrs Emily Young, two sisters Jean and Eileen Mullen also Miss Freda Stasinowsky. There were two men in the group we are talking about Mr Archie Hall and Mr Arthur Wellington.

The Bald family took a great interest in the social and sporting life of Darwin.

They were ideal, but ordinary, citizens. Hurtle Bald had done a stint of 6 years in Darwin in 1928 and had then returned south. He was promoted to Darwin and of course came back a second time.

Alice was a normal hard working wife and mother.

There was a fourth member of the family, a fifteen year old son, Peter.

He was at school in Adelaide. Peter was booked on a Guinea Airways flight to take him to Darwin and his family for Christmas holidays.

However, the military had commandeered the aeroplane.

He was booked on another flight but as the military situation worsened no civilians were allowed North. Peter became the only surviving member of his family.

The two sisters Jean and Eileen Mullen had been living at the Victoria Hotel in Smith St., but just that morning had transferred to a vacant departmental house on the Esplanade.

At 9.40 a.m. Jean as duty telephonist received a call at the busy main Switchboard from a Dennis Connors. Jean told him that she and Eileen had moved to their new house. Connors said he would send them a couple of fowls as a house warming present. Twenty minutes - a mere twenty minutes - later Jean and her sister were dead.

Bob Darken, a police constable went to the library to borrow a book. An ordinary thing to do.

Here he met Iris Bald and told her he would lend her that novel he had promised a few days before. Iris said she couldn't spare the time to go to the police station now. she would get it later. she never did. She left Bob Darken, crossed Mitchell Street and at about 9.45 a.m. walked through the Post office public entrance on the way to her home next door to the Post office. No one knew at the time that she was walking to her death.

Archie Halls (mentioned previously) was in charge of the day shift in the telegraph Office. He had only been in Darwin five days, having arrived from Stirling in South Australia.

Halls was testing the telegraph circuit to Adelaide. He was talking to Francis O'Grady in Adelaide.

At 9.58 Am Halls said (by telegraph) "sec", meaning "wait a second" then he sent "There is another raid alarm, I'll see you shortly". Of course we know he never did. That see you shortly was the last message sent from that Darwin Post Office.

Arthur Wellington just like a lot of people happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

So all these people came to the same place at the same time. A fairly ordinary situation and I'm sure nobody thought it unusual.

Continued on page 12

One of our Coast Watchers

F/L J A (ALAN) CORRIGAN MID Legion of Merit

War in the Pacific would not have progressed towards an Allied victory as efficiently as it did without the assistance of the courageous group of men, who, from behind enemy lines, with their scouts and tele-radios, were able to inform command bases of aircraft movements, enemy shipping and troop movements. Alan Corrigan (dec'd), the Uncle of one of my fishing friends, Bill Corrigan, played a significant role in Commander Eric Feldt's Coastwatchers in the Solomon Islands war theatre.

Alan was educated in Brisbane at St Joseph's College, Gregory Terrace, and excelled in academia, and in sport as Captain of the rugby, cricket and swimming in 1921 and 1922. From a Mine Manager at Mt Isa, he headed for New Guinea prospecting for gold at Wau and Edie Creek in the early 1930's, then to Wewak. With more than 10 years of New Guinea behind him and most of this living under canvas in bush camps, F/O J A Corrigan was an important acquisition from the RAAF for training in Townsville, then to the island of Isabel to keep watch over the Japanese seaplane base at Rekata Bay.

In February, 1943 he was landed on the west coast of Isobel opposite Rekata Bay with a few scouts. He made his way across the island and selected a post overlooking the Japanese base where he placed his tele-radio. The local people had avoided the enemy and F/O Corrigan had no difficulty in getting assistance from them.

Scouts were sent in with fish and vegetables for sale. One scout in particular was a gem, a shrewd local who looked stupid and could act like a moron when the occasion called for it. He struck up an acquaintance with the Japanese commander, who could speak English and always brought him the choicest food. The Jap commander allowed him to roam about the base, and on his return, could report to Corrigan where the seaplanes were hidden, how many guns were there, and where the troops were housed. This information was passed on to the aircraft at Lunga, who made full use of it. After one raid, the scout commiserated with the Japanese commander so sympathetically that the officer told him the number of casualties. After 2 months behind enemy lines, F/O Corrigan was relieved and then flew in the leading bomber on the next strikes against Rekata to direct the bombing of camouflaged positions

well hidden from ordinary observation, but well known to himself.

From April, 1943 to June, 1943, Alan Corrigan became an instructor at the Coastwatcher training establishment at Lunga (Guadacanal Island). He ran the first course in jungle training, taking the new recruits camping, teaching them how to build shelters, how to split wet timber to extract dry shavings from its interior sufficient to start a fire and how to pack and carry jungle equipment. They lived in the jungle until the feeling of the strange environment had worn off.

As is the case with our quality assurance systems in present day business, Alan Corrigan helped the Coastwatcher's base establish uniformity in nomenclature and procedures, which became part of the training standards. Contact with the US Army communications was also made to ensure that all maps showed correct place names and all communications followed standard procedures which were clearly understood.

Back in the field at Munda, Corrigan and his natives set up behind enemy lines at Enogai. Not only did he operate the radio base, but he and his party carried food into US lines and wounded out. He related to a nephew that his most frightening experience was when he carried wounded to a US PT boat on a still clear night. When the wounded marines were on board, the PT boat roared off leaving Alan alone in a rubber duckie on a glassy sea only 1/4 mile from the coast. Fortunately for him the Japs must have been on the other side of the island on that night.

For his assistance to US forces, F/O Corrigan was awarded the Legion of Merit (Officer Division).

Bougainville Island was his final post, from where his retreat followed a tip off to a Japanese patrol. After the war he returned to Wewak and then back to Bougainville Island to prospect for gold at Koupai Gap in the Crown Prince Range. The Bougainville Copper Prospect was later discovered using data from Alan's mine.

In about 1965 he returned to Australia with his wife, Vivienne, retiring at Victoria Point.

—oooOooo—

***Reference: Eric Feldt - The Coastwatchers,
Oxford University Press, 1946***

Diary of F/Sgt Donald C Kirkwood RAAF

30 Squadron

TOWNSVILLE - 1943

MAY - Friday 28th 0900.

Been in the pool 7 whole days and look like remaining for quite some time yet. A great organisation. Usual type of Townsville day. Hot and dry. Enjoyable? 1700. Posted at last. Leave at 2am tomorrow morning.

Saturday 29th

Up at 2am, breakfast 2.30am. Left 1RPP at 3.35am for drome of departure. Sat in the DC3 (GALLOPIN' GHOST) for three quarters of an hour. Airborne 4.20am. Trip unamusing, tiring and hot. Dawn breaking was a beautiful sight from above the clouds. Struck New Guinea coast at 9am, north or east of Mime Bay. The coast line is wild and beautiful. Green foliage down to the beaches and towering mountains behind continuously wreathed in cloud. Arrived Milne Bay 9.35 am. Quite a picturesque little spot, and surprisingly busy. Encircled, bar the seaward, by the usual inspiring N.G. ranges. Spent several hours of waiting amidst the coconut groves, time out for lunch. Literally gormandized ourselves on coconuts and now am afraid to look one in the face. Forced to stay overnight. Peculiarities of the Bay this night was the lack of wogs and mosquitoes

.Sunday 30th

0900. All set to continue on our way. Saw an albino here today. Peculiar type, pink skinned with straw coloured hair. Contrary to all reports he was as large as life in the daylight and quite happily engaged among his fellows. DC3 (DIPSY DOODLE) brought us up. Boring trip altogether. 1300. Duly reached our home for the next 6 months. 30 Squadron in June Valley. Seem a great bunch, made very welcome. Camp site is excellent and living quarters really good. Food excellent so far. Met all the old friends plus several others, including George Carnegie. Max Allott lost on Saturday.

Monday 31st

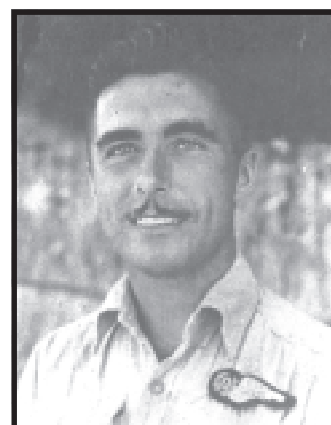
Breakfast 8am, due to fly on a stooge trip today. Flew 2 crews to a kite for experience. Attacked the wreck with cannon fire and lost an aircraft in doing so. Kite following us struck mast with wing just outside port motor, peeled same off, burst into flame, half rolled and knifed into the sea. Circled spot until rescue launch arrived, to pick up the 2 survivors. Both observers escaped one burned badly. Cain and Tyrell escaped. Frank King, course member, and Harding killed. Frank's body was recovered and we attended his funeral at 5pm same day. Blood was coming from the rough casket and bloody smudges were visible. Horrible service all told. No letters from home yet. Hope everything OK.

JUNE - Tuesday 1st

Air raid alarm for breakfast. Nothing eventuated. Nothing unusual apart from a little trench digging. No letters. Think of Mary and the scrum half quite a lot of late. Part of the squadron off to Dobodura for early start in morning. Radio and test flight around countryside with F/O Newman.

Wednesday 2nd

Good weather again. Still gathering my equipment about me. By the number of crews and planes available we won't be doing any flying for ages. Bob Harding buried today. All returned after a walk over at Bogajuin. No nips sighted.



Saw "In Which We Serve" tonight. Comment: - Lousy .

Thursday 3rd

Morning usual occupation. Flew in afternoon as individual crews. Practice attack on a strip. Startled hell out of the poor boongs. Ran off strip after landing and ended in a ditch. Caused £1000 of damage. No one hurt.

Friday 4th

Poor old Col charged today with "negligently causing damage to the value of £1000 to one of His Majesty's Beaufighter aircraft namely A19-90". 1 month of parade and barred from the barred bar. Lucky fellow. Nothing else unusual. Pictures again tonight. They are free. Ooher!!! 2 letters from home, slightly back dated. Mary seems quite lonely, these short leaves are no good.

Saturday 5th

Col on parade early. Did washing today. Frightful mess, can't clean them, have decided to send most of the stuff back, first opportunity. Compass swinging this afternoon. No flyee today. Forgot to mention our beaut afternoon out yesterday. Tropo already? Visited Local Island, a wonderful spot, swam and played baseball. All in nude incidentally. Water was beautiful, the best afternoon I have spent in the air force. All free, nice boat ride tossed in. Saw town of Port Moresby for first time from ground level. Horrible place. Cosmopolitan and dusty. Plenty of boongs. Quite different from Milne



*Rear: G. Moore: Arthur Thomson: Clive Cooke:
Peter White: Ted Marron: Bunny Gollan.
Front: Don Kirkwood: P Wilson: Col Wein:
K Huitchinson: JohnMcRobbie.*

Bayites. Saw the Macdhue wreck. Nips pasted her well. Mossies bad tonight and have had a headache all day. Sure feel tired and lazy in these parts. Sleep doesn't appear to help. I have only 23 weeks to go. Thinking of wife and nipper a fair bit.

Sunday 6th

"Bunny" off to hospital this morning. First of the dysenteries. He had a helluva time during the night. Usual occupation during the am. Bumph reading etc, finished off our beaut raid shelter. Flying this afternoon again. Short trip, only 1 hour but very interesting. Were supposed to fire cannons, but same cancelled at last moment. The wreck had claimed another victim.

Flew over the wreck and spied remains of latest victim. A terrible mess. Passed over several boong villages, 1 in hills, 2 on waters edge. Hill village was quite picturesque and the boongs were of a light colour. Most wearing loincloths only. In one of the water villages all appeared to be dressed in bright red (what there was of it).

A good landing this time. Beautifying the home later in the afternoon.

Monday 7th

Spent most of the morning beautifying the home. Gravel paths, rock bordered garden, palm trees planted. Oh yes, very pretty. But as usual in such cases, all the work nearing completion, our whole scheme sabotaged by the utterance of a desire on the part of the B.O. that we motley and poor S/Sgt's remove our repugnant carcasses to a new abode. What an abode, we all renege. Revolver practice was duly indulged during pm to the tune of 6 shots each. The targets were quite safe, although friend Marron, "dipper" type, showed no ill feelings by spattering 2 targets, namely tin lid and envelope with a shot each. Cad really. Visited brother Gollan at his present abode, the dysentery ward tonight. He is quite crappy, but lively and full of copious fluids. No letters again today from home

Tuesday 8th

Nothing spectacular during the am except a little revolver cleaning and a call to for 6 crews including "Ed" Marron. Poor old Bunny will be ropable when he learns that he has missed out on his first ops flight. A very easy job, no opposition, consisting of strafing stores and Japs housed in a boong village just at the rear of Salamaua. All returned safely, with Ed quite elated, but disappointed at not seeing any Japs. Tried to learn chess during the evening, definitely a black fellows game.

A letter from Mary received.

Wednesday 9th

Usual morning occupation of bumph devouring, etc. Nothing spectacular. Afternoon was spent at Manubada (Local Island) swimming and sports, nudely like. A great time, the water was beautiful for swimming. The trip over to the island was rough but quite enjoyable, shipping quite an amount of water. The one and only Cosgrove made 3 classic low level attacks on the launch. The Beau is certainly a quiet kite, nothing was heard until it has passed. All teed up tonight for our first strike, due off at 6.30am tomorrow.

Thursday 10th

Up at 4.45am to see de dawn. Breakfast at 5am, final briefing at 5.45am and airborne at 6.30am. Apart from Douglas's and Cobras cluttering up our passages to the strip, the take off was quite normal. Climbed up to 14,500 and sailed up the Kokoda Gap. The weather was smooth but cloud was 10/10ths and up to 17 or 18,000. We flew between 2 layers most of the trip. Plenty of fighter cover around Wau. Targets were Boana and Kiapit but thick cloud prevented the attacks from being carried out. We were forced to return. No widows in Tokyo tonight. Usual afternoon procedure of spine bashing and reading.

Col and I were quite surprised to be called in for briefing for another strafing job tomorrow, morning, take off at 6am.

Maybe widows in Yokohama tomorrow. Yes?

Friday 11th

Up at 4.45 am again, breakfast 5am, down to strip 5.45am and take off at 6. 10am. One hold up experienced. Port motor refused to start immediately delaying us in our take off. Instead of being second off we were third, being further delayed by a Liberator on the strip. Cloud base was approx 300 feet and 50 to 60 feet thick. The form up was a trying time as we lost sight of the C.O. and entered cloud. We spotted an aircraft and attempted to form up on same but he apparently had the same idea, and it ended in a vicious circle each following t'other.

At last the C.O.'s kite was spotted, lamp flashing, just poking up thru' the cloud. Made 220 knots to overtake him.

Continued on Page 10

Continued from page 9

Trip to the target consisted of a steady climb to 12,000ft to clear the ranges. The nose was put down and we entered quite a thick layer of cloud. Speed registered was 260 knots and we burst through cloud right over Salamaua at 2,000ft. No ack-ack was seen. Entered a valley 5 mile south of Salamaua and flew along until we reached our target, Komiatum, situated on a razor back ridge. Extensively strafed same in 6 runs. Appeared quite peaceful in the valley and no Japs were seen, although they must have been present as Ed and Bunny copped a shot in the tail destroying the rudder trim control. Left Komiatum and had an average trip back passing over Mubo strip which was heavily clouded in thus preventing our attack there. No enemy aircraft seen on this trip. Had a little trouble in getting into the strip due to it being clouded in. Afternoon was occupied in spine bashing and reading. Pictures during evening. Mrs Miniver and Irene and Vernon Castle. A really good programe. No letters from Mary today. None from Mum at all yet.

Saturday 12th

Cohn's 21st today. Practically nothing doing all day. Went down and inspected bullet hole in Ed's kite. Found it to be a copper nosed Japanese incendiary. Souvenired by Bunny. Afternoon colourless and a bit drab. Had a little celebration at 9pm in honour of Col. Concocted a gin punch for the occasion and devoured a large portion of his cake. No letters from anywhere.

Sunday 13th

Morning was spent with copper stick, a smoky fire, and a pile of dirty washing. Very dull. Afternoon saw us merrily on our way to Rouna Falls. A beautiful spot I believe. We did not reach there due to the inevitable Sunday afternoon breakdown. However it was fun in a way. Stuck on a mountain pass, caught in a tropical downpour and finally pushed to a military repair shop. Sunday night. All is peaceful in June Valley. Not a sound, apart from the singing of hymns, drifting across from the various camp chapels. One feels far and remote from this dread demon, WAR, and is lulled into a false sense of security and inprecaution. The siren has wailed its RED warning, the singing has stopped, lights out, tin hats rescued from the rust and donned in readiness. What for ye ask? The Jap cares not for Sunday, or any other day, he works and thinks in terms of full moons in Moresby, and tonight the moon is nearly full. Surprising enough there is no sign of tension and movements are far from hurried. 10 minutes wait and you can hear the low hum, growing gradually louder. Only 2 aircraft came over and they searchlights caught them in their beams and held them for the whole length of the bombing raid. The AA was lousy on this run but quite a few were close forcing the little buggers apart. All told it was very exciting and provided 1 hour and 10 minutes of excitement. No letters today again.

To be continued

FROM YOUNG HARRY'S DIARY

A letter to the Boss

13th December, 2004

Air Marshall A. G. Houston, A 0, A F C
Chief of Air Staff,
R-I-C. 041
Russell Offices,
CANBE RRA
A.C.T. 2600

Dear Air Marshall

You may reca1l an occasion in April 2003 at the Canberra War Memorial, when I assisted the Governor of New South Wales in the unveiling of a plaque commemorating the actions of 22 Squadron. I presumed to be unhappy at an omission in your Brief for the occasion.

My criticism of the errors in the published reports and releases on an incident I know something about personally seem to be in vain for the most part - and of course lead to a doubt on the accuracy of many other specific articles. I enclose copies of my most recent attempts at getting the facts into the R.A.A.F. records.

Should independent assurance be required - the 'ARMY' of April 2nd 1987 published a photograph of 'Jessica' being lifted from (dry) Goodenough Island - not a New Guinea mainland swamp.

I have almost given up on my oft-expressed opinion that it was not for the later presently serving R.A.A.F. personnel, acting in isolation, to decide the fate of a unique South West Pacific War Relic. The great cost of the retrieval and reconstruction was met by the Australian Taxpayer. I would be happy for deletion of any or all reference to me or mine in the saga - but Bostons and Beaufighters played an important role in assisting the fantastic efforts of the Army in New Guinea in late 1942 and 1943 - particularly in the comparatively even more treacherous Wau-Salamaua campaign. That also is under-recognised by history and in the Canberra Museum from my limited re-cent experience and knowledge. May I add that I admire the work you are doing - and the way in which you are doing it. I apologise for possibly cluttering up your busy schedule particularly at this time of the year. It is just that we visited Point Cook Museum when in Victoria a couple of weeks ago - and the incorrect statements attached to A28-8's display I found very upsetting.

On behalf of the original 'Jessica' - still active in our mid- 80's years - and myself I would like to wish you and yours an enjoyable Christmas, and continued success in the New Year and the years to come.

Yours sincerely

Harold M. Rowell

FROM YOUNG HARRYS DIARY

COMMENTS ON A VISIT TO POINT COOK MUSEUM - NOVEMBER 2004

No A 20G's were delivered until January 1944, I believe. Certainly none were on Goodenough Island between our arrival in July 1943 and when I left in October 1943.

In addition to the 4 x 303 Machine guns in the nose, all our aircraft were fitted with four fixed .50 machine guns in the original Navigator Bomb Aimer position in the nose.

We were instructed to fit 303 machine guns in the extreme tail. A28-8 had twin .303's fitted, but all were removed, and none were fired. Our principle sustained effort was the support of the Australian Army's magnificent Wau-Salamaua campaign - in terrain often more rugged than anything on the Kokoda Track.

A28-8's arrival in New Guinea was delayed by engine trouble and a serious fire, soon after lift off at Forrest Hill, Wagga on 18th October, 1942. It operated from Port Moresby from December 1942 until transfer to Goodenough Island in July 1943.

A maximum effort operation on 12th September, 1943 was a total of only four aircraft attacking Gasmata in New Britain. Two aircraft were shot down - their crews are buried in Rabaul war cemetery. A28-8 was severely damaged in the cockpit area and elsewhere and was able to land back at Goodenough with (only) one main wheel locked down.

A28-8 was the only Boston retrieved in 1987. All other aircraft retrieved earlier were U. S. wrecks. A28-8 spent years initially at Richmond after recovery, and later at Wagga, until it was made a major project for RAAF Amberley for the 75th celebration of the RAAF.

I doubt the RAAF ever had 69 Bostons. We had 22, with no replacements I was aware of from May 1942 until October 1943, and anecdotal advice is none were delivered until January 1944 when the squadron was re-equipped with Beaufighters, after most Bostons were wrecked on the ground by a Japanese attack. Jessica crashed on 12th September (NOT December) 1943 DU-J-A28-8 'Jessica' was named after my then girl friend's second Christian name (now my wife of over 60 years. She was on the staff of Naval Base H/Q Cypher Office, at Garden Island, Sydney, and on occasions de-cyphered our New Guinea attack reports.

As for the items on display alongside "Jessica" - those I recognised :- A thermos flask and a hand-held microphone were never anywhere near any RAAF Boston cockpit I operated Twenty six American Bostons were lost in one day - due to weather, but only one RAAF Boston was ever readily available for restoration. A U. Boston was lifted, well-preserved - from underwater in a swamp some years after 1987. Some parts from 'her' were used to replace parts 'canabalised' from A28-8 or damaged - but I am confident the majority of the aircraft on display was restored from the original A28-8. I believe all other aircraft retrieved were of a later model, most with fuselages to accommodate a gun turret.

RAAF Boston A 28-8 is a war relic - not a 'vintage' aircraft as are most of those on display at Point Cook. Arthur Taylor was killed instantly in her; David Duncan was injured in her; Newton V.C. flew her - on two occasions, a couple of weeks before he was shot down in his own plane, and later ceremoniously beheaded by the Japanese - and much more.

Rules of Flight

1. Every take-off is optional. Every landing is mandatory.

2. If you push the stick forward, the houses get bigger. If you pull the stick back, they get smaller. That is unless you keep pulling all the way back, they get smaller again.

3. Flying isn't dangerous. Crashing is what is dangerous.

4. It is always better to be down here wishing you were up there than up there wishing you were down here.

5. The only time you have too much fuel is when you are on fire.

6. When in doubt hold on to you're altitude. No one has ever collided with the sky.

7. A "good" landing is one from which you can walk away. A "great" landing is one after which they can use the plane again.

8. Learn from the mistakes of others. You won't live long enough to make them all yourself.

9. You know if you have landed with your wheels up if it takes full power to taxi to the ramp.

10. The probability of survival is inversely proportional to the angle of arrival. Large angle of arrival, small probability of survival, and vice versa.

11. Never let an aircraft take you somewhere where you're brain didn't get to five minutes earlier.

12. In the ongoing battle between objects made of aluminium going hundred of miles per hour and the ground going zero miles per hour, the ground has yet to lose.

Young Jessica led busy life

Flying and maintaining war birds often involves sweat, curses and blisters.

So does restoring the aircraft to museum exhibition quality, according to Warrant Officer Chris Beazley, of No. 28 (City of Canberra) Squadron.

He should know as he and other 28SQN members were involved in the painstaking job of rebuilding A28-8 Boston DU-J nicknamed "Jessica" to static condition. The aircraft has been one of the attractions at the RAAF Museum at RAAF Base Williams, Point Cook since 1998.

In 1987 Air Force recovered Jessica from her resting place in a swamp and returned her to Australia aboard HMAS Tobruk. She was transported to RAAF Base Wagga where Air Force technical personnel set about the restoration project.

They continued until 1992 when new OH&S regulations banned grit blasting and spray-painting on the commercial scale necessary for the work. The aircraft was transferred to RAAF Base Richmond and then RAAF Base Amberley where No. 23 (City of Brisbane) Squadron personnel completed the task.

Jessica deployed with No. 22 Squadron in September 1943 to Goodenough Island north of Australia. The Squadron's Douglas Bostons were heavily engaged in close, tactical support of ground forces and harassing attacks on Japanese shipping, supply dumps, supply barges, defences and Japanese occupied villages. These missions were exceptionally hazardous as they were low-level sorties (often at tree-top level) in the face of normally heavy flak.

Jessica was one of 22 Bostons ordered for the French Air Force. This was rescinded after the fall of France in 1940 and the aircraft were to be transferred to the RAF.

Soon after the Japanese entered the war in December 1941, A28-8 was transferred to the Netherlands by the Americans and was to be shipped with 11 others to Java. The Dutch East Indies were overrun before the aircraft arrived and instead Jessica was transferred to the RAAF and delivered to Melbourne in April 1942.

She conducted flight testing in Australia then joined 22SQN in Port Moresby in December 1942. Her pilot was Flying Officer Harry Rowell, who named the ship Jessica after his girlfriend.

On a mission on December 12, 1943, enemy fire struck the aircraft and damaged its undercarriage hydraulics. FLGOFF Rowell performed a wheels up landing in a partly dry swamp at the end of the Goodenough runway. He and his crew member walked away but it was the end for the Boston. She broke her back and was written off. As he departed, FLGOFF Rowell souvenired her control wheel but the aircraft slowly settled into the mud of the swamp.

"She had a charmed life," WOFF Beazley said. "There would not be many World War II aircraft that were four years old and saw service in four air forces."

At a ceremony to unveil the restored aircraft in 1996, ex-FLGOFF Rowell turned up with the control wheel salvaged a half-century before. He had survived the war, married the real Jessica and fetched up in Perth. WOFF Beazley said that during the ceremony only 23SQN had been acknowledged as the restorers. "When the project was at RAAF Wagga, Reserve personnel from all our squadrons and musterings, along with PAF, put in sweat, curses and blisters to make this restoration the success it commands at the Museum," he said.

"I have since learned 28SQN's name has been added on a plaque and hope Wagga's work can now be recognised."

Andrew Stackpool tells the story behind one of the aircraft on display at the RAAF Museum.

BOSTON FACTS.

Uses: Light attack bomber, with two or three crew.

Power plant: Two 1600 hpWright Double Row Cyclone GR 2600 A5B Engines

Dimension: Span: 61ft.4Ins, length 47ft, Height 15ft 10ins

Weight: Empty 12,220lbs; loaded 25,000 lbs

Performance: Maximum speed 304mph at 13,000ft; Tactical climb 1,200 ft/min;

Range: 1020m: service ceiling 24,250ft.

Continued from Page 6

Constable Darken was not there. He had gone the other way. The Postmaster-General's Department (P.M.G. as it was called) was housed in a complex of buildings which occupied almost an entire block between the Hotel Darwin and Government House. The block had frontages to the Esplanade and Mitchell street. This block included residences as well as offices.

When the alarm sounded all the people in the post office went to the garden out the back and got into the slit trench shelter. They took a direct hit - and all were killed.

Ordinary people doing ordinary jobs on an ordinary day that became extraordinary.

Courtesy Darwin Defender