

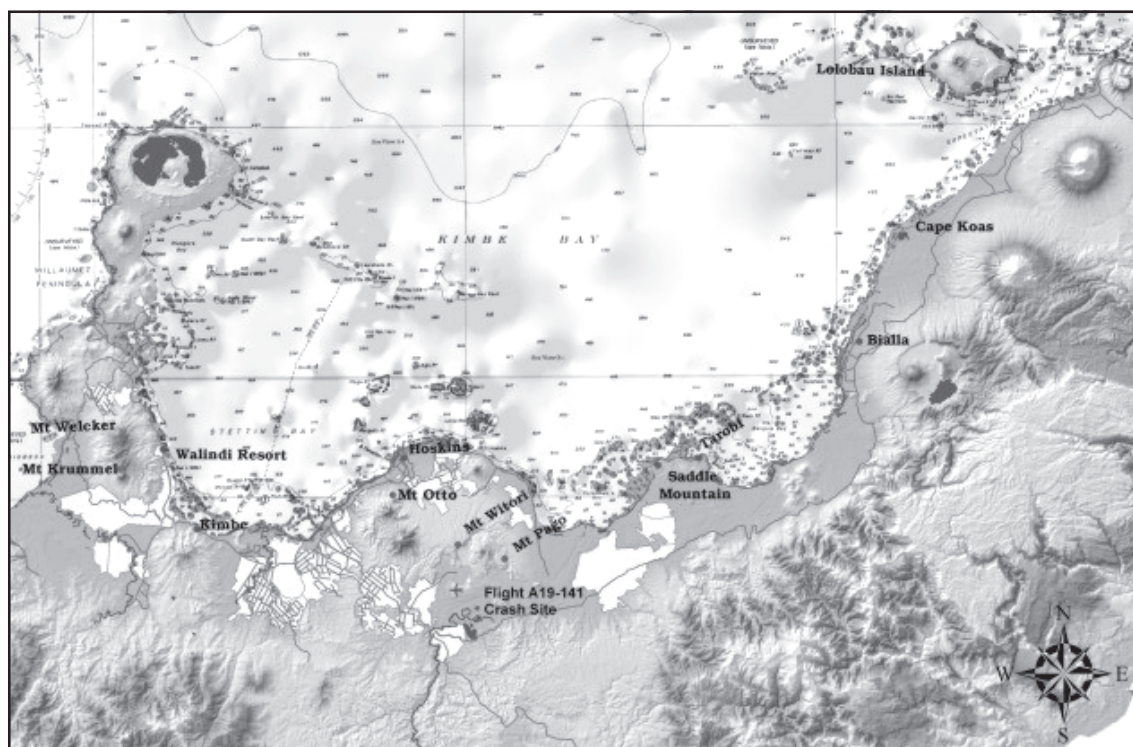
The

WHISPERER

The Newsletter of the Beaufighter and
Boston Association of Queensland

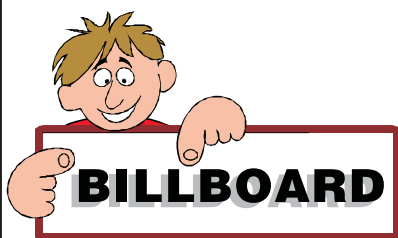
SEPTEMBER 2005

A19-141 CRASH SITE



This map of the site of the wreck of 30 Squadron Beaufighter A19-141 was constructed by Mr Frank Lewis of Kimbe in Western New Britain, a town about 20 Kilometres from the site of the wreck

30 Squadron Beaufighter, crewed by pilot F/Sgt C Wein and navigator F/Sgt Don Kirkwood failed to return to base during WWII in October 1943. The wreck was discovered on 26th April 2005.



VALE

I had a very sad phone call from our member Bill Atkinson advising me that his dear wife had passed away. Bill had advised me some time back her health was not good. I passed on the sympathies of our members to Bill knowing that he would miss her.

WHISPERING DEATH DVD

30 Beaufighter Squadron Association produced this video about the Squadron's role in WWII, some years ago. All copies were sold out. On the recent Anzac Day TV station SBS showed it in the station's cover of the day's celebration.

As a result of this showing there has been a large demand for the video so the Association has now commissioned the production of DVD's instead of producing further videos.

Copies are available at \$35 including P&P and GST from - The Secretary 30 Squadron Association Morandoo Street Elanora Heights 2101.

WHISPERERS CD

A CD of past "Whisperer" Newsletters is now available. The DCD contains the last 24 Whisperers that we have published and if you would like one please advise me and I will post it to you. Would appreciate if you could accompany your order with a cheque for \$10 to cover costs.

WHISPERER ON THE NET

Arrangements have been made with Peter Dunn to put all copies of Whisperer into to his OZ AT War Site on the net. The address of the site is < www.ozatwar.com > I recommend members with computers to have a look at Peter's site as it is full of useful and interesting information about the RAAF's part in World War II. Peter Dunn has CDs available for the site at a minimum cost if you would like one. All details are shown on the site.

COMBINED ASSOCIATION'S DAY.

Group Captain G N Davies Officer Commanding number 82 Wing have advised that the Next Combined Association's Day will be held at RAAF Base Amberley commencing at 0915 hours on Tuesday 6th September 2005. Because of increased security It is essential that members who will be attending advise me ten days in advance together with their current address.

SERIAL	TIME	EVENT	HOSTING OFFICER
1	0930-1000	Memorial Service at Front Gate and laying of Wreaths	GPCAPT Leo Davies OC82WG Chaplain Paul Goodland Chaplain Murray Earl
2	1000 -1030	Morning Tea in Officers' Mess	GPCAPT Leo Davies OC82WG
3	1030 -1130	Presentation of Trophies in Officers' Mess	GPCAPT Leo Davies OC82WG WGCDR Ken Quinn CO6SQN
4	1130 -1330	Light buffet lunch in Officers' Mess	WGCDR Mark Green PMC
5	1330	Departure from Amberley	

President's Corner



Since the last edition it has been a rather busy period with the 60th Anniversary of the cessation of the war against Japan causing many of us to reflect on that fateful day, the 15th of August 1945 and on the fact that many of our mates weren't there to savour the moment 60 years ago.

On Sunday the 14th August 2005, Peter and I attended an official function at the Shrine of Remembrance, Brisbane where a wreath was laid on behalf of the Association. The park adjacent to the Shrine was packed with members of various service organisations and the whole affair was very impressive and most suitable to the occasion.

On the following day my eldest daughter Roslyn and myself attended a function on behalf the Association

held at the Speaker's Green Parliament House to honour the many WWII veterans who attended the afternoon tea party by invitation. Peter and Joan would normally have attended with me but their respective state of health precluded them from doing so. However it was good to see Eve and Les Turnbull also present.

A Commemoration ceremony to honour the name of David McClymont, and friends of the McClymont family and the wider community who may have lost loved ones, will be held at Lennox Head at 10am on the 1st October next. David was a former member of the Association & was a wireless navigator on Bostons with 22 Sqdn.

Some years ago he contributed a very interesting article entitled *Palmalmal Splash Down* which told the story of David and his pilot being shot down and ditching off the coast of New Britain and which was published in the forerunner to the *Whisperer*. Maybe Peter might think it appropriate to republish the article for the benefit of those members who missed the article.

Regards, RALPH

BALIKPAPAN was this battle necessary?

To some Australians, the last major action of the Pacific War was also the most controversial. considerable argument raged as to whether the attack on Balikpapan on the south-eastern coast of Borneo, which began on 1 July 1945, was a gross waste of Australian manpower. At that stage the war had six weeks left to run. (However the people who make that argument forget that no one knew that the Atom Bomb would shorten the war by at least 1 year)

The assault went ahead. For two weeks before the invasion Allied mine sweepers cleared huge numbers of mines placed in Balikpapan harbour by both sides. A convoy of 100 ships landed the 18th and 21st Brigades south of Balikpapan township.

First ashore at Kiandasan, just south of Balikpapan, were the 16th and 27th Battalions. Their advances differed considerably: the latter found the going easy while the former pushed forward in the face of considerable opposition.

The day after the Australians took command of Mount Malang the Sepinggang airfield fell to the 14th Battalion without opposition. Tough opposition from Japanese entrenched in the hills was encountered by the 25 Brigade.

On 4 July, although hampered by Japanese in the surrounding hills, Australian troops captured the Manggar airfield. Several heavy naval guns possessed by the enemy did considerable damage to Australian

tanks, so that night Australian patrols attacked and took the gun positions. In the north the 25th Brigade was advancing along the Milford Highway against violent resistance. Australian units suffered considerable losses between 4 July and 9 July.

By 21 July the enemy had withdrawn through the village of Batuchampar, fighting doggedly all the way. when the enemy pulled back into the hills the Australians opted not to follow.

The other front in the Balikpapan operation opened on the western side of Balikpapan Bay on 5 July. Its aim was to neutralise an Japanese action which might threaten ships crowded in Bay. Rea resistance was not encountered until 7 July, and even that was half-hearted. The 9th Battalion advanced easily against only sporadic battles with the enemy.



*This is a photo of a Rolls Merlin engined
Beaufighter by courtesy of
Roger North*

Assassination of Isoroku Yamamoto

Allied code breakers learned that Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto was planning an inspection trip that would take him to the Kahilli area in the southern part of Bougainville. Yamamoto was a short, deep chested, broad shouldered and Chief of the Combined Japanese Fleet. He was famous for his precise adherence to schedules, and the code breakers were able to determine his exact itinerary. The timetable called for him to arrive in a bomber at Baillale, an island off the southern tip of Bougainville, at 0945 (American time) on April 18, 1943 (Easter Sunday) and the first anniversary of Doolittle's raid on Tokyo.

Yamamoto like the Japanese Emperor Hirohito was stunned by the attack on Tokyo by 18 B-25 medium bombers in the Doolittle raid just 5 months after the Japanese on Pearl Harbour. Upon learning from Admiral Marc A Mitscher, Air Commander in the Solomons, that the Army Air Force P-38s on Guadalcanal had the range to make the interception, Admiral Nimitz authorised the mission to go ahead. Even after his defeats at Midway and Guadalcanal, Yamamoto was highly regarded by his American opponents and revered in the Japanese navy, where he was considered, despite his taste for high living and his recent set-backs, to be almost as precious as the Emperor.

Major John W Mitchell, commander of the 339th Fighter Squadron, was given the responsibility to carry out the attack. Eighteen P-38 pilots were chosen. Eight each from the 12th and 339th Squadrons and two from the 70th. It was decided there would be an attack section - the killers - that would destroy Yamamoto's aircraft, while the remaining fourteen would fight off the fighter escort. Six Zeros were known to be accompanying Yamamoto's flight of two Bettys, and the Japanese were expected to put up a large welcoming escort from their bases in Bougainville.

The navigation challenge for Mitchell's plan was formidable: it called for a 445 Mile flight at wave top level, over the ocean and out of sight of any land based observers. Entirely by Dead Reckoning, flying compass courses and computing distances based on airspeed and predicted winds - Mitchell was determined that the route would bring them to a point thirty five miles off the coast of Kahilli at 0935.

The odds against the interception were high, P-38 compasses at that stage of the war were notoriously unreliable (Mitchell insisted on having a navy compass installed in his P-38) and there were no radio navigation devices.

There was also the probability that a Japanese vessel or patrol plane would discover them en route.

Yamamoto was rigidly punctual, however his aircraft were as subject to mechanical malfunction as

anyone else's, and he might not arrive on time, if so, and the P-38s couldn't wait. It would have to be a split-second ambush, or just a wasted effort.

The Lockheed P-38 was an extraordinary aircraft, the first twin-engine single seat fighter ever put into mass production. The twin-engine safety and long range of the P-38 made it near perfect for this Pacific ambush.

Note. Two of America's most famous war aces, both winners of the Medal of Honor, flew P-38s. Major Richard Bong finished the war with 40 victories, while his nearest rival, Major Thomas B. McGuire, was shot down just after scoring his 38th kill.

Mitchell buckled down to the task and worked through all the problems, later saying that he regarded the job as just another mission. Yamamoto's itinerary, he deduced the admiral's plane would be flying at 180-mph, which indicated that it was probably a Betty bomber. Working backward from the announced arrival time at Ballale and figuring a fuel conserving 197-mph ground speed for his P-38s, Mitchell devised a five-leg, two hour and forty two minute flight low over the ocean, estimating Yamamoto's interception at a point thirty miles from Ballale.

Except for the fact that two Lightnings had aborted, the interception took place precisely as planned, to the utter surprise of the Japanese pilots in the two Bettys and six Zero escort planes.

The American pilots were disappointed that the larger escort hadn't materialized, for it meant fewer victories to share. Ironically, sharing the victories would eventually become a fifty-year dispute. The Lightnings were still at wave top height when they caught sight of the Japanese formation, exactly on time and on course, at about 4500 feet altitude and descending.

One aircraft of the "killer flight" couldn't jettison its long-range tanks and pulled out, with his wingman covering him. The two remaining aircraft, flown by Captain Thomas G Lanphier and Lieutenant Rex Barber, headed for the eight-aircraft Japanese formation, while the protection flight climbed to gain altitude.

What happened in the ensuing moments is shrouded in mystery except for the most important facts; both Bettys were shot down, and Yamamoto was killed by gunfire before the aircraft crashed in the jungle of Ballale Island. In the wild melee of the attack, the American pilots claimed three Bettys and three Zeros.

Post-war Japanese records show that of Yamamoto's eight-plane formation, only the two Bettys were shot down. It is possible that Zeros were scrambled from Kahili, and were the victims claimed, but no investigation has confirmed this. One P-38 was lost in the mission. Lanphier put in the earliest and most vocal claims for having downed the Betty carrying

Yamamoto (He did not say how he knew which Betty Yamamoto was flying in Barber believed the victory was his. It is possible that both men had fired on Both Bettys, and that it was a shared triumph. Over time, the weight of the evidence has tended increasingly to support Barber's claim.

There is no little irony in that Yamamoto's death may well have saved him tremendous loss of face when the full implications of the battles of Midway and Guadalcanal were evaluated. Instead, his ashes were returned, in two boxes, to Japan for a state funeral. One

box was then interred in the Tama Cemetery, next to the grave of Admiral Togo, victor of Tsushima. The other box was buried in a Zen temple, the Chokoji in Nagaoka. Even in death, Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto split his forces.

Note. *Yamamoto death accorded him a hero's burial and a state funeral by the Japanese Nation, however his demise, had he survived the war and been tried for war crimes would have no doubt been somewhat different.*

Researched by Ron Newitt.

A poem from the end of the war

Peace now reigns the wide world o'er,
Where death and carnage ruled before.
Ring out in triumph the victory bells:
No more screaming bombs or shells.

And countless perils in air and sea,
Shall soon be but a memory.
Let peace forever light our way,
Our moon by night, our sun by day.

Peace forever, make this our lot,
Keep this always in our thought.
All good things on earth to share,
Joy and plenty everywhere.

Whil'st we rejoice let's bow the head
In memory of our glorious dead:
And make a vow, peace to sustain.
So that their sacrifice be not in vain.

One Two Three

Four men went golfing one day. Three of them headed for the first tee and the fourth went into the clubhouse to take care of the bill. The three men started talking, bragging about their sons. The first man told the others, "My son is a builder and he is so successful that he gave a friend a new home for free. The second man said "My son was a car salesman and now he owns multiline dealership". He is so successful that he gave a friend a new Mercedes and all the extras."

The third man not wanting to be out done bragged "My son is a stockbroker and he is going to give his friend an entire stock portfolio". The fourth man joined them on the tee after a few minutes of taking care of the bill. The first man mentioned "We were just talking about our sons". "How is your's doing?"

The fourth man replied, "Well my son is gay and dances in a gay bar". The three friends looked down at the grass and smirked. The fourth man carried on, "Admittedly I'm not totally thrilled about the dancing job, but he must be doing pretty good. His last three boy friends gave him a house, a brand new Mercedes, and a stock portfolio".

NOT INSANE

- I don't suffer from insanity. I enjoy every minute of it.
- Some people are alive only because it's illegal to kill them
- I used to have a handle on life, but it broke.
- Don't take life too seriously, you won't get out alive.
- You're just jealous because the voices only talk to me.

FOUND ON INSURANCE FORMS FOR CAR ACCIDENTS:

- Coming home, I drove into the wrong house and collided with a tree I don't have.
- The other car collided with mine without giving warning of its intentions.
- I thought my window was down, but I found out it was up when I put my head through it.
- I collided with a stationary truck coming the other way.
- A truck backed through my windshield into my wife's face.

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Coomalie Creek Strip

Coomalie Creek airfield was a World War 2 airfield located in the Northern Territory. The North West Area Headquarters were located approximately 6 kms south along the Stuart Highway. Coomalie Creek was located only about 10 miles from Batchelor airfield. In the first weeks in November 1942, when 31 Squadron RAAF arrived at Coomalie Creek with their Beaufighters, Coomalie Creek airfield was still very new. Workmen were still finishing off the earthworks and the few essential camp buildings. The airfield was only available for limited use, and aircraft had to take care not to collide with machinery or workmen.



Side view of restored chapel by Stan Curran on his recent visit

When 31 Squadron arrived, everyone was in tents. The only buildings were the messes, cookhouses and a storeroom. Showers and toilets were all in the open. They were soon able to get a roof for the toilets. An orderly room, sick quarters and an operations/intelligence room were then built using voluntary labour. Slit trenches were also built in case of Japanese air raids. No 31 Squadron flew their first operational mission out of Coomalie Creek on 17th November when six Beaufighters made strafing attacks on Moabissi and Bobanaro on Timor.

In late November 1944, three C-47's from 34 Squadron RAAF were detached to Coomalie airfield. No 34 Squadron started to move to Morotai on 15th February 1945. They became fully operational at Morotai on 12th April 1945. The airfield still existed in 1995 and was then part of Coomalie Farm owned by Richard Luxton, a lecturer in Architecture at the University of Northern Territory in Darwin. Members of 31 Squadron RAAF revisited Coomalie Creek Airfield in August 1995 to mark the 50th anniversary. They saw a replica of their Squadron Chapel that had been rebuilt at Coomalie Creek. They had laid a 31 Squadron RAAF memorial plaque there back in 1988.

Beaufighter Crashes at Coomalie Creek

Nov 42	Coomalie Creek RAAF Beaufighter A19-65
abt Dec 42	Coomalie Creek RAAF Beaufighter A19-45
25 Feb 43	Coomalie Creek RAAF Beaufighter?
abt Mar 43	Coomalie Creek RAAF Beaufighter A19-66
abt Mar 43	Coomalie Creek RAAF Beaufighter A19-81
2 Mar 43	Coomalie Creek RAAF Beaufighter A19-31
21 May 43	Coomalie Creek RAAF Beaufighter?
31 May 43	Coomalie Creek RAAF Beaufighter A19-103
abt Jun 43	Coomalie Creek RAAF Beaufighter A19-62
abt 7 Jun 43	Coomalie Creek RAAF Beaufighter A19-112
21 Nov 43	10 miles inland from Junction Bay (Coomalie Creek area) RAAF Beaufighter A19-145
abt Nov 43	Coomalie Creek RAAF Beaufighter A19-82
abt Apr 44	Coomalie Creek RAAF Beaufighter A19-98
abt Jul 44	near Coomalie Creek RAAF Beaufighter A19-193
abt Aug 44	Coomalie Creek RAAF Beaufighter A19-172
abt Nov 44	Coomalie Creek RAAF Beaufighter A8-17
7 Mar 45	Coomalie Creek RAAF Mosquito A52-26, crashed on landing
abt Jun 45	Coomalie Creek RAAF Mosquito A52-611
abt Aug 45	Coomalie Creek RAAF Mosquito A52-605

Courtesy 31 Squadron Historian Jack Brassil

Continued on Page 6

The Northern Territory Memorial

The Northern Territory Memorial stands in Adelaide River War Cemetery. The memorial is placed centrally in the cemetery, between the entrance building and the Cross of Sacrifice, which is towards the rear boundary wall.

It commemorates nearly 300 members of the Australian Army, the Royal Australian Air Force, the Australian Merchant Navy and the Services Reconnaissance Department who lost their lives in operations in the Timor and Northern Australian regions and in waters adjacent to Australia north of Latitude 20 degrees South, and who have no known grave.

Men of the Royal Australian Navy lost in this area who have no known grave are commemorated on the Plymouth Naval Memorial in England, along with many of their comrades of the Royal Navy and of other Commonwealth naval forces.

Northern Territory, Australia, contained during the war the largest operational base in the south-west Pacific. Darwin, the capital, was heavily bombed in 1942 and within a month of the first air raid became the heart of this important base. From its airfields the Royal Australian Air Force raided Timor, Dutch New Guinea, Borneo and the islands in the Arafura Sea; and it was from Darwin that the Services Reconnaissance Department moved by aeroplane, flying-boat or submarine to their operational areas.

Timor, 450 miles from the northwestern coast of the continent and of vital strategic importance, was the scene of a gallant resistance put up against overwhelming odds by "Sparrow Force", a small body of Australian troops sent there early in December 1941 to assist the Dutch in holding the island. Sparrow Force joined a contingent of the Dutch forces and a formation of the Royal Australian Air Force at Koepang, on the south-western tip of the island where lay the Dutch aerodrome and radio station.

The Japanese struck the first blow a heavy air raid on the Koepang aerodrome on January 26th 1942. This was followed by blows at key points in both Dutch and Portuguese Timor, prior to the landing of the Japanese troops.

On the initial violation of Portuguese neutrality an Australian Independent Company (a Commando force) was detached from the main Australian body and with Dutch East Indian troops, left Koepang for Portuguese Timor. There they tried to organise some sort of defence of Dilli, the capital, with the object of denying the Japanese the use of its aerodrome and other facilities.

Then came simultaneous air attacks on Koepang and Dilli, and at the same time Japanese carrier based bombers and planes from Amboina blasted Darwin, effectively preventing the dispatch of reinforcements to Timor.

Faced by odds of twenty to one the small force held out, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy, until at last the main body at Koepang was compelled to capitulate on February 23rd 1942. Remnants of the force made their way into Portuguese Timor and linked up with the Australian Independent Company operating in the Dilli region. When this place in turn was over-run by the enemy this small party put up a terrific resistance, one group of 20 Australians holding up 500 Japanese for six hours. Finally, having destroyed the aerodrome, the Australian Independent Company together with a Dutch Guerilla force withdrew to the wild, heavily timbered mountains of Fronteira province. There they began a historical and most successful guerilla campaign which lasted until they were evacuated early in 1943.

Researched by Allan Miller.



High Flight

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wing
Sunward I have climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds, and done a hundred things

You have dreamed of -

Wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there
My eager craft through footless halls of air...
Up, up the long delirious burning blue
I've topped the wind-swept height

With easy grace.

Where never Lark, or even eagle flew -
And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space
put out my hand and touched the face of God.

John Edmund Magee



Diary of F/Sgt Donald C Kirkwood

RAAF - 30 Squadron

1943 - JULY

Continued from June issue

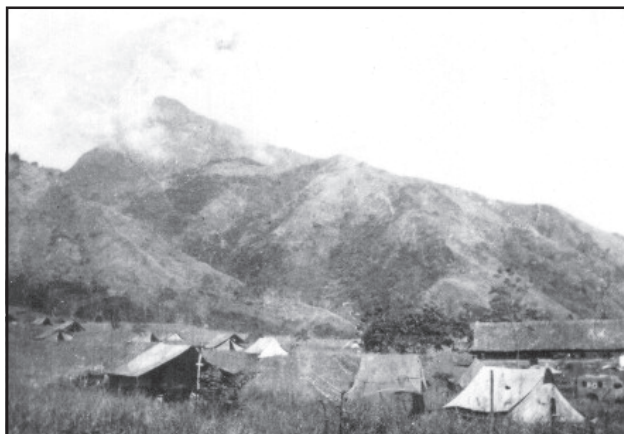


Saturday 10th July

Good day all around. Started off with a lecture on signals. Afternoon went Sela Sela hunting about 10 miles from Turnbull and caught 8. 2 does in pup, 1 doe, rest bucks. Bunny lost about 6. 2 extra small chaps included. He was thoroughly cursed. Climbed the trees ourselves with aid of foot climbing irons.

Devil of a lot of activity and warships in bay. May be

something doing soon.



30 Sqn. Camp at Goodenough Island

Sunday 11th

Feat of feats. 6 crews of our dearly beloved and overworked squadron will fly today. Remarkable.

Usual type of day for ourselves, just lazing about amusing our bodies.

Writing letters tonight when we were called for briefing. A job on tomorrow. Ted and Bunny leading, Col and I as No. 2. Convoy duties.

Monday 12th

Called at 6.15am, breakfast, gathering of final information and weather reports. Luckily it is fine again.

After 31 days of no flying the kite and cockpit are very strange. Usual trouble finding a place for everything.

Took off at 7.58am and made for Killerton Is s/c Strathford Is s/c Tokona Is s/c. Posn. 0938S 152.38E and intercept convoy. 2 destroyers, 5 tank craft.

Contacted same at 8.59am and left at 1059am., landed 12.15pm. Trip was uneventful but the tropical seas with their myriads of reefs and shoals and changing hues of blue presented the usual beautiful picture. Strathford Island contains a huge encircling reef with 2 smaller isles to the north. All have a small plantation on them. Tokona just a barren waste with sheer cliffs on north side. All are out of their actual position and far from the shape represented by the charts.

Tuesday 13th

Learnt that we are to shift to Goodenough Island by the 20th of this month. No letters will be received or posted for 8 days.

Poor Mary, hope she does not worry too much.

Our 2 does, Sela Selas, chewed their way out last night and escaped for good. Went out again this afternoon hunting for some more Selas. Used a new idea altogether. Passed a length of stout wire over the likely staghorns, with aid of a pole, then pulled the whole shebang down. Had bad luck really. Only captured 4. 2 bucks, 1 doe in pup, and 1 doe. I have claimed a small buck. Had quite a time transferring the animals to a temporary cage. They bite hard.

No mail again. Raining hard all day.

Wednesday 14th

Cage making all morning for our pets. Decided to call mine "Algie". He sleeps in my pocket already, seems quite tame. Raining again. Nothing else unusual.

No mail received.

Thursday 15th

Scrounging all morning and usual occupation during afternoon. Lord knows where all this supposed flying is. Terribly inactive. Passed the point of laziness and have entered a sphere of nervous dullness.

Friday 16th

Spent all day trench constructing. Cleaned out an old deserted trench but the AIF boys reclaimed it. Made ourselves a new one under an old tent.

Received 6 letters today, 3 from Mary, 2 from Mum and 1 from Lily Trevena (cousin). Quite a pleasant surprise indeed.

My young Sela, renamed Mickey, is an unruly young cuss and will take some steady training. He tried to break out again last night.

Saturday 17th

Nothing of great import.

Still spine bashing and awaiting eventualities. Weather is our big problem now. Raining like hell since yesterday afternoon. Been eating coconut during afternoon and poor old Col's stomach may crack up. Incidentally I spewed at lunch time. May have been the weevils, sour bread, dry peanut butter, margarine, stinking smelly onions, greasy slopped up filth, quinine or the salt tablet. Maybe they all helped

Played Chinese checkers for a few hours tonight.

Sunday 18th

Finished day's work at 9am, after rising at 7am. Fed, bathed, shaved and diary entry.

Rained extremely heavily all night and is still going. Some poor beggar is flying in the murk now (9. 10am).

Cohn had horrid night. Up at 5am after 2 or 3 hours agony with "guts ache". Still feeling ill. What a life?

May castrate young Mickey today in an attempt to tame him.

Went on another Sela hunt this afternoon. A great time was had by all of us. Never laughed so much since arriving in the island. Results of hunt nil.

Played doubles table tennis for a couple of hours tonight. Cohn was ill all day but is fair now.

Mickey looks weak today. Will postpone his operation.

No mail either way. Poor Mary will be worried.

Monday 19th

Cohn feeling OK again but feels as though I have a touch of them.

Been raining all night again with lightning and thunder tossed in for good measure. What a godforsaken hole this is. Nothing doing apart from above.

Tuesday 20th

Washing first thing this morning. It may dry, it being quite a nice day.

Clothes dried OK. Usual day. Pictures tonight. Silliest things I've seen for many a day. "Millionaire Playboy". Ridiculous. "Man Who Came to Dinner". Funny.

Wednesday 21st

Nothing all day.

Rain has given us a spell for 2 days now.

It has come to note that several days ago a Beaufort was shot down by some Yanks, who claim to have downed an unidentified aircraft. Easy mistake as the Japanese "Dinah" resembles the Beaufort in silhouette.

Briefed tonight for a coordinated attack by 5 squadrons on the Jap held strip Gasmata on the mainland of New Britain. 2 targets, the Government WIT station and the strip itself.

No letters today.

Thursday 22nd

Up at 4.30am, breakfast, final briefing at 5.15am, down to strip at 5.30am, take off 6.10am. Took off made straight for East Cape, rendezvous and formed up, made off to Cape Mourilyan, then passed up the channel between Goodenough Island and Ferguson Island at 6.54am. The weather here was beautiful, no cloud, except in the gorges of Goodenough, and wraith like about the top of its highest point (7,165 feet). It was a stunning sight, beautiful beyond words. Passed through channel up to Nauria Island, a spot in a sea of treacherous reefs, then on to Ablingo Island several miles west of our WIT station target. 20 miles from Ablingo Island we ran into heavy, blinding rain squalls. It was here too that we met up with the Beauforts on their way out. Straggling around like Brown's cows.

The rain squalls managed to split our formation and we found ourselves with only 1 other kite. We formed section pairs and went in on our targets.

First run on the WIT station brought up an answering fire from the starboard side and while going for height for our run onto the strip we were hit in the starboard quarter by a .5 calibre bullet. My arm was sprayed with metal filings.

The return fire was quite thick and apparently accurate. Balls of yellow fire were coming up to 200 feet and were bursting into a red ball. Tracer raced past in practically continuous streams. Bob Mills whom we were following attacked a gun position on the end of the strip, containing bofors guns and .5 M.G.'s. His cannon fire burst into the pit and ours burst under him, spraying the whole area. On our second run over the W/T station Col fired at a new building and the glass windows were seen to fly out as the shells passed through. Continuing on to the strip we nearly collided head on with one of our other Beaus who had had his port wing tip blown off and was a little out of control as a result. Next run Col fired at a barge and jetty and what seemed to be a store house beyond. The roof was blown right off and debris was thrown into the air.

It was this run that we passed thru' the bombing run of a Boston, which should have been off the target. They have a nasty habit of sticking around too long and spoiling other's attempts. (22 Squadron boys.) This bomb fell 200 yards dead astern, ie 1 second after we had passed beneath it, missing the W/T station by 50 yards.

All this time there was simply a cloud of allied aircraft in the area. We came home with 3 other chaps and 12

Continued on page 10

Continued from page 9

Kittyhawks. All returned safely although 4 of us were hit. Hunt had his wing tip blown off by a bofor shell, Robertson holed in the starboard wing and we as stated. Where it entered was 2ft ahead of my body and in a line with my stomach. Did little damage on the way through. All our photographs turned out very successfully.

No letters but received 2 parcels. Goodlands and a cake from Mary.

Friday 23rd

Usual type of day. Short Sela trip during afternoon but truck broke down. Catch nil.

No letters from home. Saw "Tin Pan Alley" tonight, up in the hills.

Saturday 24th

My birthday. Raining. Wouldn't it?

Nothing spectacular.

Sunday 25th

Washing. Nothing else. Ted and Bunny on an armed recco met with some success. Set a 150 ton ship on fire.

No letters today.

Monday 26th

Raining this morning. Nothing unusual during day.

Writing letters when we were called for briefing.

No letters from home again. Hope Mary has received some by now.

Tuesday 27th

Up at 345am. Flapjacks for breakfast, took off at 5.30am. Beautiful day again all the way to our targets. Two 150 ton ships beached at Cape Cunningham, the west side of Jacquinot Bay, New Britain. These ships were forced ashore as a result of strafing by Beaufighters 2 previous mornings.

One was left burning, while the other had jagged holes torn in its hull. Both are completely cactus.

No opposition. Sea like a mirror.

Pile of mail tonight.

Wednesday 28th

Washing again in creek. Rained like all night.

Usual day spine bashing interspersed with a couple of games of badminton.

Writing letters again tonight.

Thursday 29th

Nothing all day. Watched 3 Beaus land. Harold Tapner did extra fast one ending up in a broadside which nearly wiped Cohn off.

No mail either way.

Friday 30th

Up at 1.45am but the job was scrubbed. Usual day of nothing doing.

Saturday 31st

Very slack, amused ourselves with spine bashing. Several letters received.

IMPRESSIONS OF A PILOT

Flight is freedom in its purest form,
To dance with the clouds which follow a storm:
To roll and glide, to wheel and spin,
To feel the joy that swells within:
To leave the earth with its troubles and fly,
And know the warmth of a clear spring sky:
Then back to earth at the end of a day,
Released from the tensions which melted away:
Should my end come while I am in flight,
Whether brightest day or darkest night:
Spare me your pity and shrug off the pain,
Secure in the knowledge that I'd do it again:
Foe each of us created to die,
And within me I know,
I was born to fly.

Gary Claud Stecker.

Great Truths About Aging

- Growing old is mandatory: growing up is optional
- Forget the health food. I need all the preservatives that I can get.
- When you fall down, you wonder what else you can do whilst you're down there.
- You're getting old when you get the same sensation from a rocking chair that you once got from a roller coaster.
- It's frustrating when you know all the answers but nobody asks the questions.
- Time may be a great healer, but a lousy beautician.



RAAF's Part in the Battle for Australia

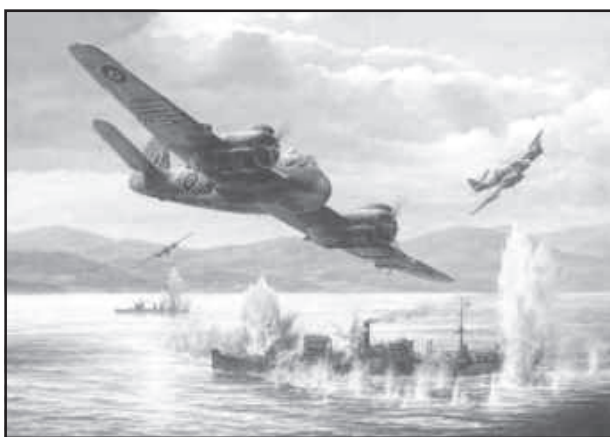
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Reformed and reequipped No.75 Squadron with No.76 Squadron moved to Milne Bay to protect Moresby's flank, and to act as a springboard for actions against the Japanese in Northern New Guinea and New Britain. They stood in the Japanese path once again. In three never to be forgotten days the Kittyhawks and the Australian Army ground troops smashed the Japanese land forces at Milne Bay.

The successful defence of Milne Bay was a unique victory, with air force personnel sharing the same hardships as their army counterparts. In fact ground crew members of both 75/76 Squadrons had to take up arms to defend Gurney strip. During October 1942 two RAAF attack squadrons arrived in New Guinea. They were No 22 Squadron with Boston aircraft, and No 30 Beaufighter Squadron.



The AIF was pushing its way through the Kokoda Track towards Buna, and the RAAF squadrons operating as part of the U.S. 5th Army Air Force, gave them full support - bombing and strafing, supply dropping, and flying out wounded. Before the end of the year the Japanese had lost Buna and Gona and were being pushed back along the coast towards Lae and Salamaua. On March 1, 1943, a Japanese convoy was in the Bismark Archipelago. A RAAF Catalina played an important part in the shadowing of the convoy. When it turned into Vitiaz Strait on the 3rd of March the aircraft of the RAAF and U.S. took part in the attack, Beaufighters, Bostons and Beauforts leading in low level attacks on ack-ack batteries and the convoy, while the U.S. Mitchells, Fortresses and A20s bombed the convoy from high level. The convoy was entirely sunk.



The RAAF grew in strength and stature, assembling two squadrons at Milne Bay, one Beaufort squadron and one Hudson squadron. The Beaufighters and Bostons were moved to Goodenough Island in the D'entrecasteaux group, along with a squadron of Kittyhawks. A Spitfire and a Kittyhawk were moved to

and based on Kiriwina Island. From these bases, the RAAF took control of the sealanes south of the Solomons and along the coast of New Britain. On October 12 the Beauforts made their first night raid on Rabaul. On November eight, Beaufort torpedo bombers attacked shipping in Simpson's Harbour, whilst other Beaufort squadrons made many night raids on Vunakanau and Lakunai airstrips in the Rabaul area. Meanwhile Beaufighters, Bostons, Kittyhawks and Spitfires were flying daylight missions against Japanese supply dumps, staging bases and transport areas on New Britain in preparation for the Allied assault on New Britain. U.S. troops made the Arrow landing on December 15 and the Cape Gloucester landing on December 26.



No.10 operations Group was established at Nadzab, and operated from the Newton airstrip, built by the RAAF works wing. Vultee Vengeance dive bombers and Kittyhawks began operating from Nadzab on January 13.

The RAAF squadrons based on Kiriwina and Goodenough Islands kept up a steady programme of telling strikes on Japanese positions and lines of communication. Early in March the U.S. troops landed on the Admiralty Islands. Ground staff of No.77 Squadron were landed on the beach during a Japanese counter attack and were forced to take up defensive positions and act as ground troops. One of the first Australians ashore asked a nearby American where the front line was. The G.I. replied: "Boy, you're right in it". On April 22 the RAAF No.62 Works Wing with Wing Commander Dale as the Officer Commanding No.6 and No.7 Construction Squadrons (who also built the Newton airstrip at Nadzab). An advanced party of No.10 Operational Group, which was now operating as the First Tactical Air Force, landed with U.S. infantry at Aitape. The Americans were simultaneously landing at Hollandia. Two days later, the airstrip was serviceable and RAAF Kittyhawks of No.78 Wing flew from Cape Gloucester. A flight of No.78 Squadron Kittyhawks took off five minutes after landing to refuel took off to patrol the Hollandia area.

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No.9 Operational Group, comprising No.77 Boston, No.30 Beaufighter and a Beaufort squadron moved to Nadzab, concurrently with the withdrawal of No.10 Group, the three Vultee Vengeance squadrons (Nos.21, 23, and 24) from Nadzab. The No.9 Operational Group aircraft were used for strikes on Wewak, But and Dagua in daily raids. During May the Americans further extended their hold on New Guinea with hard fought landings on Wadke and Biak Islands. The Kittyhawks were used as top cover and for strafing installations. At Sarmi No.80 Kittyhawk squadron was called in to dive bomb the Japanese during a strong counter attack. After the operation the U.S. Commander sent a message that the counter attack had been broken, thanks largely to the efforts of the RAAF.

Over Biak the Kittyhawks of No.78 Squadron (four flights of four) encountered a dozen Japanese aircraft. In the short dogfight they shot down 7 Oscars and 2 Kates, damaged 1 Oscar and 1 Kate. Our losses were only one Kittyhawk flown by Flight Sergeant "Happy" Harden.

On July 2 Noemfoer Island was occupied and once again advanced works units of the first T.A.F made the landing on D-Day. They repaired the Kamiri airstrip and the first RAAF planes landed on July 10th. The Beauforts had by this arrived at Aitape and were busy smashing a threatening Japanese counter attack from the direction of Wewak. In constant attacks the Australian built Beauforts and Beaufighters cleared the way for the AIF landing at Wewak.

RAAF airfield construction squadrons did good work throughout these landings, going on with the Americans to Morotai, in the Hailmaheras group of islands. The Americans thought so much of these squadrons they had an RAAF construction with them when they landed in Mindanao in the Southern Philippines. First Tactical Air Force with its Beau fighters, Bostons, Kittyhawks and Spitfires settled on to Mortal Island, and from there neutralized a huge area including the Celebes, Borneo, and as far as the Southern Philippines.

Throughout the whole campaign, RAAF Catalinas of Nos.11, 20 and 40 Squadrons operated on vital missions, reaching as far as the China coast to mine sea channels. No word of praise can be too high for the Catalina squadrons. They reached out to enemy harbours, searching, mining and bombing missions. No Japanese base in the South West Pacific Area was out of their reach.

From Darwin an almost separate war had been waged. The RAAF used Hudsons during the early stages against the Japanese 23rd Air Flotilla of the XI Air Fleet based in Timor. Then Beaufighters, Kittyhawks, Beauforts, Spitfires, Mitchells, Venturas, and towards the end of the war, Liberators. They helped stop the downward thrust from Timor that the Japanese had planned. They repeatedly bombed Ambon, and the

Japanese bases in Timor, including Sourabaya in the Dutch Indies. The long range work carried out by the Catalinas and in the early part of the war, and later by the Liberators and Catalinas ended the Japanese air war in this area.

After their arrival, Spitfires did an excellent job of protecting Darwin from Japanese bombers. Australian built Mosquitos of the RAAF photo reconnaissance unit carried out a dangerous job with outstanding success: photographing the enemy's positions as far away as the Philippines. In Bougainville, Boomerangs and Wirraways were used in Army co-operation work, with the Royal New Zealand Air Force Corsairs. Working with the Australian ground forces they flew hundreds of sorties as the eyes of the army.



The battle hardened Australian divisions landed in Borneo in April 1945 after Tarakan had been pounded constantly for weeks by U.S. and Australian Liberators. They bombed strategic points prior to the landings at Labuan and Balikpapan. The Kittyhawks, Spitfires and rocket firing Beaufighters covered the landing troops, strafing and wrecking enemy transport and communication lines. Intensive pre-invasion bombings by RAAF Liberators at Balikpapan paved the way to a good beach landing by the AIF. At the close of the war, wherever Australian troops were operating the RAAF was working with them. The RAAF was the fifth largest air force in the world by the end of the war with over 50% of its aircraft being built in Australia.



WHISPERING DEATH VIDEO

30 Beaufighter Squadron Association produced this video about the Squadron's role in WWII, some years ago. All copies have been sold out. On the recent Anzac Day TV station SBS showed it in the station's cover of the day's celebration.

As a result of this showing there has been a large demand for the video so the Association has now commissioned the production of DVDs instead of producing videos.

Copies are available at \$35 including P&P and GST from - The Secretary 30 Squadron Association Morandoo Street, Elanora Heights, 2101.