



ADF Serials Telegraph News

News for those interested in Australian Military Aircraft History and Serials
January - March 2011 Prodigal Edition

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Sub-Editor's Note:

This seasonal issue does not replace the ADF-Serial Newsletter which has been absent since July 2008, but will compliment it when it returns perhaps later this year as a separate source of research discussion in a narrower focused format. Gordy

Vale

It was with great sadness that we have lost a long time Member and contributor to Australian Aviation History, LCDR R E N Geale MBE RAN FAA (Ret), who passed away in early December 2009. Bob, known to most as "Windy", was also an Author for the RAN pages on the ADF-Serials website. Post service, Bob in his usual way performed an unparalleled amount of historian work for the FLEET AIR ARM MUSEUM, based at Nowra.

It was also with great sadness when in March 2010 we lost Wynnum B Graham, a contributor of immense detail and who kept everyone on their toes if their research was not up to scratch. He passed away quietly at his home in Cairns after a lengthy battle with cancer

Message Board – Current topics

- KC-30A Serials and Construction Numbers
- Ex RAAF Mirages Alive and Well
- Third Heron UAV to be leased within Australia

These boards can be accessed at: www.adf-messageboard.com.au/invboard/

Two Flying Fortresses named "Juliet"

The B-17E was originally designed to correct some of the deficiencies in the earlier Fortresses that had been brought to light as a result of combat reports coming in from Europe.

The first B-17E, 41-2393, flew on September 5, 1941 and the first deliveries to the 7th Bombardment Group would commence in November 1941. This Group, initially along with the 19th and later 5th, 11th and 43rd Bombardment Groups would battle the Japanese all through 1942 and early 1943 in the Asia-Pacific theatres using this model.

The last B-17E rolled off the production line at Boeing on May 28, 1942 after a production run totalling some 512 production examples before it was superseded on the production line by the B-17F.

Interestingly, some of the crew members of the 19th and 43rd Bombardment Groups included RAAF Officers and NCOs who were seconded as experienced Pilots usually in Co-Pilot roles due to shortages. Even other RAAF crew members were seconded in other roles. Sadly, we too would also share in their losses of valiant 19th and 43rd Bombardment Groups aircrews, but that will be told in a later story. What isn't widely known is that we experienced other losses of aircrew whilst flying the B-17E in RAF service with Coastal Command.

The Fortress IIA

In mid-1942, around 45 were to be Lend Leased to the RAF as Fortress IIAs with serials FK184/213, FL449/460, and FL462/464. A few were diverted back to the USAAF, with some ending up in the Pacific, but with at least 42 were known to have entered RAF service.



B-17E 41-2513 in standard Olive Drab and Neutral Grey which would later become Fortress IIA FK184 in RAF Service

In RAF Service they were allocated to Coastal Command for use in antisubmarine duties in the Atlantic with the first examples entering service with No 220 Squadron on the 24th July, 1942.

With ASV equipment and aerials and then adorning Coastal Command camouflage, they would perform their duty in the Battle of the Atlantic. On the 10th August 1942 at 1230hrs, Boeing Fortress FK207 (ex USAAF B-17E FY41-9204) "J" of 220 Squadron RAF (15 Group) was returning after completing the final leg of a night convoy escort mission.



The weather conditions at Nutts Corner Aerodrome in Northern Ireland were marginal with very low cloud. This forced the aircraft commander to fly very low over rising ground to perform his circuit prior to landing on a lit runway.

Eye witnesses stated that the aircraft when on finals some three miles from the threshold seemed to stall and dived into the ground. There was little hope for the crew with the airframe being engulfed in flames from the follow-on explosions from the bombs and fuel still carried. The following lives of six crews of NR-J perished: *W/Cdr G A Sanderson Serv#742287 (RAF), Co-Pilot F/Sgt E W Bristow Serv#745118 (RAF), Air Observer Sgt D F Capel Serv#404602(RAAF), WAG Sgt H Garcia Serv#931532, WAG Sgt V C Pretter Serv#751381 and WAG Sgt P G Foster Serv#1158929*

On the 6th October 1942 at 0459 hrs, Boeing Fortress FL454 (ex USAAF B-17E FY41-9245) “J” of 206 Squadron RAF (15 Group) crashed at nearby Benbecula shores after taking off from Stronaway in the Hebrides.



The aircraft had almost collided with 206 Sqn Fortress FL457 (ex USAAF B-17E FY41-9229) coded “VX-F” that was being ground taxied by another crew along the active runway. This forced the crew of Juliet, which was halfway through their takeoff, to pull the controls back and attempt to climb over the obstructing aircraft, in disregard of sufficient airspeed. They succeeded in missing only to stall into the sea at the far end of the runway. Five perished.

The crew were: *Pilot P/O J E Delarue Serv# 402322(RAAF), Co-Pilot Sgt J C Jaeger (RAF), Navigator Sgt F A Robinson (RAF), WAG Sgt J A Taplin Serv#407607(RAAF), WAG Sgt J F Guppy Serv#406452(RAAF) who were killed, with WAG Sgt J Nunt and WAG Sgt D S Coutts being slightly injured.*

It would be fair comment to say in hindsight, that the airmanship of RAAF Pilot P/O Jack Edmond Delarue, helped avert the collision of both aircraft. This had undoubtedly saved the lives of the seven aircrew and perhaps the surviving two members of his VX-J crew.

Details and serials researched through the National Australian Archives, RAAF Casualty Files and various B-17E sources. Please note: My Aircraft Profiles that are depicted in any story are representations only, though every effort is made to be accurate given the information available.

Gordon R Birkett compiled @2008

Curtiss Corner: P-40K-10 A29-183 still survives?



A29-183 looking rather bent (Buz Busby)

On the 10th February 1944, F/Sgt P. A. Webb of 77 (F) Sqn RAAF forced landed in A29-183 (ex 42-10193) coded AM-H near Vivigani strip on Goodenough Island after being blinded by oil in the cockpit just after take-off. He managed to put it down and was not injured.

As for the aircraft itself, its history has it being boxed for export ex Buffalo New York, with the aircraft proceeding by rail to Vancouver Canada with sixteen other RAAF P-40Ks per USAAF Contract 535 AC 22714 Diversion 146 Aus1, where it was loaded on a ship which sailed to Sydney, Australia in late December 1942. Rec at 2AD on the 22nd January 1943, it was assembled and issued to 77 (F) Sqn on the 22nd February 1943. It was received by 26RSU ex 77 (F) Sqn for a service on the 5th September 1943, and returned back to the Unit on the 17th September 1943. Returned later that week back to 26RSU, it returned to the unit strength again on the 22nd September 1943. Again it seems that there was another problem and again it returned to 26RSU on the 31st October 1943. Again it was returned to the unit on

the 15th November 1943, but the service performance was not acceptable and it was earmarked to be returned to 26thRSU yet again 27th January 1944. This didn't occur as the unit was transiting to P-40Ns, but then on take-off at 10.47hrs on the 10th February 1944, the engine failed on take-off at Vivagani Strip, forcing the pilot to perform a forced landing soon after some 2 miles north west in a clearing. Un-injured, F/Sgt Webb would fly another day, in fact A29-184 AM-T on ops a few days later on the 16th February 1944 and would suffer a generator problem forcing him to perform another emergency landing. Back to A29-183, it was received by 26RSU again, and eventually converted to components and written off by the 9th March 1944 on site.



A29-182 from the front (Buz Busby)

Recovered in the 1970's it was apparently transferred or sold from Bob Greinert to Graham Orphan in New Zealand in the nineties. Bob and Graham have been involved in numerous restorations and recoveries. Whether this aircraft will grace the skies once again the future is anyone's guess.

Message Traffic:

Ticket #60

Subject RAN Walrus colors 1942		Group -	Annotate , Print
Status Open		Operator Windy	
Created 12/03/09 06:33		Customer Bruce Constable (hmasperth1@yahoo.com.au)	
Solved -		Access key 60Z558729293018136682	

Bruce Constable [220.253.79.13] 12/03/09 06:33	Hi, Some time ago you very kindly supplied me with photos and details of the Walrus aircraft attached to HMAS Perth to place on my website. I have now had a query from a high school at Nowra NSW regarding the color of the Walrus on Perth when she was sunk on 1st Mar 1942. They have a huge project underway to make a 9ft model of Perth. I was wondering if you have any info on the paints used for the Walrus. It looks from B&W photos that it was a dark blue grey. I don't know if the RAN painted it or she came that way from the RAAF. Any help would be greatly appreciated. Cheers Bruce Constable www.perthone.com/perth.htm
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Ticket no 60 is unanswered (See Vale), perhaps someone can?

Updates to go on

Ticket #221

Subject CAC -16 Wirraway III A20-652/VH-WIR		Group -	Annotate , Print
Status Responded		Operator Martin	
Created 02/12 23:51		Customer alan macdonald (tbx@adf-serials.com.au)	
Solved -		Access key 221Z3273690850932791373	

alan macdonald [124.186.223.133] 02/12 23:51	A20-652 was flown from Parafield to Caloundra Qld by Matthew Denning, accompanied for the most part of the trip by his wife Simone. It became the first aircraft for the Queensland Air Museum to have flown in to Caloundra on delivery to the museum since it moved there. Following a flying display it was handed over to the museum at Caloundra at a ceremony on 18 December 2010.
Martin Edwards (Beech 1900, Canberra, CT4, Sabre, Vampire) (Martin) [203.206.204.80] 02/15 14:18	Hi Alan Thanks for the update. I will add the info to A20-652's aircraft history. Regards Martin

Message Ends and transmitter off. Copyright 2011

Gongs and Praise for Period

Martin Edwards has been doing a herculean effort in resurrecting ADF Serials by updating and choreographing all incoming details. Well done

Gordy

Any contributing Articles would be most welcome, along with pics for the next issue; due April 2011