



## ADF Serials Newsletter

For those interested in Australian Military Aircraft History  
and Serials  
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### Editor's Note:

Hi everyone

2006 proved to be an eventful year for Australian military aviation with the loss of a Blackhawk near Fiji in November. Additionally, December 2006 saw the death of Dick Cresswell, the first pilot to shoot down a Japanese plane on Australian soil. Cresswell also flew during the Korean War and was awarded the US Air Medal, the US Distinguished Cross and the Distinguished Flying Cross in 1951-52. Cresswell's funeral, held at the Royal Military College, included a flypast of 4 Hornets from && Sqn, a fitting tribute to the man that had held the position of Commanding Officer three times, twice during World War II and again during the Korean War.

This month we feature some of the airshows that will take place in Australia during 2007 including RAAF Edinburgh. Gordon Birkett focuses on presentation aircraft – this month it's a Catalina. Did you know that the NSW Heritage Office compiled a register of WW2 aerodromes in 2001? Read on to find out where you can obtain your own copy for free!!! As usual, we have included: On This Day and Feedback.

**Would you like to submit some images or an article for the newsletter? We welcome contributions to the newsletter. You can contact us via the contact link at the end of the newsletter.**

Till next month

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## Message Board – Current topics

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The ADF Serials website hosts a number of message boards including:

- **General discussion** - topics related to the adf-serials.com website or any discussion not covered by another forum eg Location of WW2 airfields across Australia
- **Aircrew** – relating to Australian aircrew – identifying an unknown airman buried at Lutwyche Cemetery, Brisbane
- **Army aircraft** – AAAC Bell 206's A17-028 and A17-047 being unloaded at Brisbane Airport on 28 Jan 2007
- **RAAF aircraft** – RAAF stop gap aircraft to replace aging F-111 aircraft, possible sighting of Wedgetail A30-004 at Amberley, Restoration of P-39 Airacobra by Classic Jets, Parafield
- **Navy aircraft** – download details for pdf on A4G's
- **NZ Military Aircraft and aircrew** –
- **Feedback** – provides a place for feedback, questions etc
- **ADF Serials website updates** – provides information on latest updates.

These boards can be accessed at <http://www.adf-serials.com/invboard/>

**During December 2006, the ADF-Serials website averaged 2,200 hits per day.**

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### 2007 Airshows

**20 -25 Mar 2007      Australian International Airshow 2007 - Avalon**

For details check out the following website: <http://www.airshow.net.au/>

**Sunday 6 May 2007    the Fleet Air Arm Museum (Nowra) formerly Australian Museum of Flight** For further details keep checking the website: <http://www.museum-of-flight.org.au/site/>

**2007 Defence Air Show      27-28 Oct 2007 - RAAF Edinburgh SA**

The Defence Air Show is rotated around our major bases so that everyone in Australia gets a chance to see Navy, Army and Air Force aircraft in action periodically. The 2007 Defence Air Show will be held at RAAF Base Edinburgh, 20 minutes north of Adelaide in South Australia.

More information will be included as it comes to hand

### Temora Aviation Museum Flying Days

February	17-18
April	7-8 (Easter)
May	19-20
June	30- 1 July
August	18-19

September 15-16

November 17-18

Check out their website for further information:

<http://www.aviationmuseum.com.au/news/FlyingDates.cfm>

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## **World War II Aerodromes and Associated Structures in NSW**

This study was prompted by the need for the NSW Heritage Office to respond strategically to community concerns that World War II aerodromes and associated sites, coastal fortifications, tank traps and bombing ranges, located in various areas in the state of New South Wales, may be of State heritage significance and are potentially threatened by urban growth and expansion. Old Bar Airfield, Old Bar (Taree Council area) was listed on the State Heritage Register (Register) in February 2000. Since then the Heritage Office has received at least three nominations for aerodromes for consideration by the Heritage Council of NSW for listing on the Register. These aerodromes are of cultural value in terms of their ability to demonstrate their importance in the history of the formation of the RAAF, the development of the Department of Defence and military aviation and training in Australia, in the lead up to and during World War II when the nation was under threat of attack from Japan. The presence of these aerodromes collectively are significant to individual communities and the people of the state of New South Wales."—(From NSW Heritage Office website).

This document is downloadable and can be found at:

[http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/03\\_index.htm#aerodromes](http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/03_index.htm#aerodromes)

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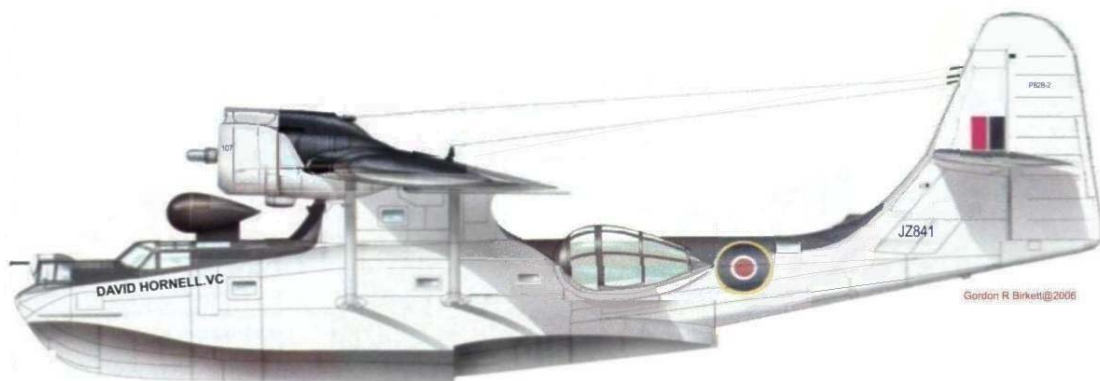


## **Presentation Aircraft: PB2B-2 Catalina A24-360 /JZ841**

### ***“David Hornell VC”***

The Australian War Cabinet per Agendum No 533/1944 dated the 21st November 1944 authorised the acquisition of an additional 17 PB2B Catalina Aircraft. These final 17 PB2B-2 Catalina aircraft built by Boeing Aircraft of Canada Ltd Vancouver, having been ordered for the RAF under Canadian DMS Contract W.S.L.72-349- PC9331.

The RAF Serials were JX660-JX662 and JZ828-JZ841 inclusive. These would be the final examples of some 307 Model PB2B model Catalina Aircraft (240 PB2B-1s and 67 PB2B-2s) built in Canada before beginning to manufacture B-29 bomb bay sections.



With the final assembly of **PB2B-2 c/n61200 RAF Serial JZ841 (US Navy BuNo44294)**, the company wished, in recognition of this being the last aircraft built (a later contract for 18 PB2B-2s was cancelled), that a special name be given to the aircraft.

After a contest arranged by the management and participated by employees of the company, the committee Judges, decided that it should be named **“F/L David Hornell .VC”** on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 1945. It was felt that the name would be fitting as F/Lt Hornbill had spent some time at the Boeing Aircraft of Canada Ltd Factory doing acceptance tests on newly built Catalina aircraft prior to delivery to their various air arms and had operated such aircraft in wartime operations.

#### **“F/L David Hornell VC”**

On the 24<sup>th</sup> June 1944, a 162 “Osprey” Squadron RCAF Canso PBV-5A 9754 Coded “P”, from Wick Scotland was on a patrol. They spotted a German U-Boat that was on the surface running at high speed. Several repeated attacks later, U-1225 was sunk after being straddled by depth charges.

Unfortunately his aircraft suffered severe damage from enemy fire and was ditched soon after. With only one remaining life raft, the eight-man crew rotated in its use until a search aircraft dropped an airborne lifeboat near their position. F/Lt Hornell endeavoured to offer to reach the drifting lifeboat, then some 500 yards away, but was held back. The cold Atlantic sea had by then claimed two of the crewmembers by exposure and would later claim his life also after they were rescued, some 21 hours after ditching.

For his determination during the attack and the selflessness displayed after the ditching, he was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross.

#### **JZ841/A24-360**

JZ841 was to be handed over to the RAAF in February 1945. The resident RAAF Liaison Officer at Boeing Aircraft of Canada Ltd, F/L M Talbot had stated earlier in a report on the 26<sup>th</sup> February 1945 that JZ841 would require the removal and replacement of both engines, resulting in an anticipated delivery date of the 5<sup>th</sup> March 1945.

With that anticipation of delivery date, a RAAF flight crew, under command of F/L David Joyce was dispatched from the RAAF Ferry Detachment at San Pedro California to collect the aircraft.

Mr S Burke, President of Boeing Canada, held a ceremony on 28th February 1945 at the No 3 factory with a special guest attending, Air Marshall F V Heakes Air Officer Commanding of Western Air Command, Canada, who would officially christened the aircraft *“David Hornell VC”*.

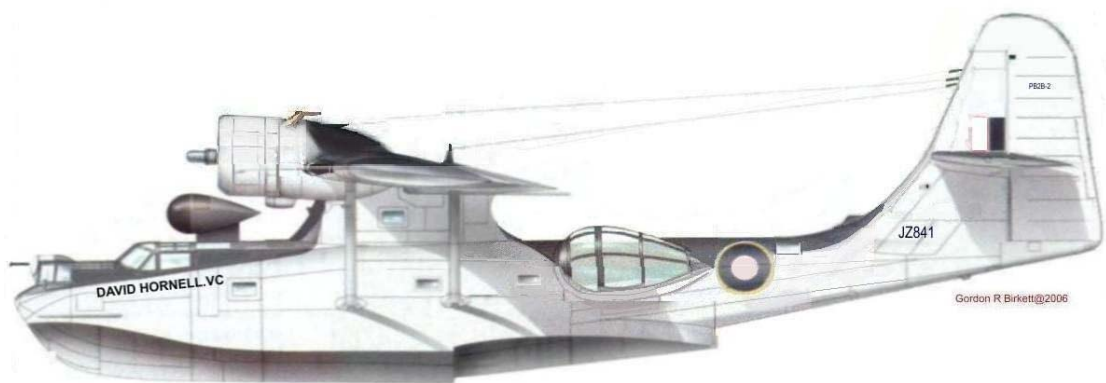
Delivered by air by F/L Joyce from Vancouver, Canada to San Pedro, California soon after, the aircraft was modified with RAAF specified equipment and had the de-icing boots removed, and engine de-icer heater exchangers were removed from the tops of the cowls at San Pedro.

The red portions of the national markings were removed prior to its flight in line with the standard RAAF theatre marking standards per Blue and white roundels, though it appears as in the few available photos that the Yellow portion of the RAF Temperate Roundel remained. However it did retained its RAF serial of JZ841 due the discontinuation of applying RAAF Serials stateside earlier in mid 1944.

After being made ready for its trans pacific delivery flight from San Diego, the aircraft took off on the 18<sup>th</sup> April 1945, captained by F/L Steadman and crew.



*With a long way to go, a RAAF PB2B-2 leaves the West coast of the USA in 1945.*



**JZ841** arrived in Australia on the 27<sup>th</sup> April 1945 at the 1 Flying Boat Repair Depot (1FBRD) along with three other Catalina aircraft (**JX633**, **JX648** and **JZ831**) and was re-serialised **A24-360** on the 30<sup>th</sup> April 1945.



***A trans-pacific RAAF PB2B-2 arriving in Australia at Rathmines near Sydney NSW in July 1945 still with the original engine de-icer heater exchangers, but without De-icing boots. AWM***

It was painted in an overall paint scheme of black a few weeks prior to being issued to a unit.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> May 1945, Captained by S/Ldr McKinlay, the aircraft was flown to Rose Bay and then onto Melville Island before delivered to 43 Squadron RAAF then based at Labuan Island.

Officially received by 43Sqn RAAF on the 30<sup>th</sup> May 1945, the aircraft commenced its operational life.



On the 6<sup>th</sup> June 1945, flown by F/O Penny, the aircraft flew the aircraft's first operational mining sortie, lasting some twenty-two and a half hours in duration to the Soerabaya Straits in the Netherlands East Indies.

As one of four Catalina on the night of the 20<sup>th</sup> June 1945, she completed another operational mine laying sortie in the Bangka Straits, piloted by Group Captain Stuart Campbell, CO of 76Wing.

Group Captain Campbell had a reputation of "getting it right" when laying mines, by the repeated attempts to lay his mines as prescribed on target, as per in the pre-flight briefings; much to the alarm of the crew. Duration of this mission was 15 hours and forty minutes.

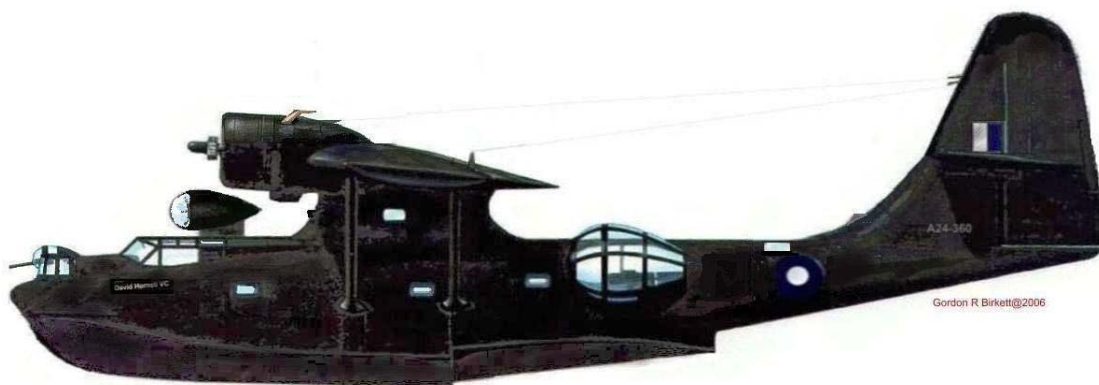
He flew this aircraft again on the 29<sup>th</sup> June 1945, on a fifteen and a half hour mining mission to the Bangka Straits in company with **A24-359 OX-H**, flown by F/L Gill.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> June 1945, **A24-360** was damaged at Labuan Island when it taxied into a submersible reef prior to take-off when captained by Group Captain Stuart Campbell. Temporarily repaired, it was flown south to 1FBRD, under the command of S/Ldr L Fletcher, to undergo repair and overhaul where it arrived on the 9<sup>th</sup> July 1945.

It emerged from her overhaul as a **PB2B-2R**; "R" subtype referring to it being converted for Air Sea Rescue/Transport with certain equipment removed or installed. Service use also showed up that certain important items required replacing, such as a lighter coloured Perspex radome also replaced the dark polyfibre radome of the aircraft, which would be more durable in tropical weather.

Following these modifications and with the cessation of hostilities, F/L A Delahunty flew the aircraft from Rathmines on the 8<sup>th</sup> September 1945 northwards again.

The aircraft arrived at 113 Air Sea Rescue (ASR) Flight located at Labuan Island, some 5 miles off the coast of Borneo, on the 12<sup>th</sup> September 1945.



The aircraft would fly its first mission on the 15<sup>th</sup> September 1945 with 113ASR Flight when it took two Japanese captives to Sandakan to drop a message to arrange a meeting with the Japanese Head Quarters there. It landed, allowing both Japanese captives to stay and for it to return to Labuan with two War Criminals amongst a hostile AIF demonstration.

*\* (Author note: It may well have been because of the rumoured Japanese death marches that left few survivors from the camps. There was a plan prior to the end of the war whereby the 1<sup>st</sup> Parachute Battalion 2<sup>nd</sup> AIF and AIB units were to free them, but the plan was abandoned. Only a handful survived, which in individual cases, fell into the hands of the AIB)*

For the next weeks the aircraft was busy on missions inserting Australia Army parties around to accept or advise of surrender terms and on return ferrying personnel to Labuan.

Other missions included searching for a down 76Sqn RAAF P-40 Pilot on the 6<sup>th</sup> October 1945 near Jesselton.

On its final flight with the unit on the 8<sup>th</sup> October 1945, it ferried Army Officers to Tawao to accept the surrender of Japanese Forces there.

On the 21<sup>st</sup> November 1945, flown by F/L Gregerson, the aircraft arrived at 1 FBRD at Lake Boga for radio equipment installations.

On the 11th December 1945, the aircraft was flown to 115 Air Sea Rescue Flight based at Morotai, by F/L Gregerson where she would perform various courier runs after her arrival on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 1945.

F/L Gregerson flew the aircraft to Ambon on the 19<sup>th</sup> December 1945, where it was temporarily based. F/L Day flew the aircraft on the 30<sup>th</sup> December 1945 to collect a Japanese War Criminal from Lake Tondano.

Due for a major overhaul, she was flown down to the Rathmines on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1946 from Labuan by F/L Day, arriving there on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 1946. Four days later, the aircraft was handed over to 2FBRD for overhaul.

After the overhaul, the aircraft was held in Category C storage; flyable with engines fitted at Rathmines.

Whilst stored there, on the 25<sup>th</sup> April 1946 the aircraft suffered hail damaged to the tail plane.

Due to the determination of post war needs, and with the RAAF having only thirty-two Catalina aircraft in use, A24-360 was repaired and placed in special reserve Category C storage until 1949.

Earlier in June 1948, the aircraft, along with **A24-371**, was being considered for use by QANTAS Empire Airways in proposed extended services. QANTAS Empire Airways had already had on loan two earlier RAAF owned Catalina aircraft for established services, **A24-372** and **A24-378**.

The aircraft almost returned to service when an order was issued in April 1950 for it to go to 11Sqn RAAF as a Category D storage aircraft as reserve or for the re-claiming of usable spares. This order was rescinded on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 1950 and the aircraft was once more placed in special reserve Category C storage.

With the immediate needs of maritime reconnaissance to be met by the Lincoln Bomber, **A24-360** was finally declared surplus on the 10<sup>th</sup> January 1952 and subsequently sold to the US firm, Airmotive Pty Ltd, on the 18<sup>th</sup> May 1953, after being stripped of her instruments, W/T, Radar and APU unit. Thereafter the trail is cold.



This is the only known photograph of Catalina PB2B-2 JZ841/A24-360, in pristine condition, on



a test flight high over Vancouver Canada, in January 1945. Credit: Boeing Canada @1945

It should be noted that only one RAAF PB2B-2 Catalina (VH-ASA), has survived time and it is now on display at the Power House Museum in Sydney, NSW. Its previous RAAF Identity is **A24-385**.

It is in a post WWII civilian paint scheme and is named "Frigate Bird II", as flown by Captain P G Taylor in his experimental trans-pacific flight between Australia and Chile.

The flight departed Sydney and intermediate stops were made at Noumea, Fiji, Tonga, Aitutaki (Cook Is.), Tahiti, Mangareva and Easter Island (Isla de Pascua). The aircraft arrived at Valparaiso, Chile, on 27 March 1951. The return flight departed Valparaiso on 6 April 1951 and arrived at Brisbane, Qld, on 20 April 1951.

A feat truly equalling the many times the young RAF/RAAF/RNZAF/USAAF/MLD and USN Crews who ferried their aircraft ten years earlier over the Pacific in hostile times.

**Gordon R Birkett @2006Vers3**

[www.adf-serials.com.au](http://www.adf-serials.com.au)

NB: Though every effort is made for authenticity, Profiles are guides only.

#### Sources/Additional Information

- Aircraft Assignments to RAAF - Operational Aircraft.
  - E/E88 RAAF IRC
  - 43 Sqn RAAF A50 History Sheets
  - [No 113 Air Sea Rescue Flight] - Flying operations
  - RAAF Unit History sheets (Form A50) [Operations Record Book - Forms A50 and A51] Numbers 111, 112, 113, 114 and 115 Air Sea Rescue Flights, Dec 44 - Jan 47
  - RAAF Unit History sheets (Form A50) No 1 and No 2 Flying Boat Repair Depot June 42 - Nov 47 and No 1 and No 2 Flying Boat Maintenance Unit (FBMU) Oct 43 - Jan 47
  - *Boeing Canada production totalled 362 aircraft, these comprising 240 PB2B-1s supplied to Australia, New Zealand, US Navy, and the UK. 50 PB2B-2s for the US Navy, UK and Australia, 17 non-amphibious Catalina aircraft for the Royal Canadian Air Force, and 55 amphibians of which, in RCAF service, were designated Canso.*
  - *Bu No 44295/44312 Boeing-Canada PB2B-2 Catalina Contract was cancelled*
  - *U-1225 was Sunk 24 June 1944 Northwest of Bergen, in position 63.00N, 00.50W 56 dead (all hands lost) one of 37 U-Boats sunk by Catalina Aircraft in WW2.*
  - *Australia ordered the first of its 168 delivered Catalina Aircraft in June 1940, intending that they be used for maritime reconnaissance. The RAAF had four front-line Catalina Squadrons (numbers 11, 20, 42 and 43) during the Second World War, together with two Communications Units and several ASR (Air Sea Rescue) Flights: Numbers 111, 112, 113, 114 and 115. There were at least another 3 undelivered and several re-directed Catalina aircraft that did not carry the RAAF A24 Serial.*
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#### Feedback

Recently the group was asked for assistance in finding out more about F/O Docking. Does anyone know the circumstances or know whether the pilot was John Carmody 413344 RAAF? Does anyone have any recent detail on John Carmody please? Beaufighter NE 668 of 455 Bomber Squadron was lost in May/June 1944. RAF Form 2009 raised 13 June 1944 shows aircrew as F/O Carmody.

Ron Wynn was able to provide the following information:

Regarding your email of 10 December, the information you seek is below

however it relates to a Keith not Brian Carmody, unless Brian was a nick-name?

NE 668 coded UB-Z was ditched off the Dutch Coast on 13 June 1944 with both crew - F/O D.K. Carmody and F/O G.C. Docking taken prisoner. They were part of a 12 aircraft attack by cannon fire , having jettisoned their bombs, against seven armed trawlers discovered when returning from an earlier strike against three small vessels. 5 Trawlers were severely damaged and left on fire and the other 2 listed as damaged. However 5 Beaufighters were hit by flak and NE 668 was seen to be trailing smoke from an engine. It ditched some 5 km off the coastline and the crew took to their dingy and were picked up by a German R boat some 14 hours later.

The Carmody was Keith who was a famous West Australian cricketer who captained WA and played for Australia post-war.

Source:- Strike and Strike Again 455 Squadron RAAF by Ian Gordon (no other Carmody is mentioned)

### **Follow up on VH-BGP**

Margaret Picard has supplied the following photograph of A2-3 Seagull V when it was registered VH-BGP taken sometime in 1950's and owned? operated by Eric McIlree (Avis). My father Charles Nevil K. Bell was the pilot of the aircraft. My mother believes the man being carried was the manager of a coconut plantation on Patlingat? Isl? A quick Google search hasn't come up with any location near PNG only SA.

Joe Barr was kind enough to provide the following: In connection with the photo of VH-BGP/A2-3, it is likely that the actual name is Patlangat which is on the west coast of New Ireland. It doesn't appear on my small-scale modern map but it is mentioned in the Admiralty Geographical Handbook for the Pacific Islands Vol 6 issued in about 1945. Evidently Burns Philp owned some of the largest coconut plantations in that area which was just north of Kalili (which again is not on my map). The nearest island name I can come up with is Pangula Island which is just north of Kimbe. Does Margaret have access to her father's log books? If she has and can give an idea where he was based at the time it may be possible to confirm or narrow the search.

**Thanks to Ron and Joe for providing this valuable information ☺**

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### **On This Day:**

- Jan 1969 Australian involvement in Vietnam peaked at 8300
- 1 Jan 1975 Office of War Graves Commission established. The Office is responsible for the maintenance of the graves of Australia's war dead in 78 countries around the world and in 76 war cemeteries within Australia.
- 1 Jan 1942 **Hudson A16-29 13SQN** Crew: FLGOFF John Turnbull 642, PLTOFF Robert Kelvin Allen 404945 and SGT Walter John Lay 408079 crashed into sea after an engine fire near Ambon, Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia).
- 4 Jan 1942 Japanese raids begin against Rabaul.
- 6 Jan 1943 **Wirraway A20-69 2OTU** Crew: FLGOFF V.F. Curtis 400039 (QFI) and SGT W. Simpkins 420502 (Student) crashed after carrying out instrument training and flying in cloud.

- 6 Jan 1946 **Spitfire XIV TZ106 453SQN** SQNLDR D.M. Davidson DFC 402321
- 28 Jan 1986 **F-111C A8-139 1 SQN** Crew: FLTLT Stephen Erskine O126168 (Pilot) and CAPT Gregory S. Angell WSO (USAF ex-Officer) crashed into sea off the coast of Moruya, NSW, during a simulated night attack.
- 29 Jan 1969 **Iroquois A2-719 5SQN Crew: FLGOFF R. Enders and FLTLT W. Waterhouse (RNZAF)** crashed at Mt Molongo, 20 nm E of Canberra, ACT, when the Main rotor separated in mid-flight during simulated IF training.

**Thank you to Dean and his aircrew losses research, the Australian War Memorial's "This Month" and the RSL Diary for dates for this month's On this Day segment- Jan**

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**If you have something for the newsletter or would like to submit an article, query or image, please use the following link:**

<http://www.adf-serials.com/contact>

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