



## ADF Serials Newsletter

For those interested in Australian Military Aircraft History  
and Serials  
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January – February 2008

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### Editor's Note:

Hi everyone

2008 marks the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of WW1, the war to end all wars! This year Anzac Day will be officially commemorated on the Somme by the Department of Veterans Affairs – a once only event according to the DVA website! It seems unbelievable that while the majority of Australia's WW1 deaths took place on the Western Front during WW1, these men are not officially commemorated each year.

This year I will be visiting the Somme in early May and in particular, Pozieres where my great grandfather, Arthur Munro Emmett was killed during the Battle of Pozieres in July 1916. Sadly, like most of the other 5285 soldiers killed during this battle, my great grandfather's body was never found and he is commemorated at the Australian memorial at Villers Bretonneux. The issue of repatriation of the remains of Australian servicemen remains a topical subject. Earlier this month, ABC radio broadcast a program "Lost planes, lost men" which discussed the Hundreds of Australian war planes which crashed in Queensland, PNG, and the Pacific during WW2. Many haven't been found, and the remains of their crew still lie where they crashed. There's a global trade in souveniring these wrecks and surprising things are found in the jungles, the mountains and the seas. The link is provided in the body of the newsletter.

This month, Gordon Birkett continues his look at RAAF strength, units etc at 8 December 1941.

**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  
Jan

## Message Board – Current topics

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

- **General discussion** - 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Australian Air League at Blacktown, photos of Kwajalein Missile Range
- **Aircrew** – Information wanted on airman wings and brevets
- **Army aircraft** – Ex A18-319 Nomad crash in Indonesia
- **RAAF aircraft** – Canberra A84-204 Amberley March 1981, C-130h Nose Art - Can anyone tie up names & serials?
- **Navy aircraft** – Sea Otter VH-AJN which one ?
- **NZ Military Aircraft and aircrew** – RNZAF Skyhawks
- **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/>

**2007 Webstats:** During 2007 there were 468268 hits on the website an average of 1232 hits per day. Size of website 615 Mb which includes 6749 images.

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## 2008 Airshows

2008 is shaping up to be a busy year for airshows!

**RAAF Amberley 4-5 October 2008** more information as it comes to hand

## Temora Flying Dates

March	22nd & 23rd
April	26th & 27th
June	7th & 8th
July	19th & 20th
August	30th & 31st
October	11th & 12th
November	15th & 16th

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

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## Websites:

### Spitfire Production – Andrew Pentland

This website attempts to list every Vickers-Supermarine Spitfire and Seafire aircraft built.

There is no shortage of publications relating to the Spitfire, but I am constantly struck by the number of errors in respect of serial batches recorded in books and websites, a situation that persists as details are copied from one publication to the next.

Errors and omissions in official records mean that no definitive record can be produced.

However, I have carried out significant original research, principally at the Public Records Office (now the National Archives), RAF Museum, Cambridge University library and elsewhere, in order to produce as accurate a production record as possible.

I have reconciled Supermarine records to those of the Ministry of Aircraft production, and also produced reconciliations that identify the main errors contained in the principal Spitfire publications.

I hope that this website can provide a useful resource for enthusiasts, researchers and modellers. No doubt many errors persist in respect of individual aircraft histories and I welcome your feedback.

<http://www.spitfires.ukf.net/home.htm>

### **de Havilland Aircraft Production – Andrew Pentland**

The designs of Geoffrey de Havilland and the company he formed in 1920 have had a profound effect on aviation.

During the 1920's and 1930's the Moth series taught many an airman to fly and caught the public imagination by establishing numerous world records. The term 'Moth' was used collectively to refer to any light aeroplane. The Tiger Moth formed the backbone of Commonwealth flying training during the Second World War with over 8,000 being produced, and war surplus aircraft re-established many flying clubs in the post-war period.

The early designs of Geoffrey de Havilland built by the Aircraft Manufacturing Co ('Airco') and overseas licensees during the first World War have not been included here.

I have not attempted to provide a detailed description of the history of the company or detailed data on the aircraft - the excellent reference work 'De Havilland Aircraft since 1909' by A J Jackson cannot be bettered in that regard.

Here I attempt to present a complete history of every aircraft produced by the company, its subsidiaries and licensees from the incorporation of the De Havilland company in 1920 up to its takeover by Hawker Siddeley.

<http://www.dehavilland.ukf.net/>

### **Golden Years of Aviation – Andrew Pentland**

This site documents all the civil aircraft that flew during the Golden Years of aviation between the two world wars.

I have attempted to compile a comprehensive list of aircraft registrations by country, and aircraft production by manufacturer, for this period.

Inevitably this information is incomplete and contains errors due to the lack of records and the amount of data I have had to compile.

The site should therefore be considered very much as work in progress, and as a starting point for research into specific types.

I hope that you will contact me with corrections and additions, in order to make this a valuable reference resource

<http://www.goldenyears.ukf.net/>



### ***The RAAF Strength; First Units, and their locations as at the 8th December 1941 Part 2***

*The RAAF in NEI Forward Areas – Gordon Birkett*

An earlier 1941 agreement with the Netherlands East Indies Government formulated a plan whereby forward echelons of RAAF aircraft units would be based in the Netherlands East Indies, specifically at Ambon (Laha) and in West Timor (Koepang).

As at the 8<sup>th</sup> December 1941, detachments were deployed as follows:

- No 2 Squadron (Flight of 4 Hudsons; **A16-6/18/30/65** arriving on the 07/12/41) at Koepang (All coded **B**)
- No 13 Squadron (Detachment of 6 Hudsons; **A16-66/67/68/69/84/96**) at Laha arriving on the 07/12/41 (All coded **N**) Later reinforcements in January 1942 (**A16-59/123/ 125**)
- No 11 Squadron (Detachment of 2 S-23 Empire Flying Boats; **A18-10** and **A18-13** from 11 Sqn Bowen had arrived at Darwin on the 6<sup>th</sup> December 1941, under F Lt J Mc L

Hampshire and F Lt Norm Fader. Advance parties of 30 men from No's 2 and 13 Sqns were dispatched from Darwin to Koepang West Timor on these aircraft.



*Hudson A16-18 in background photographed late 1941. RAAF Official*

#### **Northern Territory**

- No 2 Squadron (with 11 Hudsons (**A16-9/12/32/34/46/57/77/78/79/80/100**) and 1 Moth Minor **A21-18** left at Richmond) via Darwin on their way to NEI, with detachment of 4 Hudsons already at Koepang, Timor NEI; (**A16-6/18/30/65** arrived there on the 07/12/41, followed by another flight; **A16-9/12/32/34** on the 12/12/41) (Coded **B** pre-war)
- No 7 Squadron (without aircraft, but designated as a Hudson Squadron, later Beaufort) at Darwin (To be coded **G**)
- No 12 Squadron (14 Wirraways; **A20-48/60/62/ 65/ 88/91/91/ 180/ 181/ 182/ 230/ 231/232/233**) and 3 Moth Minors (**A21-21/22/33**) at Darwin (Coded **M** pre-war)
- No 13 Squadron (10 Hudsons; **A16-29/ 33/ 61/63/ 64/71/72/88/ 95/98**) at Darwin. A detachment of 6 Hudsons with **A16-66/67/68/69/84/96** were already at Laha from the 07/12/41. (Coded **N** pre-war)



13Sqn

**RAAF Hudson in Australia in 1941 Credit RAAF**

The RAAF in PNG/New Britain

As Australian Administered Territory, the need to ensure that adequate patrolling could be carried out, aircraft would be based at Port Moresby, New Guinea, and at Rabaul, New Britain. They were as at the 8<sup>th</sup> December 1941, as follows:

- No 24 Squadron (Detachment of 4 Hudsons, including **A16-13** and **A16-91**,) at Rabaul (to be later reinforced with 10 Wirraways of that Unit in mid-late December 1941 from Townsville). An earlier November 1941 wreck, a burnt out **A16-31**, was still there. (The later reinforcement of 10 Wirraways were lost: **A20-71/ 128/ 179/ 303/ 304/ 319/ 321/ 436 & 437**)

- No 11 and 20 Squadron (Detachments of 2 S-23 Empire Flying Boats (**A18-11** and **A18-12**) and 3-6 Catalina respectively including **A24-8/ 9& 11**) at Port Moresby Harbour

Rabaul, located just a few hundred kilometers south of the Japanese mandate territories in the Pacific, became the first Australian territory to be attacked by the Japanese.

On 23rd January 1942, a Japanese force, supported by battleships and aircraft carriers, landed near Rabaul. The RAAF's small and under-equipped defending squadron took on the more numerous and better-equipped Japanese aircraft, with heavy losses.

No 24 Squadron would be all but wiped out in aircraft alone save for **A16-91**, with the commanding officer, Wg Cdr J M Lerew signalling to RAAF North Eastern Command "[nos morituri te salutamus](#)", being latin for "**we who are about to die, salute you.**"



***Pictured is A16-91 of 24Sqn's Hudsons at Rabaul late 1941. Credit RAAF***

The remnants of No 24 Squadron crews and ground crews were evacuated by 11Sqn Empire flying boats in late January/early February 1942 to Australia.



RAAF Hudson A16-13 of 24 Squadron at Rabual December 1941

**Gordon R Birkett @2007Vers4**

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### **Fighting High – New EZine**

Joe Barr has provided the following details of a new ezine:

Not yet with any Australian content but with the potential to have some in future is a new Ezine that has been developed by UK author Steve Darlow. He says:

"I have just launched an online ezine FIGHTING HIGH, which pays tribute to the Allied airmen who won the air battle 1939 - 1945, drawing on a considerable amount of first hand accounts to keep their memory alive. Issue one includes fascinating articles illustrated with numerous unpublished photographs, book reviews and an aircraft recognition competition.

FIGHTING HIGH is a pdf document and free to download via the following link - [www.stevedarlow.co.uk/fightinghigh.htm](http://www.stevedarlow.co.uk/fightinghigh.htm)

It is expected to be issued quarterly at present but have a look. The stories appear interesting. Joe

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### **Lost planes, lost men – ABC Radio broadcast 3 Feb 2008**

Hundreds of Australian war planes crashed in Queensland, PNG, and the Pacific during WW2. Many haven't been found, and the remains of their crew still lie where they crashed. There's a global trade in souveniring these wrecks, and surprising things are found in the jungles, the mountains and the seas. This broadcast covered information on a WW2 aircraft wreck in North Queensland and also discussed the problems of salvage/souveniring of wrecks in the Pacific Area. Those interviewed included: Daniel Leahy, John White, John Lemke, Syd Beck, Ben Cropp and Justin Taylan. The transcript and pod cast can be accessed via the following link: <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/backgroundbriefing/>

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### **Feedback**

Carlo Kopp submitted the following via the feedback link: My compliments on a superb website. I intend to link to it from the APA website at <http://www.ausairpower.net/>  
We have the highest traffic/visitation rates of any AUS defence oriented website so far.

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### **Can You Help?**

#### **70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Australian Air League - Blacktown**

The Blacktown Squadron of the Australian Air League youth group is celebrating its 70th Anniversary this year. We are holding an Anniversary Dinner and at the moment I'm looking for photos to put on display. At various times the Air League has had a few gate guardians at their hall in Blacktown including Boomerang A46-30, Firefly WD-827 and Vampire A79-422. I have some "photos of these aircraft, but I'm after more

<http://blacktown.airleague.com.au/history.html>

If anyone has some photos of these aircraft (esp. colour - all the ones I have are b&w) and would care to scan them and email them - it would be GREATLY appreciated. If you don't have access to scanner etc. I will pay postage etc to get copies of them.

**If you can assist please use the contact link:**

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

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### **On This Day**

- 1 Jan 75** Office of Australian War Graves 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.
- 4 Jan 42** Japanese air attacks begin against Rabaul, New Britain Rabaul possessed a number of airfields and one of the best natural harbours in the south-west Pacific. Its capture gave Japan a base from which to launch air attacks towards New Guinea and north-eastern Australia as well as a strong south-eastern corner to its defensive perimeter in the Pacific.
- 17 Jan 17** 4 Squadron, Australian Flying Corps sail for France No. 4 Squadron was the final Australian Flying Corps squadron formed in the First World War. Its pilots

- flew Sopwith Camels over the Western Front beginning their active service in the battle of Cambrai.
- 17 Jan 91** Coalition air attacks begin against Iraqi forces in Iraq and Kuwait. The first day of the Gulf War which ended when Iraqi forces were driven from Kuwait.
- 20 Jan 42** Wirraways engage Japanese fighter and bomber formations over Rabaul In the days before the fall of Rabaul, Japanese aircraft conducted a series of raids on the town. In an engagement lasting less than ten minutes three of 24 Squadron's eight Wirraways were shot down, one crashed on take-off and two **were damaged in crash-landings**
- 29 Jan 69** Iroquois A2-719 5SQN Crew: FLGOFF R. Enders and FLTLT W. Waterhouse (RNZAF). Main rotor separated in mid-flight during simulated IF training and crashed at Mt Molongo, 20 nm E of Canberra, ACT.
- 2 Feb 42** First Japanese air attack on Port Moresby. The Japanese had hoped to occupy Port Moresby as a base from which to cut off shipping to Eastern Australia. Their defeat in the Battle of the Coral Sea thwarted the planned naval attack and invasion against Port Moresby.
- 10 Feb 54** Queen Elizabeth at Macquarie Place, Sydney Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip each plant a Plane tree at Macquarie Place, Sydney to mark the beginning of the Remembrance Driveway between Canberra and Sydney.
- 11 Feb 26 DH-9 A6-28 3SQN Crew: FLGOFF Philip McK. Pitt (Pilot) and AC1 William E. Callander (Observer / Photo). In February 1926 two DH-9's of 3 Sqn were sent to Canberra to conduct an aerial photographic survey of the Murrumbidgee River. The first aircraft flown by FLTLT Allan Hepburn arrived on February 9 and would be followed by FLGOFF Pitt two days later. When he arrived over the Ainslie aerodrome at Canberra, ACT (then known as the Federal Capital Territory), FLGOFF Pitt shut off the engine (as was standard procedure for the aircraft) and turned into land but the aircraft suddenly stalled, turned left and spun into the ground from about 100 ft. The aircraft burst into flames shortly after striking the ground. The aircraft had come down in a local field about 60 metres from where a local farmer, Mr Walter Johnson, had been ploughing his field. After overcoming the initial shock of the aircraft crashing near him Mr Johnson went to the aid of the downed airmen. However it appeared that FLGOFF Pitt had been killed instantly but AC1 Callander had survived and was pulled away from the wreckage by Johnson only to die from his injuries in Canberra Hospital later that evening. Despite the loss of the two airmen the efforts by Mr Johnson were recognised by the Royal Humane Society who awarded him their Bronze Medal.
- 13 Feb 52** Vampire Mk30 A79-754 SGT T. Moore. Dived into the ground and was destroyed during a formation Mach run near Booral, NSW
- 21 Feb 56** Australian and British aircraft bomb Kluang, Malaya The raid was staged against the jungle base of the 7th Independent Platoon, Malayan Races Liberation Army in Central Johore and was carried out by Lincolns of No. 1 Squadron RAAF and Canberras of No. 12 Squadron RAF. It wiped out the camp and was regarded as the most successful of the 4,000 sorties flown by the Australians in Malaya.

**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:**

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