



# ADF Serials Newsletter

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

Welcome everyone to this month's newsletter. My apologies again at the delay in getting the newsletter out. March was a very bus month as I finished the final judging for the Children's Book Council of Australia Eve Pownall Award as well as surviving our annual local history conference at work!

This month there is news on the RAAF Richmond Air Show which will be held in October 2006. This promises to be a spectacular event and one that will attract aviation enthusiasts from all points of the compass.

Looking for information or help on an aviation? Why not check out the message boards on the ADF Serials site? There are a number of message boards covering the gamut of research!

Gordon B takes an interesting look at how Australia might have ended up with Japanese Zeroes on strength rather than British or US aircraft. Read on to see what Gordon B has recently discovered!

Till next month  
Jan

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## Website News – ADF Serials Message Boards:

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

- General Discussion
- Aircrew
- Army Aircraft
- Navy Aircraft
- RAAF Aircraft
- New Zealand Aircraft and Aircrews

- Website updates

The ADF Serials group would like to thank Brendan Cowan for taking over the admin for the discussion groups. As if his work in the message board isn't enough, Brendan has provided significant updates to the DH.60 Moth, Auster, Battle and Oxford pages. Many thanks for your commitment to the website!

### Website Stats

Recent visitor info...

| Month          | Total  | Month | Ave  |
|----------------|--------|-------|------|
| June 2005      | 698194 | 25770 | 859  |
| July 2005      | 715740 | 17546 | 566  |
| August 2005    | 730155 | 14415 | 465  |
| September 2005 | 751755 | 21600 | 720  |
| October 2005   | 783747 | 31992 | 1032 |
| November 2005  | 798267 | 14520 | 484  |
| December 2005  | 821145 | 22878 | 738  |
| January 2006   | 849696 | 28551 | 921  |
| February 2006  | 873888 | 24192 | 864  |

| Year | Total Hits | Hits this Year | Av Hits per day |
|------|------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 2003 | 296831     | 172429         | 472             |
| 2004 | 576212     | 296381         | 765             |
| 2005 | 821145     | 244933         | 671             |

### RAAF Richmond Air Show 2006 - 21-22 October 2006

One of the postings by Dean on the Message boards gave details of an air show to be held at RAAF Richmond in October. I found the following information on the Hawkesbury City Council website:

*RAAF Richmond will be running a diverse and exciting air show on the weekend of 21 and 22 October 2006.*

*More than three hours of flying are planned for both days. Aircraft from the current Defence inventory will combine with Warbirds from the Temora Aviation Museum and the Historic Aircraft Restoration Society. It will be the most exciting air show since Richmond's 1988 Bicentennial spectacular.*

*Highlights will included the Army's new Tiger Attack helicopter performing aerobatic manoeuvres, while the United States Air Force will demonstrate the massive C-17 heavy lift aircraft. The RAAF will take delivery of its first C-17s after the Richmond's Defence Force Air show.*

*It will also be an historically important event for residents of the Hawkesbury. Ninety years have elapsed since the opening of the flying school at Richmond by the 'Governor of NSW.*

*In celebration of this important milestone the air show will include a number of vintage aircraft including a Tiger Moth, Dakota, Hudson Bomber, Catalina, Meteor Jet, Canberra Bomber and of course the most recognisable of all WW II aircraft the famous Spitfire.*

*Extensive ground displays and other entertainment will be provided.*

*There will be a modest entry charge. Further information will be posted on this website as planning progresses.*

<http://www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au/events/pages/21848.html>

Sounds like an event that you won't want to miss!!!

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### **Zero or all for Naught? - Gordon B**

With just over a year passing, since the start of the war in Europe, decisions were being made concerning the equipment purchases for the expanding RAAF

On the 29<sup>th</sup> October 1940, the Advisory War Council Meeting was held in Melbourne with several topics discussed. One of those present was Sir John Latham.

Having served a distinguished political career including as the Leader of the Federal opposition (United Australia Party) in the late twenties and early thirties, he was appointed Chief Justice of the High Court in 1934.

His electorate then elected a new member, who would later become Prime Minister in 1939 and then again in 1949.

At the commencement of hostilities, Sir John returned to politics it seems and was appointed as Australian Minister to Japan. This appears as an Ambassador role.

Older Australians would remember some of the nicknames that were given to Sir Robert, one being in particular, *Pig Iron Bob*. This was derived by the fact that substantial amounts of pig iron were traded to Japan, prior to the outbreak of the Pacific War.

An interesting topic brought up by Sir John Latham, who it seems, may have been approached by Japan to supply aircraft to Australia.

The discussion was centred on maintaining good relations with Japan by placing an order for aircraft to the value of 500,000 Australian Pounds.

This was perhaps view that such an order would put Japanese interests opposite to Germany. All agreed at the meeting of the proposal and a recommendation was forwarded to the Prime Minister, Sir Robert G Menzies KC. MP on the 31<sup>st</sup> October 1940.

Sir Robert replied in the positive and stated that immediate steps would be taken to examine the proposal in his reply of the 4<sup>th</sup> November 1940.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> November 1940, the Minister for Air, Mr J "Blackjack" McEwen sent an advisement, stating *finally* that since June 1940, Mitsubishi Shoji Kaishi Ltd had indeed approached the Aircraft Production Commission in providing service and training types for the RAAF.

He stated that for obvious reasons that the Department felt that it could not rely on Japan for war materials, but continued to negotiate on training types to fulfil the needs of the EATS for 1940 and 1941. The approved type would fill the need in the same way as the Avro Anson.

Negotiations progressed to the point whereby the company submitted a proposal on the 12<sup>th</sup> September 1940 to supply 250 of such a twin-engine type as follows:

- Shipment to commence in ten months and completed in 20 months thereafter.
- Price per plane complete to be approx. twelve thousand, five hundred Australian pounds, free on board ex Main Port Japan.
- Payment to be made by counter-pay to Japan, not in cash, but by product (platinum, pig iron, scrap iron, molybdenum, nickel, aluminium and lead, to name but a few items that would seemingly come flying back in 1942)

The Chief of Air Staff threw his opinion in by stating that all deliveries should be made "immediate delivery", given the needs of the EATS.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1940, the Advisory War Commission minutes (Minute #50) carried an extension of the decision and I quote:

"It was recommended that further enquiries should be made as to the possibility of obtaining immediate delivery of fighter types of aircraft, and the importance of the continuance of the negotiations was emphasised"



***Perhaps we may have had been delivered 75 x Aus 6 Model 4 Naughts by September 1941. With mixed Japanese colours with standard RAAF Malaysian markings? What a thought! GRB***

Minister for Air, Mr J McEwen in his letter of the 12<sup>th</sup> December 1940 to the Prime Minister on behalf of the Chief of Air Staff, stated:

*"By making inquiries for operational types, we will reveal to Japan not only that we are short of this class of aircraft at the moment, but that our prospects of obtaining them from British or American sources are not clear.*

We cannot expect the best performance fighters from Japan in view of the relations existing between that country and Great Britain at the present time

Japan is a potential enemy and one with which hostilities cannot be ruled out, and to obtain operational aircraft from such a source would deprive us of any possibility of tactical surprise in the event of war since the Japanese would be thoroughly familiar with the capabilities and limitations of their aircraft

Difficulties of inspection both during the manufacture in Japan and on delivery would be very great and incapable of solutions under present conditions. **In this connection, sabotage by means of delay action explosives is a real possibility”**

*The last comment or perhaps selling pig iron and being called Pig Iron Bob, let alone being probably being called Zero Bob, swayed the mind of the Prime Minister.*

*Suffice to say, the chances of a Mitsubishi Zero flying in RAAF Colours in 1941 **flew out the window** after that statement in December 1940!*

**The main reason could have been that the Japanese Imperial Government joined Germany and Italy in September 1940 in an alliance for world domination called the Tripartite Pact.**

Special thanks to the National Archives of Australia for their ongoing support and timeless effort in making one of the greatest repositories of documents in Australia.

Gordon R Birkett @2006

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#### **Bell Aircobra – Hells Bells - Gordon B**

During the course of Gordon's research he has found an additional Bell Aircobra that is still in existence and it's a RAAF one: 41-7119 aka Hell's Bells **A53-1**

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#### **Feedback:**

#### **B-24D Liberator "Miss Deed" Serial Number 42-72814**

Bob Livingstone has provided the following information on this aircraft:

Comments: I am sure "Tracy" is familiar with the details, but other ADF Serials members/readers are not. 42-72814 (a late model B-24D with a Hawaiian Air Depot nose turret conversion) was from the 90th BG, 321st BS and departed Dobodura on 06NOV43 at 0300 for a weather recon towards Rabaul as part of the planning for a bombing mission which never eventuated. It is not known if it carried a name or artwork. It was not MISS DEED which was 41-24070 of the same squadron which passed to the RAAF, became A72-7 with 7 OTU Tocumwal, later Instructional Airframe #3 and which was scrapped at Toce on 29OCT45. 42-72814 checked in by radio at 0320, but the crew never made any further contact and are assumed to have been shot down in the Rabaul area. An alternative is that since no weather reports were filed (required every 30 minutes), the aircraft could have collided with terrain while still over New Guinea shortly after the radio check and still remain to be found in the NG jungle.!

Aircraft are still being found in NG to this day dating from WWII. An example of this is 42-40505 Mr Five by Five which had also served with the 90th BG which was found in NOV 2002 after going missing on 09OCT44. Closure for those relatives (burials have just taken place in

the last few weeks in the US of the crew remains), but not for those of the 11 crew of 42-72814. Australian relatives are also involved, as Sgt Joe Holohan, RAAF, an RCM specialist was also aboard.

Thanks for the information Bob. There are a lot of Australian families who still have loved ones that are unaccounted for.

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### **On This Day:**

**2 Mar 1972** Last RAAF Flight out of Vietnam

**7 Mar 1942** Kittyhawk A29-1 piloted by PLTOFF Lloyd Henry Holliday 411786 (75 Sqn) crashed 10 kms NNW of Kempsey, NSW whilst on a ferry flight to Townsville with two other Kittyhawks. Although the crash was fatal the aircraft was salvageable and it was then allotted to 5AD for repairs. This aircraft would be repaired and returned to service several times during its service with the RAAF. PLTOFF Holliday's mother served overseas as an army nurse in WW1.

**14 Mar 1942** Wirraway A20-404 from 1OTU piloted by SGT Noel Elford Giddings (416021) Crashed near Lake Glen Maggie, Vic

**16 Mar 1943** Flight Lieutenant William Ellis Newton awarded the Victoria Cross

**18 Mar 1969** Mirage IIIA A3-37 piloted by WGCDR E J Myers from 75 Sqn crashed into sea during low-level intercept mission at night off Singapore.

**19 Mar 1947** P-51D A68-785 piloted by WOFF P. Lester from 82 Sqn crashed with the right wing failed during recovery from power dive 2 nautical miles from Bofu Airfield, Japan.

**20 Mar 1917** Lieutenant Frank Hubert McNamara awarded the Victoria Cross

**21 Mar 1942** Battle for Port Moresby begins

**22 Mar 1942** Kittyhawk A29-16 piloted by FLTLT Bruce Horace Anderson 260770, 75 Sqn was shot down over Lae, New Guinea.

**22 Mar 1942** Japanese bomb Katherine in the Northern Territory

**27 Mar 1953** Last engagement between RAAF Meteors and Soviet Migs in Korea

**28 Mar 43** Beaufighter A19-182 from 31SQN with crew FLTLT Keith Alexander Fitton 403730 (Pilot) and FSGT Richard Charles Foyle 40970 (Nav) crashed on operations over Roti Island.

**29 Mar 44** Oxford AS356 from 1SFTS crashed when pilot LAC R.W. Bruce 422418 was taking off on his first night solo flight, climbed to about 600 feet and turned to the right and climbed steeply. The aircraft then stalled and dived into Port Phillip Bay about two miles off shore.

**31 Mar 1921** Formation of Royal Australian Air Force

**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 links:**

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