



## ADF Serials Newsletter

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

Hi everyone

It was with sadness that I learnt of the death of Wing Commander Bobby Gibbes, a stalwart of 3 Sqn during WW2. Bobby Gibbes was one of the true characters of the wartime RAAF and his passing was a reminder of how few of these members remain. The Temora Aviation Museum lists Bobby Gibbes on the Unsung Heroes web pages. If you would like to know more about this wonderful larrikin and his life, please use the link in the Temora section below. Vale Bobby Gibbes.

This month the newsletter contains two articles by Gordon Birkett which examine the Lockheed Lightning I/II: “Almost in Australian Service” and Presentation Aircraft: Wirraway A20-285 “Hotelkeepers and Allied Trades of South Australia”

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 - Why is Townsville still operated under RAAF control despite it not having RAAF aircraft stationed there? Wreckage of VH-XXF on Horn Islands
- Aircrew – WW2 recruitment film “Green Light” and its possible whereabouts, compiling a list of all Phantom pilots and navigators

- Army aircraft –Mrh 90 update
- RAAF aircraft – RAAF stop gap aircraft, Caribou colours
- Navy aircraft –Sea Sprite replacement found
- NZ Military Aircraft and aircrew – Kiwi Orion visits Edinburgh
- 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/>

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2007 Airshows

### **Oakey Warbirds Fly in Day 16 & 17 June 2007**

The Museum of Australian Army Flying in conjunction with the Spitfire Rebuild Project Volunteer Team will be holding a warbirds fly-in static display on 16 and 17 June 2007. Location is the Oakey Civil Terminal in aid of the Spitfire A58-27 Spitfire Rebuild Project. Other aircraft on display during the weekend will be a P51 Mustang, Yak 52, T28 Trojan, Boomerang, Grumman Avenger and Invader as well as current military aircraft including a Black Hawk and Super King Air.

Opening time 10 am – 4 pm both days. Entrance costs: Family (2 adults and 2 children) \$12, Adults \$5, pensioners \$3 and school aged children \$2. There will be food stalls and other displays etc. For further details If you have any specific questions regarding the fly-in at the museum please contact Helen Bawden by email at; [nedwab@bigpond.net.au](mailto:nedwab@bigpond.net.au)

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**

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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### **Unsung Heroes – Temora Aviation Museum**

The Temora Aviation Museum has compiled Unsung Heroes – an alphabetical listing of Australian who has greatly contributed to Aviation. They are always looking for additional

people to add to this growing database so please check out the site:  
<http://www.aviationmuseum.com.au/unsung/alpha.cfm>

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### Lockheed Lightning I/II: "Almost in Australian Service" – Gordon Birkett

During January 1942, the RAAF were looking for additional fighter aircraft to equip and enlarge the Airforce. One of the general types offered by the British Air Commission to the RAAF in February 1942 to be considered was the Lockheed P322 Lightning1.

Back in May 1940, both the French *Armée de L'Air* and the British Air Commission (BAC), on behalf of the RAF, had ordered some 667 Lockheed Model 322 twin engine fighter aircraft (417 x Model P322-61-03 and 250 x Model P322-61-04 aircraft respectively).

With the fall of France a month later, BAC took over the existing French contract. With production building up, the combined order was now to be broken down as 143 Lightning Is (without turbo supercharges due to shortages of supply) and the remaining 524 as Lightning IIs (with turbo supercharges and handed engines). Serial range would be: AE978 to AF220 and AF221 to AF744 respectively.



*Lightning I AE979 flying over the California Coast in late 1941. Credit: Lockheed*

The major push behind the design specifications of the Lightning I, aside from the urgency to deliver quickly, was that the aircraft power plant and airscrew would be interchangeable with both countries' then current major imported fighter, the Curtiss Wright Tomahawk I/ Curtiss P-40 H81A fighter as fitted with an Allison V1710-33 (USAAF Designated Right Handed) 12 cylinder Vee engine.

The twin installed Allison V-1710-C15 Vee (V1710-33 in USAAF Service), rated at 1,090 hp (813 kW) was only supercharged, not turbo supercharged. This meant also, unlike USAAF P-38D Lightnings in general, both V1710-C15 engines and airscrews fitted to the Lightning I aircraft, rotated in the same direction.

Additionally, with the lower thrust line of these engines, there was a requirement of a fuselage and wing junction fillet. The RAF required the deletion of the 37mm cannon also. This combination of specifications and the urgency of delivery before other problems were solved, therefore limited the operational maximum level speed to just 300 mph.

With only 3 Lightning I aircraft delivered to the RAF in the United Kingdom by March 1942, (AF105, AF106 and AF108), the decision of cancelling the order for the type was taken due to its performance.

Further to this, though accepting the design shortcomings of the Lightning I, the turbo-supercharged Lockheed Lightning II aircraft order was also cancelled, though they would go to the USAAF when built as the P-38F and P-38G models (150 and 374, equalling the original 524 Lightning II aircraft)

### The RAAF Allocation

On the 9<sup>th</sup> February 1942 the Australian Minister for Australia in American, Lord Casey, requested a proposal of providing some Lightning twin boomed aircraft to the RAAF. Though at that time the aircraft had not entered wide spread service in either the USAAF or the RAF, it was considered by Senior RAF Officers that its performance was very high, but with an acknowledgement that it may take a further 6 months developmental time to correct its deficiencies before it could enter squadron service.

The number proposed a few weeks later in late February 1942 for the RAAF was for an initial 40 aircraft. Given the development problems, delivery would not have been any earlier than October 1942 in the form of the combat capable Lockheed P-322 Lightning II model.

And like the initial deployment of the USAAF P-38F version in SWPAC, there would have been only enough airframes perhaps for a Squadron to be deployed within a RAAF fighter wing.

With the improvement of supply per P-40E/E-1 Kittyhawks, this offer was eventually declined on the basis of having to reduced operational types so as to ease the maintenance burden of having numerous types. The proposed allocation was formally declined in late March 1942.

Later in that year, the RAAF would eventually introduce the Lockheed Lightning as a combat aircraft in the form of the F4 reconnaissance model only. Thus the brief flirt with the possible use of the Lockheed Lightning as a fighter for the RAAF was over.

## USAAF Service

The remaining Lockheed Lightning I aircraft, retaining their original BAC Serials, would be used by USAAF training Units in the Continental US of A.



*Lockheed Lightning I AF161 in flight with later Allison V-1710--27/29 engines. Credit: Lockheed*

A high percentage of those earlier aircraft, from aircraft #20, were fitted with 2 x Allison V-1710--27/29 handed Engines.

Some became movie stars. If there are any avid researchers who would like to see film of Lightning I aircraft in flight, I would suggest that you view an original copy of "A Guy named Joe" with Van Johnson and Spencer Tracey, a Film set in the Pacific war zone (film location was actually Florida, USA).

You'll see them both in flight and on the ground,

As for the Lockheed Lightning IIs Aircraft, as stated, they became P-38F and P-38Gs with their serials being:

- P-38F-13: USAAF FY43-2035 to 43-2063
- P-38F-15: USAAF FY43-2064 to 43-2184
- P-38G-13: USAAF FY43-2185 to 43-2358
- P-38G-15: USAAF FY43-2359 to 43-2558

What is interesting is that several of these ex BAC contracted Lockheed Lightning II aircraft did in fact come to Australia, though as P-38G-13/15s models, to be assembled at Eagle Farm (Brisbane) or Townsville and then flown by the 8<sup>th</sup>, 49<sup>th</sup> and 475<sup>th</sup> Fighter Groups in combat operations in the South West Pacific Theatre.

SWPAC Examples are:

43-2187(475<sup>th</sup>'s *Barbara-Anne IV*), 43-2200 (2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Andrew Duke, 475<sup>th</sup> FG, crashed at Mareeba, Qld), 43-2203 (Flown by Major George Welch of Pearl Harbour Fame, in shooting down 4 aircraft during Sept 1943, with the 8<sup>th</sup> FG, later shot down at Rabaul when flown by Lt. Willis F. Evers), 43-2211 (8<sup>th</sup>'s *Calamity Jane*), 43-2212 (8<sup>th</sup>'s *RUFF STUFF*), 43-2284 (8<sup>th</sup>'s *De Drunk*), 43-2386 (8<sup>th</sup>'s *G.I. ANNIE* and 43-2287 (flown by Major Thomas B McGuire, Pacific Theatre leading Ace) to name but a few.

Those 49<sup>th</sup> FG examples included: 43-2207, 43-2208 (Flown by Capt Bill Haney 9<sup>th</sup> FS as #95) and 43-2387 (Flown by 1<sup>st</sup> Lt Carl Planck, 9thFS).

Though not flown by the RAAF, it would be fair to say that the Lockheed Lightning II did impact historically on the joint war effort in the SWPAC from late 1942 when flown by the three Groups in this theatre.

Gordon R Birkett @2006Vers1F

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

#### Authors Note: The future Lockheed Martin Lightning II

The final chance of a Lockheed Lightning II aircraft to serve in the RAAF in the fighter role will be made within the next few years.

It will be however in the form of the single engine Lockheed Martin F-35A Lightning II.

So it now seems that after nearly 75 years of waiting that all three of our fighter Squadrons will be eventually be flying the Lockheed Lightning II by 2017.

#### References:

NAA:

- Delivery Rates of Aircraft - Formation of New Units and re-arming of Existing Squadrons.
- Provision of interceptor aircraft

Joe Baugher:

- FY43 Serials

Peter Dunne's Australia at War

- Crashes per 43-2200

Jane's:

- Fighting Aircraft of World War II ISBN 1-851-70493-0

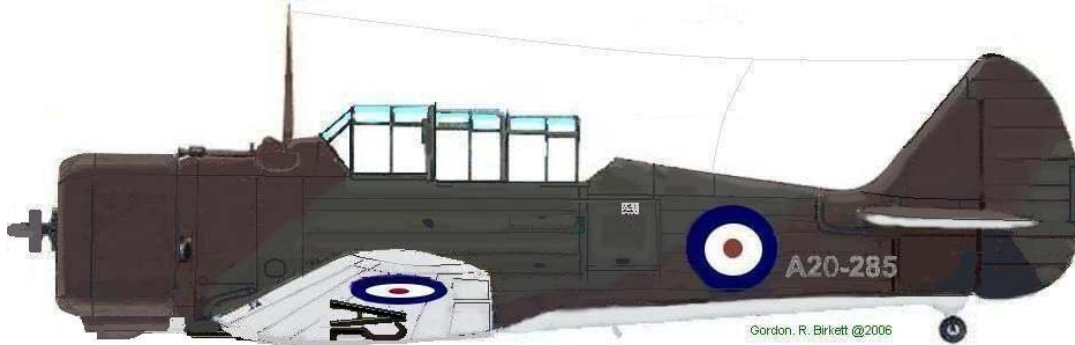
#### **Presentation Aircraft: Wirraway A20-285 "Hotelkeepers and Allied Trades of South Australia" – Gordon Birkett**

**The Licensed Victualler's and Allied Industries War Material Fund of South Australia had raised some £5120.6.6 during 1940 and early in 1941. A letter to the Department of Air, Canberra, explaining their wish to purchase a Spitfire or similar aircraft for the Royal Australian Air Force was sent in early March 1941, following a discussion with the then Minister for Air, the Hon J "Blackjack" McEwen.**

Though the Royal Australian Air Force was not then equipping with Spitfire Aircraft in Australia, the sum donated, approximately half the cost of a CAC Wirraway, was regarded as sufficient to have a suitable plaque placed on a Wirraway in appreciation of the Licensed Victualler's and Allied Industries War Material Fund of South Australia donation.

A letter of acceptance of the Presentation aircraft to be a Wirraway was sent on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May 1941 to the Minister of Air with details of the Presentation Plaque to be displayed. A further

letter was sent on the 14<sup>th</sup> May 1941 to the Department of Air to amend the words for the plaque, in lieu of "Licensed" and "Trade", to "Allied Trades".



***A20-285 depicted as she left Fisherman's Bend 6<sup>th</sup> June 1941***

1 Aircraft Depot was advised to affix a Presentation Plaque, following its production by the Unit, to a new CAC Wirraway when it was accepted into the Royal Australian Air Force.

A plaque, ***"Presented by the Hotelkeepers and Allied Trades of South Australia"*** placed on rear crew cockpit port fuselage of a new and pristine CAC8 c/n486 Wirraway MkII. This aircraft was accepted into the Royal Australian Air Force as **A20-285**.



A RAAF Pilot boards the newly presented A20-285 at Fisherman's Bend, Victoria 6<sup>th</sup> June 1941. The plaque can be seen forward of the fuselage roundel. RAAF Official

The aircraft was received by 5 Squadron on the 29<sup>th</sup> June 1941 then based at Laverton Victoria as one of twelve Wirraways and additionally, 3 Moth Minors on strength with the squadron.

A20-285 suffered its first accident on the 11<sup>th</sup> March 1942 when the pilot, P/O Miller-Randle, braked suddenly to avoid an obstruction on the taxiway at Laverton and tipped on her nose damaging the airscrew.

By November 1942, the national insignia had been changed to Blue and White only, along with all serials and roundels deleted on the underside of the aircraft. Blue/White fin flash was also added, with the serial on the underside of A20-285 being sprayed out and the red centres deleted. The underneath of the cowl was also sprayed.

Another accident happened on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March 1943 when aircraft made forced landing near Kingaroy where the squadron was then based. Both the aircraft and the pilot, F/O Olorenshaw landed without mishap.

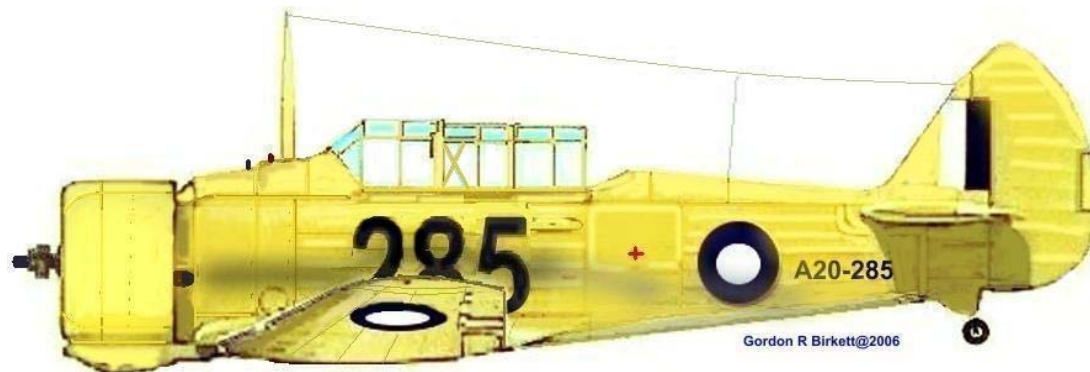
Being based in the North Western theatre of Australia, Squadron codes (BF in the case of 5Sqn RAAF) and individual aircraft codes were applied to all aircraft of the squadron from February 1943 in medium sea grey. A20-285 became F for Freddie.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> July 1943, a further mishap occurred when F/O S R Carter was making a landing at Mareeba with a strong cross wind, when the aircraft veered across the strip and struck a dirt mound. Damage to the aircraft was confined to a bent airscrew and a damaged starboard wing tip. Squadron maintenance personnel would repair it.



***A20-285 Coded as BF-F with 5 Squadron (Army Co-op) at Mareeba in June 1943***

A20-285 days as a frontline aircraft came on the 27<sup>th</sup> October 1943 when it arrived at 7 Service Flying Training School at Deniliquin, New South Wales. During next few months the aircraft would undergo a C service, latest modifications, and an engine change, emerging in a new overall yellow colour. For the next twelve months the aircraft would be used for the training of new pilots.



A20-285 depicted in service with 7 Service Flying Training School during 1944.

***The aircraft's final service came during May 1945 when the aircraft was transferred to the Central Flying School, then located at Point Cook, Victoria.***

***From there the aircraft went into Category C Storage for the duration of her service with the Royal Australian Air Force at 7 Aircraft Depot at Tocumwal during February 1946.***



***A20-285 would spend her remaining storage at Tocumwal as part of the Strategic Reserve, later under the care of Detachment B, 1 Aircraft Depot, until she was disposed on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1956 and later scrapped by L& M Newmans Pty Ltd.***

***I wonder when the Presentation Plaque was taken off, or more importantly, whether it has survived?***

**Gordon R Birkett @2007Vers2**

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**Sources:**

1. Gift aircraft for RAAF - Contribution from members of the public - 2nd World War (NAA)
2. E/E88 Card and Personal Resource Collection (GRB Inc)
3. A50 History sheets 2AD , 5 Squadron ,CFS
4. RAAF Accident records held.

**Please Note: though every effort is made for accuracy per profiles, advice and comments are welcomed.**

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

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

**Sources:**

- 78 F and 80F Squadron A50 History Sheets
- 78F and 80F Operational Reports
- EE88 Aircraft Card
- Accident Report per A29-651.
- NAA File: Acquisition of Aircraft for RAAF (1944)
- AWM Photograph Neg# OG1545
- Personal BuzB and GordyB P-40 Photographic Vault Archives

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***Limited Edition RAAF Mirage III0 Book***

For those who may remember the book on the colours and markings of the RAAF Mirage III0 by the late Paul Mason and Myself, I now have available a very limited set of 25 books with the signatures of Serge Dassault, son of Marcel and the seven Australian pilots who accumulated over 3000 hours on the type; "Baz" Turner, Wayne Higgenbottom, Dave Halloran Shane Welsh, Jeorge Washington, Bob Chaplin, Reg Meissner (who, regrettably passed away in February 2006)

Also included are the signatures of Faye Mason (in memory of her late husband), myself and Juanita Franzi who provided the excellent artwork found in the book.

There are only 20 of these numbered books available for sale (#6-25) and, for the time being, I am making 10 available to the modelling and enthusiast community and 10 for the pilot / groundcrew to ensure that (hopefully) everyone who may be interested gets a fair chance.

The price for one of these, never to be repeated, copies is \$250 plus the cost of registered and insured postage (which I still have to find out from the post office).

Anyone who is interested can contact me at [hyper16@tpg.com.au](mailto:hyper16@tpg.com.au) for further info and orders (payment will most likely be via direct deposit where possible. Please note that I am not able to take any form of credit card payment or similar methods). Let me know if you have a

preference for a particular number (again, #6 to 25 available) and, if possible, an alternative in case your first choice is already taken.

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### **Can You Help?**

WW2 Recruitment Film "Green Light"

Robert Gibbins has written to the ADF-Serials group about his father Raymond Henry Gibbins (Service No. 250423) who is 93!

Robert provided the following information:

My father began flying in 1936 at Essendon. Subsequently he became an Assistant Flying Instructor at the Royal Victorian Aero Club and the GoldFields Aero Club at Kalgoorlie and Norseman in Western Australia. With the out break for the Second World War he ferried the club's last remaining aircraft; a Gipsy Moth back to Melbourne. The trip took a couple of days.

With the cessation of civil flying he joined the RAAF. His postings were:

No 2 Instructor's Course. Point Cook: 2nd January to 1st March 1940  
No 1 EFTS Parafield South Australia: 11 March - 8 November 1940  
No 8 EFTS Narrandera NSW 10 November- 26 March 1941  
No 1 EFTS Parafield South Australia 31 March- 10 October 1941

CFT Camden NSW 24 October 1941 -12 December 1941

No 1 SFTS ITS&F, ATS Point Cook 15 December 1941- 31 August 1944  
Ferried to PTC Mallala South Australia 4 September 1944  
No position: reassigned to No 2 ADS Mt Gambier South Australia 7 September - 18 September 1945

On discharge from the airforce he resumed flying with the Aero Club but with their relocation to Moorabbin could no longer continue his flying career.

Now for an off beat question/request. Do any of your researchers have ready access to the RAAF Unit Records? On page 7 of my file there is a notation at the top of the page stating he was involved in the making of a recruitment film called 'Green Light'. As a result of this promotion posters and bill boards appear all over Adelaide.

I was wondering whether if any of you could check out the details of the making of the film? A few years ago I tried to find out about it but could find nothing. I thought it would be nice if I could find any remaining copies of it and play it for him. However, I expect this would not be possible. If however, I could find out details about its making etc. I would be most grateful.

A note of warning. I know the film was made whilst he was at Parafield. I have a still photo and a recruitment program with his photo in it. What I cannot be so sure of is when this actually took place, what the name of the film really was and of course whether a copy of the film still exists. But I am sure it would have been recorded in the Parafield Unit Records some where. Can anyone think of where there might be a copy? I have suggested the War Memorial (even though it's not on their online catalogue) and Screensound Australia for a start.

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### **On This Day:**

- 2 Mar 1972 Last RAAF flight out of Vietnam Australia's involvement in Vietnam was among the most divisive issues in Australia during the second half of the twentieth century, leaving a legacy of bitterness that continued long after the conclusion of the war.
- 7 Mar 42 Kittyhawk A29-1 75SQN PLTOFF Lloyd Henry Holliday 411786  
Crashed 10 kms NNW of Kempsey, NSW whilst on a ferry flight to Townsville with two other Kittyhawks. PLTOFF Holliday's mother had served during WW1 as an army nurse.

- 8 Mar 43 Catalina A24-22 11SQN Crew and pax: WGCDR Frank Chapman (Pilot), SGT Ronald Stephens (2nd Pilot), FLGOFF John Todd (Nav), SGT Jack Dewhurst (1st Engineer), LAC Robert Docking (2nd Engineer), FLGOFF Stanley Deacon (1st Wireless Op), SGT Lloyd Stanley (2nd Wireless Op), LAC Colin Anderson (Armourer), FLGOFF Michael Bradshaw (Intelligence Officer), Crashed off Gasmata after an on-board fire while on a "milk run."
- 9 Mar 43 Beaufort A9-16 1OTU PLTOFF W.N. Greenwood, SGT N.J. Crosbie, SGT W.E. Gough, SGT J.H. Shepherd. Crashed into the sea approximately 10 miles SE of Woodside, Vic.
- 12 Mar 90 Nomad N24 A18-401 ARDU. Pilot: FLTLT Donovan. In-flight structural failure of the horizontal stabiliser caused the aircraft to crash at Mallala, S.A.
- 15 Mar 43 Beaufort A9-81 1OTU PLTOFF D. Connell (pilot), SGT F.E. Bradley, SGT N.R. Dawson, SGT S.E. Marsden. Crashed approximately 7 miles SE of Swan Reach, Victoria.
- 20 Mar 1917 Lieutenant F.H. McNamara, VC Lieutenant F.H. McNamara, originally from Rushworth, Victoria, becomes the first Australian airman to win a Victoria Cross for rescuing a downed comrade in Palestine.
- 23 Mar 70 Canberra Mk 21 A84-205 1OCU FLGOFF H. Badower O316661 (Pilot), FLTLT J. Siffer O44650 (Nav). Crashed at Amberley after attempting an asymmetric overshoot and lost control.
- 25 Mar 25 Avro 504K A3-28 1FTS FLGOFF Stewart E. Mailer (QFI), FLGOFF Alan M. Charlesworth (student pilot). This Avro 504K, formerly E3743, was another aircraft given to Australia as a part of the Imperial Gift was on approach to land at Point Cook, after a training flight. The aircraft then apparently stalled and spun into a paddock at the rear of the hangers at the airfield. As a result of this crash FLGOFF Mailer has the unfortunate distinction of being the first officer of the RAAF to be killed in the new service.
- 27 Mar 1953 Last engagement between Meteors and MIGS in the Korean War Meteors had been found to be inferior to MIGS in air to air combat in Korea and were transferred to ground attack duties.

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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