



ADF Serials Newsletter

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

Hi everyone. Another busy month with lots of discussion on the ADF Serials message boards. As someone who only gets a chance to browse occasionally, I am constantly amazed at the expertise and knowledge of those who freely give their assistance to others! You can access the message boards from the menu on the main webpage:

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

We also thank the many people who provide feedback about stories etc in the newsletter. It was surprising but gratifying to receive an email from Warwick Henry thanking us for the information about the Richmond Air Show featured in an earlier edition of the newsletter. While the air show had been advertised locally in the Sydney area and had been up on the RAAF website since June, information about the air show had not been disseminated to the wider aviation community via aero clubs, mags etc. Warwick followed this up with RAAF PR and hopefully this will be addressed for the next RAAF air show. Thanks to Warwick for following this up. I have included the links for the Air show which promises to be a fantastic weekend!

If you know of any events aviation events coming up, please use the contact link and we will publish them in the newsletter.

Till next month

Jan

Richmond Air Show - RAAF Base Richmond Update 21–22 October 2006 UPDATE

Gates open 8am both days.

Car parks open 6:30am.

Flying display midday–3:30pm both days (both the same, assuming good weather).

Gates close 6pm.

Civilian aircraft will not be able to fly into RAAF Base Richmond for the Air Show. Space is very limited and the runways, taxiways and hardstands will be being used for displays, exhibitions and pedestrian traffic throughout the day.

For further details including travel options via Cityrail please visit the website:

<http://www.defence.gov.au/raaf/airshow/transport.htm>

<http://www.defence.gov.au/raaf/airshow/prices.htm>

<http://www.defence.gov.au/raaf/airshow/index.htm>

Presentation Aircraft: Vultee Vengeance A27-11 – Gordon Birkett



A short story of Sir Thomas Buckland's life and his aircraft donations

With this series we will be providing some background for some of the RAAF Presentation Aircraft received during World War II. Perhaps a single person stands out more than any other person or organisation would be Sir Thomas Buckland (1848-1947). His life deserves to be told in detail.

Being a goldmine-manager, pastoralist, businessman and philanthropist during his life, Sir Thomas was born on 1st August 1848 at Maidstone, Kent, England. Migrated to Sydney in 1865 and worked for his uncle Thomas Buckland, he then moved to Victoria and became a gold-assayer.

In 1867 went to Queensland and joined the Gympie gold rush, but in 1869, he returned to Sydney and entered the Bank of New South Wales to become bullion clerk and gold-assayer. Three years later he resigned and moved to Charters Towers, Queensland, where he set up

as a gold-buyer and assayer and head of the butchering business, T. Buckland & Co. With his involvement in mining, Sir Thomas contributed a small fortune in 'backing money' before he received a rewarding dividend. He became later a manager of several companies (including the director of the Victory (Charters Towers) Gold Mining Co. Ltd, in 1892).

From 1877 Sir Thomas was a member of the Charters Towers Municipal Council (Later Mayor in 1882 and 1883). At Millchester, Queensland, on 8 August 1875 Buckland married (later divorced his first wife in 1889). In 1879 he acquired Cardigan station in North Kennedy, in 1891 St Anns, and within a year, Bosworth on the Burdekin River...

In 1890 he went back to England, intending to settle, and on 15 October married Mary Kirkpatrick of Monks Horton Park near Hythe, Kent.

In 1891 he returned to Queensland to manage his interests during the depression, and soon became managing director in Australia for the English principals of Cobar Gold Mines Ltd, New South Wales.

Residing in Sydney from about 1898, he became a director of several prominent companies:

- Chairman of the pastoral company Pitt, Son & Badgery Ltd in 1906-43
- Director of the Permanent Trustee Co. of New South Wales from 1920.
- President of the Bank of New South Wales in 1922-37
- Chairman of the United Insurance Co. Ltd from 1935

Thereafter Sir Thomas devoted his time and energy to his directorships and to philanthropy. He endowed the Buckland Memorial Church of England Boys' Home at Carlingford in 1927, and in 1934 gave £100,000 for the construction and endowment of the Buckland Convalescent Hospital at Springwood

By 1938, he was now in his nineties and with his personal growing concerns about the country's lack of defence preparations, he donated £10,500 to the Commonwealth government to buy an Avro Anson bomber (A4-41). He requested, and was recorded taken, for a flight in it as condition of his gift.

In 1940 he gave £20,000 to the British government for war expenditure.

Donating with a Vengeance

On the first of May 1941, he inquired about donating an additional £15,000 for an example of the latest American bomber plane for the Royal Australian Air Force. Just fourteen days later he received a reply from the then Minister for Air, the Hon J "Blackjack" McEwen. He would send another letter on the 11th July 1941 inquiring whether the type of aircraft concerned had arrived in Australia. He also agreed that a small plaque, reflecting the donation be fixed on the designated aircraft on presentation. The actual transfer of the donation for £15000 was made on the 15th November 1941.

The initial American Bomber type was to be the Brewster Bermuda, previously written about in an earlier ADF-Serial Newsletter Article. As stated in the article, this aircraft type was finally cancelled by the RAAF and replaced by the V72 Vultee Vengeance. This information was conveyed to Sir Thomas by letter dated the 9th February 1942. Further to this, in a letter of the 10th April 1942, he was advised by the Minister for Air, the Hon Arthur Drakeford, that the first of the type delivered will be earmarked as the presentation aircraft. In his reply of the 14th April 1942, Sir Thomas indicated if the aircraft was being delivered from Sydney, his wish to be able to have a flight in it, as previously done when presenting his Avro Anson donation, he would avail himself.

In his reply to this request on the 20th April 1942, the Minister for Air would advise and make arrangements to see that be carried out. On the 13th May 1942, the Minister for Air wrote to Sir Thomas to advise him of the delays of aircraft delivery. He was asked whether, on advice by RAAF Officers, if he would transfer his preference to a Kittyhawk aircraft instead, then in supply.

On the 19th May 1942 Sir Thomas understood the delays and accepted their suggestion, but that would mean his "ride" would not happen. In a letter dated the 27th May 1942, Sir Thomas agreed to the Kittyhawk proposal. However, it seems that a Vultee Vengeance had indeed arrived by the middle of July 1942, and the Kittyhawk proposal was promptly forgotten. At this time he underwent his medical which he was considered fit. In a communique from Group Captain Irwin of 3AD Amberley, the aircraft assembled, tested and with the plaque fitted, was to be flown down to Richmond by the 22nd August 1942 for the acceptance ceremony.

Unfortunately Sir Thomas or A27-11 were not present due to the operational situation of the then time. He expressed his disappointment to the Minister for Air by letter.

About Sir Thomas requested flight?

At the age of 95 years, following another thorough RAAF Medical, did he get his wish of Vengeance flight; high above 2AD Richmond in A27-11 following its conversion to a target Tug, a year later in late August 1943?

Records show no evidence, however rumours do persist to say he did. Can anyone confirm this rumour?

The Aircraft Details and History

RAAF Serial: A27-11. British Purchasing Commission RAF Serial: AN892.

Northrop Built Model A31 (V72) c/n455 Mk.1a Contract BAC A-1555 Delivered:08/07/42 Los Angeles USA to Brisbane. Served: 2OTU/12Sqn/1CU/SHQ Laverton

Presentation Vengeance "Sir Thomas Buckland", presented by Sir Thomas Buckland, Rec ex USA to 3AD 27/07/42. Rec 2OTU 31/08/42. 28/09/42 rec at 1AD for modifications.31/10/42 rec at 12Sqn.Rec 2AD 22/05/43.Allocated for Target towing conversion 29/09/43. Rec 2AD 10/01/44. Rec 1AD 31/01/44. Rec 1 Comm Unit 26/03/44. Rec SHQ Flight Laverton 10/05/44. On 21/05/44,1533 hrs , after dropping target drone at 300ft, the aircraft was force landed in a crop field after engine malfunction some two miles northwest from Laverton RAAF.Pilot was F/Lt Hoptop Ser#407175 A/Ob was Sgt J K McTiche Ser#430607. Both were un-injured. Approval to convert to components 18/08/44 with 1CRD. That was the finale of A27-11.



A27-11 sitting at Amberley waiting in preparation of her hand-over in late August 1942. (RAAF)

Gordon R Birkett @2006Vers2.1
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Sources:

1. Biography Extract written by R. F. Holder, Australian Dictionary of Biography On line addition, www.adb.online.anu.edu.au
2. Gift aircraft for RAAF - Contribution from members of the public - 2nd World War (NAA)
3. E/E88 Card and Personal Resource Collection (GRB Inc)
4. A50 History sheets 2AD and 3AD Units
5. RAAF Accident records held.

Presentation Aircraft: Oxley Shire Tiger Moth – Gordon Birkett

One of many aircraft to be presented to the RAAF during WW2; ranging from Link-Trainers, Tiger Moths to even Wirraways, we'll concentrate on one particular Tiger Moth in this issue.

During the Second World War the local population of Oxley became involved in raising sufficient funds to subscribe to a presentation aircraft for the RAAF.

Oxley is an agricultural township on the King River, 12 km. South-East of Wangaratta in North-East Victoria. The explorers, Hume and Hovell in 1824, named the area of Oxley Plains after the New South Wales Surveyor-General, John Oxley.

The Oxley Shire extended from Wangaratta southwards to Mount Howitt at the crest of the Great Dividing Range. Its east-west dimension was from Greta to the foot of the Mount Buffalo plateau. Its area was 2,789 square kilometres. The township of Oxley was the administrative centre of Oxley shire until 1936, although council meetings continued at the shire hall in Oxley until 1966.

The Presentation Subscription had raised, by June 1942, enough funds to enable the allocation of an individual Tiger Moth Trainer by the RAAF. That aircraft would be A17-616.



The aircraft was new, having only been just received from De Havilland Australia (Per authority QY874) at 1 Air Observation School on 17th August 1942. It was here that the aircraft was fixed with its presentation plaque on her fuselage, "Presented by The Shire of Oxley Victoria" situated between the cockpits on the port side.

A17-616 was later transferred to 5 Squadron (Army-Co-op) RAAF on the 6th December 1942. 5 Squadron had been reformed at Laverton airfield in Victoria on 9th January 1941. The Squadron was equipped with CAC Wirraways. Their initial role was Army Co-operation, being trained in tactical and photoreconnaissance, artillery spotting, message dropping and other Army support roles.

The Squadron was relocated to Toowoomba airfield on the 12th May 1942, and then having moved on to Toogoolawah airfield by November 1942 when A17-616 joined the squadron.

The squadron then moved to Kingaroy airfield in February 1943, followed to Mareeba airfield in north Queensland during June 1943. It was during this time that the Squadron was allocated its Squadron codes resulting in all six of the unit's Tiger Moths, to be coded BF.

A17-616 became BF-Z.



It seems that the standard paint finish of acceptance in August 1942 had given way to the above finish, along with codes, by the time of its first accident in July 1943.

Sky under on the under surfaces, with the then standard Earth and Foliage Green disruptive scheme and the then standard insignia of White and Blue Roundels. There is doubt on whether it sported the fin flash.

Following its accident at Rocky Creek, the aircraft continued its service after repair and overhaul by Australian National Airlines at Bankstown with 6th Communications Unit in the Northern Territory.

There is no photographic record of what scheme she was carrying during this service, though overall Foliage green would be a careful consideration.

After a varied wartime service the aircraft went into storage following its rebuild and overhaul post war in early 1946.



Eventually after again being overhauled and re-sprayed in silver, she would be allocated to 1 Basic Flying Training School Point Cook in 1952.

There she would serve less than twelve months before being placed again into storage for some years at East Sale prior to her eventual sale in 1959.

There appears to be a cold trail after 1959 and I would appreciate if any person could throw any further light of her subsequent history?

E/E88 Card History

A17-616 C/N DHA1051 Rec 2AD ex DHA 18/08/42. Rec 1AOS 24/08/42. Designated as presentation aircraft by the RAAF and had its presentation plate affixed "Presented by The Shire of Oxley Victoria" 19/10/42 rec 5Sqn Accident 06/12/42 at Yeppoon Qld, when aircraft tipped on nose on landing. 20/07/43 allocated to 12RSU following crash at Rocky Creek on the 19/07/43. Canc. Rec 02/08/43 rec at 13ARD ex 5Sqn. To ANA, for overhaul at Bankstown. Rec 2AP following re-build, 14/06/44. Rebuilt and accepted, 05/08/44 rec at 6CU. 12/11/45 issued to 10EFTS.

Still with 6CU, accident 15/11/45 when on landing aircraft ground looped causing extensive damage when undercarriage collapsed at Gorrie Strip. 26/11/45 rec at 10EFTS from 6CU for storage. 01/04/46 it was still being repaired.

Selected 10/04/46 for post war service.09/12/47 rec 2AD17/08/48 Cat C Storage. 1/05/51 rec at DHA Bankstown for overhaul. 02/04/52 allocated for 1BFTS Point Cook. 22/05/52 Issued to DHA for overhaul then ferrying to 1BFTS. 28/05/52 rec at 1BFTS.20/03/53 rec East Sale until 11/07/56. 21/08/56 to be held as general reserve at East Sale.09/10/56 rec 1AD for disposal. 01/06/57. Collected by Purchaser 23/04/59.

Gordon R Birkett @2006Vers1

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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
4. RAAF Accident records held.

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

Can you Help?

A9-650 Loss over Milak, PNG

Owen is currently working on his second manuscript which in part involves a Beaufort WAG, FLTLT Francis Owen Smith, whom he is named after. He was involved in the crash of A9-557 and later died in A9-650. From all of his research, he has narrowed -650's crash site down to "over Milak" in New Guinea. The bodies were subsequently recovered from the wreck of -650, so Owen would like to know where he might find a more precise location. (He has a rough grid reference from the Ops Record)

Any ideas would be appreciated.

Rob Endersbee at the Merredin Military Museum is looking for a Macchi 057 as it is currently (unrestored)? Rod message:

Being far from complete, we are not sure on when we will be able to start restoration to static condition. Any suggestions on who to talk to about obtaining parts would be greatly appreciated. It is our first aircraft in the museum.

Some information on the Merredin Military Museum (WA)

Located adjacent the water tower on Great Eastern Highway, the Museum's collection displays memorabilia and equipment relating to all conflicts from World War 1 onwards. Some of the machinery is still in working order.

Details on the collection and further information on World War 2 sites in the region are available in a booklet on sale at the Museum.

Open 10.00am to 12.00pm and 1.00pm to 3.00pm

Cost of entry

\$6.50 for adults, \$3.50 child/conc, \$15.00 for families

Closed Saturday

On This Day:

4 Sep 1947 **Mustang A68-787** 77SQN. While attempting to land at Bofu airfield, Japan, FLTLT C Nissen overshot and the aircraft came to rest in a drainage ditch and drowned as a result. It was believed that FLTLT Nissen had been incapacitated during the landing resulting in the crash.

5 Sep 1926 **DH-9 A6-17** 1FTS. SGT Ernest B Ebell, a trainee pilot died after he attempted a forced landing near Geelong, after encountering storms while returning from a cross-country flight test. He subsequently crashed and was killed as a result.

19 Sep 43 **Oxford BG119** 1OTU Crew: FSGT J.A. Layton 415584 (Pilot), WOFF G.W. Clarke (2nd Pilot) and FSGT T.C. Anderson (Nav). The aircraft was first seen to go into a left hand steep turn the aircraft then onto its back and roll out the plane then fell into a dive. It was during the dive that smoke was seen coming from the port engine. FSGT Layton did not recover from the dive and the aircraft disintegrated into a fireball upon striking the ground.

20 Sep 1912 Official approval given for the establishment of a military Central Flying School.

21 Sep 1918 Australian and British airmen of the Australian Flying Corps and Royal Flying Corps massacre retreating Turkish troops in the Wadi Fara, Palestine.

28 Sep 1956 **Meteor Mk7 VW-410**. Crew: PLTOFF M. Henzell and FLTLT N. Chilsolm crashed near Woomera after possibly losing control at high speed.

29 Sep 1977 **F-111C A8-133** 6SQN Crew: SQNLDR John Francis Holt O315918 (Pilot) and FLTLT Adam Phillip Winold Noordink O118789 (Nav) suffered a birdstrike through the canopy at the Evan's Head Air Weapons Range. Both crew members survived the initial impact and ejected, however, the ejection occurred outside its designed parameters and both crew subsequently died.

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

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

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