



## ADF Serials Newsletter

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

Hi everyone. Well the end of the year is nearly upon us and I can thankfully say I have survived HSC year (just)! I can't remember being under the same level of pressure when I sat my exams a number of years ago. Now we just have to wait for the all important university entrance results to see what the next step is!

I was saddened to hear of the Col Pay's death last week. Col was well known in aviation circles not only for his interest in warbirds, but also as a pioneer aerial fire fighter. Vale Col Pay.

This month Gordon examines the status of the RAAF as at 8 Dec 1941 starting in the then British colony of Malaya. RAAF numbers were small but the crews kept flying against tremendous odds to support their counterparts on the ground and tragically, many lost their lives or were taken as prisoners of war during this campaign.

On behalf of the ADF-Serials group, I would like to wish you all a safe and happy Christmas and New Year. See you all next year!

Jan

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### Message Board – Current topics

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

- General discussion – Death of Col Pay
- Airshows – Images from FAA Nowra
- Aircrew - Aircrew Trades, Brevets & Wings?, Information Wanted

- Army aircraft – Retirement of Iroquois, 5<sup>th</sup> Aviation Regiment turns 20
- RAAF aircraft – Orion Accident 1978 Cocos Islands
- Navy aircraft – Sea Otter
- NZ Military Aircraft and aircrew – RNZ 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/>

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## 2008 Airshows

### Temora Aviation Museum

February 9th & 10th

March 22nd & 23rd

April 26th & 27th

June 7th & 8th

July 19th & 20th

August 30th & 31st

October 11th & 12th

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## Vale Col Pay

It was with much sadness that I learned of Col Pay's death last week. Col's contribution to Australian aviation was tremendous as evidenced by the tributes published after his death:

The NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) is deeply saddened by the loss of a long term contractor and friend Col Pay, who was an icon within the aerial fire fighting industry.

Col was a pioneer in aerial fire fighting and his knowledge, skills and experience were of the highest standard. He had exceptional knowledge of fires and he was regarded as one of the most experienced fire bombing pilots in the industry.

As a contractor with the RFS since the 1990's, he has been integral to fire fighting operations at some of the largest fires in the State. Col was professional, innovative and his wealth of knowledge enhanced both the aviation industry and fire fighting across the country.

The fire fighting industry is very close and the loss of such a generous and passionate person will be felt by Australian fire fighters and those he battled major fires with in other parts of the world.

Col will be sadly missed by the RFS and our thoughts are with his family, friends and colleagues at this difficult time.

[http://www.bushfire.nsw.gov.au/dsp\\_more\\_info\\_latest.cfm?CON\\_ID=5274](http://www.bushfire.nsw.gov.au/dsp_more_info_latest.cfm?CON_ID=5274)

## Fly-past a final farewell to pioneer pilot with a larrikin spirit - Paul Maguire

FLIGHT is freedom in its purest form,

To dance with the clouds which follow a storm.

THESE words began the tribute poem Impressions of a Pilot which Ross Pay read yesterday to about 1000 people gathered at Saint Andrews Uniting Church, Scone, in the NSW Hunter Valley to farewell his father, pioneering aviator Col Pay.

Mr Pay, 75, died last Friday when his Air Tractor 802 plane crashed in Lake Liddell, between Muswellbrook and Singleton.

He is understood to have been testing the fire-bomber, by scooping up water, when the machine clipped the surface, flipped and sank where the lake was about eight metres deep. Australian Transport Safety Bureau investigators are expected to release a preliminary report in a month on the cause of the crash.

Mr Pay was considered a legend within the flying fraternity because of his passion for restoring old warbirds, dedication to aviation and the success of his crop-dusting and fire-bombing business.

He grew up at Narromine where he developed his love of planes, began learning to fly in 1951, obtained his pilot's licence in 1953 and became a commercial pilot in 1957 before moving to Scone and starting Pay's Air Service.

During yesterday's funeral, Ross told the congregation his father had been his hero and best mate.

Col Pay was a strong, loving, cheeky man who, although deaf when it suited, was the best role model anyone could wish for, his son said. Ross recalled what could be considered his father's philosophy to life.

One day when complimented for his success, Col answered: "The harder I work the luckier I get."

Those who came to the funeral filled the church and nearby hall, which had video coverage of the service, and about 500 people crowded the grounds between the church and the hall. Friends and relatives who spoke during proceedings described Mr Pay, first and foremost, as a dedicated family man and secondly as a pilot, historic aircraft enthusiast and businessman. He was a hard working, practical and generous person who maintained a larrikin spirit, continued to learn and innovate all his life and most often chose to speak through actions, rather than words, they said.

Following the funeral, Mr Pay was buried at Scone Lawn Cemetery in a ceremony which ended with a fly-past by three planes.

The first to come in over the gathering was Mr Pay's private Cessna, then an Air Tractor, like the one in which he died, and the last was a Spitfire that performed loops and barrel rolls before disappearing into the clouds.

Source: The Herald, NSW

[http://nqr.farmonline.com.au/news\\_regional\\_detail.asp?class=national%20news&subclass=general&story\\_id=1105365&category=general](http://nqr.farmonline.com.au/news_regional_detail.asp?class=national%20news&subclass=general&story_id=1105365&category=general)

**Comment from "Digger"** <http://ww2chat.com/forums/general-topics/1212-vale-col-pay.html>

Col wasn't a WW2 vet but he did a helluva lot to keep the warbirds flying and show us the types of planes we'd only have otherwise read about. He was a cropduster pilot from Scone NSW and died doing what he loved, pioneering new techniques for water scooping to use against bushfires when something went wrong and he crashed into Lake Liddell, between Singleton NSW and Muswellbrook NSW. His plane and body were recovered by emergency services watching him show the technique. Ambulance swam out to try and save him but to no avail.

He restored and flew P51D, Spitfire MkIX and a P40E and thrilled and delighted crowds at air shows as he put them through their paces and flew them as they should be flown. I had the honour to have met him on a few occasions as a past Hon Sec of local Aero Club when we asked him to bring his Mustang which he was too happy to do and also socially through other ag pilot friends.

Col was 75y.o with over 50 years flying experience.

He'll be sorely missed for his experience, dedication and sense of humour. Vale Col Pay

**The Temora Aviation Museum** had already acknowledged Col's tremendous contribution to Australian aviation by including him in their Unsung Heroes section:

<http://www.aviationmuseum.com.au/unsung/p.cfm>

## Pacific Fortress Documentary – Peter Dunn Oz@War

Many military researchers will have used Peter Dunn's Oz@WaR site which is a comprehensive research tool for aviation and military enthusiasts. Peter Dunn has been providing research on "The Liberty Belle" for an upcoming documentary:

Pacific Fortress follows the journey of the B-17 Flying Fortress "The Liberty Belle" from USA to Australia to recreate the untold story of the USAAF Kangaroo Squadron. The documentary is preparing to film in December 2008, when the Liberty Belle will commence this remarkable journey.

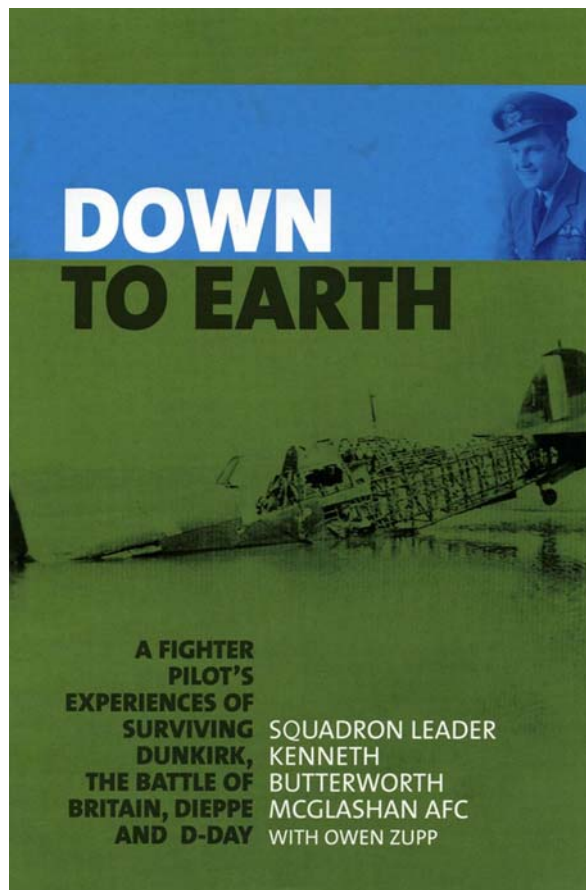
For further information please check out the following link:

<http://www.ozatwar.com/pacificfortress/index.htm>

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## New Book

**"Down to Earth" by Owen Zupp**



Along the way we all have cause to encounter all sorts of personalities; some interesting, some complicated and others that spring to mind for all of the wrong reasons. They can be found in a marketplace in some far-away hidden corner of the globe, or right around the corner next to the pie shop. Part of the fun is never knowing quite where you'll find them.

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Some time back, I took to speaking to veteran aircrew of past conflicts in an effort to record their stories. It allowed me to tie together my interest in history, writing and aviation. Along the way meeting characters who have 'been there and done that' but retain modesty and the art of the understatement. While some stories are published, others are simply retained by the family to pass on to the enquiring grandchildren whose questions always seem to surface around ANZAC Day assignment time.

Two years ago, I was approached by one such survivor of World War Two. Not through the Department of Veteran's Affairs, or the RSL, but an electrician. Repairing all and sundry in the aftermath of a lightning strike, the 'sparky' mentioned an old fella he knew who had been trying to get his story recorded for a few years. He'd started to write it himself, but hadn't gotten very far; maybe I'd like to have a chat with him?

Kenneth Butterworth McGlashan was standing in his shed, shaking his head at a recalcitrant lathe when I first met him. He'd taken to restoring tired antique furniture in his retirement and his workshop was a mix of turned table legs and sawdust. Turning away from his tools, Kenneth greeted me warmly and immediately began chatting about his Royal Air Force days. With a Scottish accent, the 84 year-old started to describe an aerial combat over Dunkirk in 1940 on which he had come out on the wrong side. We wandered inside and began to chat over a cup of tea about aerial campaigns that had become folklore; the Battle of Britain, Dieppe, D-Day. Kenneth had been there for all of them as a fighter pilot, he was one of 'The Few' who had defended Britain in her darkest hour.

His sharp eyes hadn't aged a day, nor had his sense of humour. He related anecdote after anecdote with tremendous clarity and the hours ticked by until it was time for me to leave. Sensing my movement toward the door, Kenneth asked me if I was interested in writing his story and I knew I was, however I sensed immediately that this wasn't a magazine article or a short story for the family archives; it was a book. This bloke had received his wings on rag and tube biplanes before the war and flown through the entire conflict, from the retreat at Dunkirk to the landings at Normandy and beyond. He was living history and I was hooked. I had to say yes.

Was I up to writing a book? Between a two year-old, a wife pregnant with twins and good dose of self-doubt, I had reservations. But as I sat in Kenneth's lounge room a week later with the wheels of a tape recorder slowly turning, I started to gather momentum. Not through any skill on my part, but because Kenneth was a natural story teller with an 'A Grade' memory. He jumped from episode to episode, but I let him go as sorting out the chronology was my job. For a starting point, I couldn't go past the tale of Dunkirk with which he had first captivated me.

He had been 19 years of age as he sat perched above the English Channel in his new single-engined Hawker Hurricane. The airframe had only eight hours in the air and, by modern standards, Kenneth didn't have much more. Leading the rear section of three at 25,000 feet, he was tasked with covering the backs of his leading sections. Not long over the Channel, one of his trio turned back with engine trouble, leaving him and Geoff Howitt to fly as a pair. As they flew toward the plume of smoke lifting skyward from Dunkirk on the French coast, the massive evacuation of allied troops was taking place on the waves below in everything from Thames paddle-steamers to personal yachts.

Suddenly, the leading sections dived towards a flock of marauding German bombers. Simultaneously an ear piercing squeal rang out in Ken's headsets and his wingman broke formation clean in front of him as a pair of Messerschmitts roared from left to right. McGlashan rolled in on his foe, but seconds later heard what sounded like an alarm clock going off behind his head. (It was actually bullets hitting the armour plating.) Reality struck when the port side of his Hurricane began ripping under a hail of gunfire and red tracers skipped between his legs, tearing up the piping and framework of his aeroplane's floor.

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What ensued was a turbulent spinning plummet towards the French sand. When the attack abated, he attempted to level out and get out as his fighter was bleeding to death. Crippled, the Hurricane was attacked again and he was ultimately forced down on the beach just south of the Belgian border. On the ground, he hurried from his fighter and dived beneath one of a sea of abandoned Lorries on the beach. His subsequent nine mile walk to Dunkirk was a drama that included being shot at by German infantry and being threatened at bayonet-point by French Algerians, but ultimately it was a walk of isolation. As a nineteen year old he watched Spitfires dive into the sea and soldiery drift on the swell like so much flotsam as he trudged toward the final point on the Continent held by allied forces.

Needless to say, Ken survived his encounter over Dunkirk. After an eventful boat ride back to England he went on to fly in the Battle of Britain from the RAF's easternmost airfield at Hawkinge until it was abandoned and laid to waste by the Luftwaffe. At this time his squadron was transferred to Ireland, where they trained foreign pilots on the Hurricane and attempted to protect coastal towns and the vital shipping routes supplying the British Isles from the west. There was no radar or organised control system in this region, so it was not unusual for the pilots to be scrambled by an irate Postmaster yelling down the phone, "We're being attacked, what are you going to do about it?"

From Ireland he would be a pioneer in night-fighting in a time when pilots were force fed carrots to improve their night vision. Stacked from 13,000 feet at 500 foot intervals above a burning Merseyside, the 'advanced' technique of detection was to wait for the bombers silhouettes to appear against the backdrop of the inferno. The fighters would then dive down, but inherently the bombers had already slipped away into the veil of darkness. Later in the war he would 'night fight' again, this time in company with a bomber equipped with a massive light in its nose. Termed 'Turbinlite', this technique involved sneaking up on the target in absolute darkness before illuminating it with a 2,700 million candlepower searchlight. This highly unsuccessful game of cat and mouse provided a greater risk to friend through collision than to foe through combat.

Through the disastrous raid on Dieppe in which Ken's aircraft was again badly shot up, he continued to fly operationally. On the eve of D-Day, he was one of a handful of aircraft airborne in darkness over France seeking out the German aircraft designed to jam the communications of the Normandy landings. Following D-Day he was deemed 'Tour Expired' and was to be pulled from operational flying. Instead he was seconded to BOAC and sent to Cairo as the British carrier set about re-establishing civil air routes in the Middle East. Be it serving in Cyprus through the EOKA campaign, welcoming in the jet age in Gloster Meteors and de Havilland Vampires or winning the Air Force Cross, there always seemed to be something happening for Kenneth McGlashan.

He finally retired from the RAF in 1958 and later established his family and a civilian life here in Australia. In 1990 he received a very cryptic letter from the Tangmere Aviation Museum who was undertaking some research following the discovery of the Hawker Hurricane that Kenneth had left on the Dunkirk beach in 1940. Today the aircraft is set to take to the English skies once more.

So tale after tale occupied afternoon after afternoon. I would sit and listen as Kenneth would detail his extraordinary life and tale of survival, taping every word before spending the night tying it together into some sort of order. Slowly but surely, his life became the book we had both envisaged. We agreed to title it 'Down to Earth', partly to reflect Kenneth's level-headed approach and also as a humourous jibe at the fact he had a few RAF aircraft make 'unscheduled' landings in his time.

Along the way, I gained two valuable friends in Kenneth and his wife, Doreen and this is another wonderful by-product of my hobby. Sadly, when the book was launched at Kenneth's stomping grounds during the Duxford Air Show in July, he had not lived to see it happen. However, Doreen made the long trip to the UK to be a part of the event. On the second day of the air show she was flown by helicopter to be reunited with the restoration of Kenneth's Hurricane. Nearing 90, Doreen is insistent that she'll be back next year to see the fighter fly once more.

Ken always stressed that by numbers, there were 3,000 fighter pilots who defended the realm through the Battle of Britain and within this sum only three percent were officially recognised as "Aces". He was always proud to be counted amongst the remaining 97%. To me this in many ways sums up who he was.

His life was an extraordinary tale. I didn't have to venture to some far flung corner to find it though; Kenneth McGlashan was virtually over my back fence and my life became richer because of it.

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www.owenzupp.com

"Down to Earth" (ISBN 1904943845) By Squadron Leader K.B. McGlashan with Owen Zupp

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### ***The RAAF Strength; First Units, and their locations as at the 8th December 1941 Part 1 – Gordon Birkett***

*Recently an ADF-Serial enquirer, Chris Pulis asked for an answer regarding the number of aircraft and types we had at the start of the Pacific War. I thought perhaps we could share for the first time in years the answer with some more detail in a number of parts.*

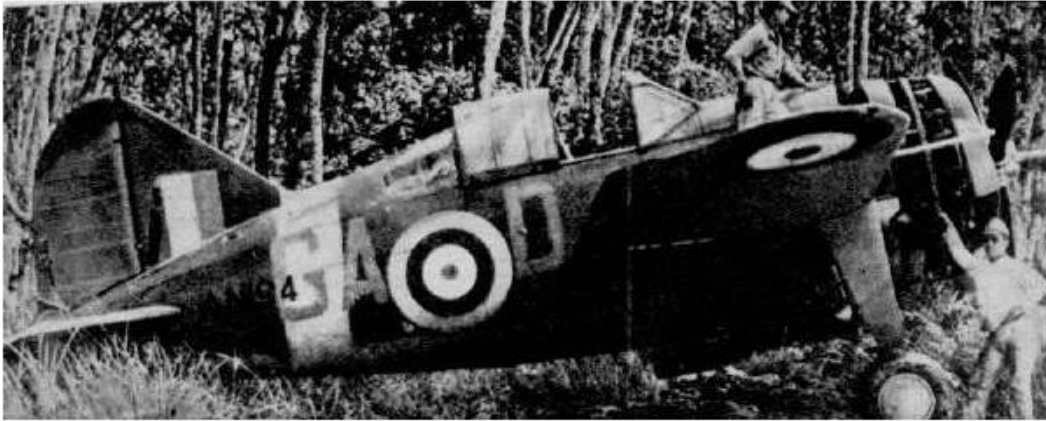
#### **The RAAF in Malaya**

With the initial delivery of 50 Hudsons in 1940, a decision was made to forward deploy two General Reconnaissance Squadrons and one Army Co-operation Squadron, equipped with Hudsons and Wirraways respectively, to Malaya in the middle of 1940.

***In mid 1941, the decision was taken to equip the Wirraway equipped 21 Squadron RAAF with Brewster Buffalo fighter aircraft and redesignating it into a fighter squadron.***

There was a further Article XV Squadron formed to be based in Malaya, 453Sqn RAF (RAAF), which though an actual RAF unit, (though predominately an EATS RAAF manned unit) is included in this summation. Later in January 1942, 21 Squadron RAAF would be combined with this unit to form 21/453Squadron RAAF.

One further Article XV Bomber Squadron was to be formed in the Far East in Malaya, 454 Squadron RAF (RAAF). It was earmarked to form there later in May 1942 as a Baltimore Unit, however events soon outran intentions, resulting in it being formed in the UK in place of 465 Squadron RAF (RAAF) as a Handy Page Hampden Torpedo Bomber Unit. 465 Squadron (RAAF) would never be formed.



A captured ex- 21 Sqn RAAF Buffalo in Sumatra, AN-184 GA-D, previously flown by F/O J B Hooper on the 08/12/41 on their first mission of the war, pictured circa mid March 1942. Three others, W8163 GA-P, W8207 ex-"TD-T and W8156 ex-" L" were also captured intact and perhaps re-built. Credit: IJA

On the 8<sup>th</sup> December 1941, these RAAF squadrons were under command of the AOC, RAF Far East since 26<sup>th</sup> August 1940. A further second line unit is displayed on the basis that the equipment was ours. Those Hudsons underscored were lost by the end of March 1942.

- No 1 Squadron RAAF was at Kota Bahru on the North Eastern Malaya coast with 16 IE Hudson Mk1s (**A16-19/20/21/23/24/51/52/53/62/70/80/84/89/90/92/94**) Pre-Australian war codes were **A** then **US-\*** in Malaya).
- No 8 Squadron RAAF with Hudson Mk1s was at Kuantan, further south on the Malaya Peninsula with 17 IE Hudsons (**A16-4/ 11/ 15/ 17/ 40/ 41/ 43/ 48/ 54/ 75/ 76/ 81/ 82/ 85/ 86/87/93**) Pre- Pacific War codes were **H** then **NN-\*** in Malaya)
- No 21 Squadron RAAF with Buffalo Mk1s was at Sungei Patani, in North West Malaya with a establishment of 18 Buffaloes (12 IE underscored, with 6 more IR held at Singapore) and one Wirraway (**A20-59**)(First Buffalo received 28/08/41; **AN172, AN180, AN183, AN186, AN188, AN194, AN201, AN212, W8163, W8169, W8206, W8212, W8219, W8222, W8224, W8227, W8232, and W8236** with codes **GA-\*** in Malaya) With heavy losses, and with only reserve aircraft available later that month, the unit merged with 453 Squadron to become 21/453 Squadron RAAF on 24th December 1941. The new squadron then moved to Sumatra but Japanese advances once again forced a withdrawal. The unit eventually abandoned Java and sailed to Fremantle, where it was disbanded on 4<sup>th</sup> March 1942.
- No 453 Squadron RAF (RAAF) (Established as a fighter Squadron on the 05/07/41) with 17 IE Buffalo Mk1s and 3 IR at Sembawang. 453 Squadron was deployed to forward airfields at Ipoh and Kuala Lumpur. (**AN175, AN180, AN184, AN185, AN213, W8151, W8152, W8157, W8158, W8159, W8176, W8180, W8188, W8192, W8207, W8209, W8210, W8211, W8216, and W8217** with codes **TD-\*** in Malaya.
- A joint RAF/RAAF OTU at Kluang South Malaya with 10 Wirraways (ex-No 21 Squadron aircraft (**A20-43/44/50/56/58/60/72/85/86/87**)) to be later known as Y Squadron formed from Wirraways on the 10/01/42. (Held by 151 Maintenance Unit with Single Codes per 21Sqn original aircraft individual Letter Codes, with the GA painted over. Pre-Australian code was **R**). One other suffered a landing mishap on the 31/10/41 with 21Sqn RAAF and was held for repairs at 151MU. That was **A20-47 (GA-B)**.
- 2 Reserve Hudsons (**A16-26/54**) held at 151Maintenance Unit
- 5 reinforcement Hudsons (**A16-42/56/60/65/95**) dispatched from Australia 23/12/41.
- A further 4 aircraft reinforcement to 1 Sqn 03/01/42 (**A16-35/37/42/56**) ex 6Sqn Richmond



- Only four CAC Wirraways made it back to Australia; **A20-46, A20-51, A20-61** and **A20-84**, on the 16/12/41 by sea (SS Ormiston) to Sydney, then onto 2AD Richmond.
- There were also 3 RAAF Tiger Moths (**A17-293/296/297**) held as communication aircraft in Malaya prior to December 1941, usually singularly allocated to each squadron mentioned. Some of these may have been sequester to MAF and camouflaged post December 1941



The invasion of Malaya began shortly after midnight on 8 December 1941. No 1 Squadron RAAF and No 8 Squadron RAAF were ordered to launch an attack at first light on enemy shipping in the Kota Bahru area. Two hours later, No 1 Squadron RAAF, then based at Kota Bahru, in North Eastern Malaya, commenced the Pacific's theatre first RAAF operation.



RAAF Hudson A16-19 of No 1 Squadron in Malaya December 1941

Sadly two of those Hudson bombers were lost on the second mission (One ditched and another crash landed) resulting in Flying Officer Donald Alexander Dowie Service# 649, crewmember of Hudson A16-19 (No1 Squadron) becoming, seemingly, the first Australian Pilot prisoner of war to be captured by the Japanese.

His aircraft had either exploded or struck the sea some three miles off shore after attacking a Japanese Cruiser.

After spending two days in the sea and coastal area, he was captured by the Japanese soon after and started his internment at Singora.



**No 1 Squadron Hudson A16-19 in Malaya mid to late 1941: Credit RAAF**

It was not until January 1943, when advised by the Internal Red Cross, that he was in fact a Prisoner of War. I am happy to say that he survived and was recorded safe on the 8<sup>th</sup> September 1945 at Singapore.

A further No 1 Squadron Hudson would be lost that day when a Buffalo of 243Sqn RAF (**W8196 WP-V**) collided with **A26-52** at Kota Bahru on landing. As the weeks wore on, some 42 RAAF Hudsons, 12 Wirraways and 3 Tiger Moths were lost from these Malaya units by early March 1942 by the time these units were dissolved on the 7<sup>th</sup> March 1942.



**RAAF Hudson A16-76 coded NN-F of 8Sqn RAAF in late 1940. RAAF Official**

These figures do not take into account any additional RAF Hudsons taken on strength by the joint 1/8 Squadron RAAF in the Netherlands East Indies in February 1942. RAAF Hudson survivors were **A16-26** (F/Lt G White) and **A16-89** (P/O Gibbes), which had the honour as the only two original representatives of No1 Squadron's aircraft flown out of NEI, arrive back in Australia on the 05/03/42 from Bandoeng, Java. (**A16-26** had suffered damage on the ground earlier from a near hit by a bomb in Sumatra whilst manned by F/Lt O'Brien and P/O Gibbes)



**Hudson A16-26 at Laverton March 1942. No US-<sup>\*</sup> Code was ever allocated to this reserve aircraft**

One further Hudson survivor reached Australia. Being one of the 52 reinforcement RAF Hudsons (three RAF Squadrons) sent out from the United Kingdom via the Middle East that made it to the Netherlands East Indies by early February 1942, Hudson Mk III (LR) **AE488** was the single RAF survivor.

It would later be taken on RAAF strength as **A16-222**. All three would be on No 7 Squadron RAAF strength within a month to face the anticipated Japanese invasion.



### Reinforcements

As included earlier, some 9 additional RAAF Hudson were stripped from Australian based units (including **A16-95** above) and then rushed in to Malaya as reinforcements.

This had coincided with the timely arrival by sea to Australia of the third batch of 49 Hudson aircraft ordered mid 1941.



*Coloured or post war coloured picture of eight Singapore Aircraft wrecks. Centre of picture is Buffalo W8156 "L" of 21/453 Sqn RAAF that came on strength in late January 1942: Credit IJA via unknown*



***Wirraway A20-47 Coded GA-B of 21Sqn RAAF, later "B" of Y Squadron, RAF 1942: AWM***



***Hudson A16-26 "A" at Laverton RAAF Base March 1942 nestled between a LB-30A, B-17D 40-3079 and B-24A in front. Credit RAAFA***

Meanwhile, the battle for the northern approaches of Australia through the Netherlands East Indies and New Britain had started for the Hudsons, Catalina's, Empire Flying Boats and Wirraways of No's 2, 11,13, 20 and 24 Squadrons RAAF.....

**In the Part two, we will cover the Northern Territory, NEI and New Britain Strengths**

**Gordon R Birkett @2007Vers5a**

[gordy@adf-serials.com.au](mailto:gordy@adf-serials.com.au)

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### **Picture of the Avro 698 Vulcan B2 aircraft**

One for the enthusiasts to view:

<http://www2.airliners.net/open.file/1281954/L/>

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### **Australian War Memorial (AWM) Official Histories**

Since its inception, the Australian War Memorial has sponsored Australia's official war histories. Australian governments have commissioned four separate series of official war histories over this period, one for each of the major conflicts in which Australia has been involved: the two world wars and the Cold War conflicts in Korea and Southeast Asia. In 2004, the Federal Government authorised the writing of a fifth official history relating to Peacekeeping and Post–Cold War operations.

Official histories are 'official' in the sense that they are commissioned by government as the national record of Australia's involvement in particular conflicts, and the official historians have been granted unrestricted access to closed period and security-classified government records. All the Australian official war histories contain their author's own interpretations and judgements and do not follow any official or government line.

As such, these works are the first published official record of Australia's involvement in War. They are a detailed chronological record of all services and all theatres of conflict. They comprise an invaluable resource for researchers at all levels, from the scholar to the general reader. The official war histories are our enduring national record providing a comprehensive, authoritative, and accessible account of the Australian experience of war.

Currently World War 1 and World War 2 official histories are available online at:

<http://www.awm.gov.au/histories/index.asp>

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### **RAF Museum Navigator Online**

The Royal Air Force Museum's Collections Online Navigator contains a selection of records relating to items in the collection. It is not a complete catalogue of the museum's holdings but offers, for the first time, an opportunity for you to search our database and find out more about the collection we hold in perpetuity for society and the Royal Air Force. We intend to continually improve this site by adding and updating the records and acting on your comments.

Navigator was born out of a longer term project to increase our accountability, accuracy and access to the collection. This is primarily being done through the implementation of a collections management system. As well as supporting our policies and procedures, improving our in-house management and providing an effective means of locating items to help answer enquiries, we are able to share this information much more efficiently. The records you see in Navigator are as a result of this investment.

Within Navigator you can either browse the highlights, undertake a quick search or a more detailed advanced search which allows more precision. There are four views available:

Gallery - viewing results by a thumbnail image;

List - viewing results as a text only list;

Detail - viewing a thumbnail image and any information associated with that item;

Click on the thumbnail from Detail View to get a larger watermarked image (this will open in a new window).

The current version of Navigator covers records from all aspects of the collection. All records have been selected based on our experience of dealing with enquiries and knowledge of the collection. The home page of Navigator presents a selection of highlights from the collection; some of these items will be expected but others will not immediately spring to mind.

There is some Australian content so you might like to bookmark this:

<http://navigator.rafmuseum.org/simpleSearch.page.do>

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### **On This Day (October/November/December):**

- 2 Oct 52** Meteor F.8 A77-436 77SQN. FLGOFF O. Cruikshank (RAF) died after possibly attempting to eject after a dog fight.
- 3 Oct 92** Dedication, Australian Vietnam Veterans' National Memorial. The Vietnam Veterans' National Memorial, ANZAC Parade, Canberra, was opened by the Prime Minister, the Hon. Paul Keating, MP, and honours those Australians who served and died in the war in Vietnam.
- 18 Oct 51** Wirraway A20-193. PN/A N. Sweeney lost control during low level aerobatics near the Little River aerodrome, Vic.
- 27 Oct 52** Dakota A65-113. Crew/pax: SQNLDR P. Fisher, FLTLT A. Tafe, WOFF G. Bouquet, ACW M. Costello, Mr R. Stiles, Mr F. Campbell. Aircraft crashed at high speed into water off Cronulla, NSW. Although the exact cause was undetermined it was thought that control was lost in turbulence and poor weather.
- 2 Nov 42** Kokoda airstrip re-occupied The capture of Kokoda, New Guinea, and its airstrip enabled the Australian advance across the Owen Stanley Range to continue.
- 8 Nov 44** 'G' George arrives at Amberley This Lancaster bomber survived 90 operations with 460 Squadron RAAF. After touring to support war loan campaigns, it was presented to the Memorial. George is now on display at the Memorial in ANZAC Hall.
- 11 Nov 41** Opening of the Australian War Memorial By the time a memorial to the dead of the First World War was ready to open, Australia had been involved in the Second World War for over two years.
- 19 Nov 90** Macchi A7-045. Pilot: FLTLT R. Page. Left wing failed in-flight during Air Combat Manoeuvres approximately 55 nm NE of Williamtown, NSW. FLTLT Page died after he ejected and was then struck by the aircraft. His parachute subsequently did not open and he died after impacting with the water
- 27 Nov 39** Inauguration of the Empire Air Training Scheme Over 37,000 Australian airmen trained under the scheme, in Australia, Canada and Rhodesia, one of the Commonwealth's greatest achievements in wartime.
- 2 Dec 14** First Australian military aircraft despatched to war Australian aircraft and their crews left to form the 'Mesopotamian Half Flight', fighting in what is now Iraq. Many were captured at the fall of Kut in 1916.

- 5 Dec 39** First official RAAF operation of the Second World War A Sunderland aircraft of No. 10 Squadron RAAF, flew on the first official RAAF operation of the Second World War. This was the beginning of six years of war for 10 Squadron, which flew as part of RAF Coastal Command continuously against U-boats in the battle of the Atlantic.
- 15 Dec 83** **Macchi A7-46** CFS Pilot: FLTLT Steve Carter and **Macchi A7-93** CFS Pilot FLTLT Graeme Brooks. The Roulettes suffered their first fatal accident on 21 Oct 83 when two of their own collided in mid-air. The changeover of the 1983 Roulettes to the 1984 team occurred which saw the inclusion of three new pilots into the Team. The Roulette Leader remained unchanged and FLTLT Carter, who previously flew as Roulette 5, was now Roulette 2. On this day the team was flying their second "full show" sortie. The routine started without any problems and after finishing a porteous loop the Team organised for the next sequence. The sequence was for three aircraft to pass each, the third aircraft being inverted and heading in the opposite direction to the remaining two aircraft. This was to be performed at a right angle to the simulated crowd line and the pass to occur just in front of the crowd line. Following the Porteous Loop Roulette 3 positioned himself for the next manoeuvre. This entailed him to fly towards the crowd line while Roulettes 1 and 2 positioned themselves to fly line abreast, coming from behind the crowd line. Meanwhile Roulettes 4 and 5 were to complete a pass of each other directly in front of and parallel to the crowd line. When the two other aircraft had made their pass Roulettes 1,2 and 3 commenced their approach with No.3 flying upside down. When the three aircraft approached Roulette 3 suddenly took a nose down attitude in front of Roulette 2 and approximately 15 seconds after Roulettes 4 and 5 had completed their pass Roulettes 2 and 3 collided at a point over the simulated crowd line. FLTLT Carter in Roulette 2 was killed immediately and both aircraft broke up in mid-flight. During Roulette 3's break up FLTLT Brooks' ejection seat separated from the aircraft with him still restrained in it. The barostat unit built into the seat was then activated which released the Brooks and deployed the main parachute, however the seat remained attached to the parachute via the drogue bullet. FLTLT Brooks landed in a swamp from which he was rescued by the wife of a local farmer and then by an Esso medivac helicopter to the Base Medical Flight. During treatment he suffered a cardiac arrest and was transferred to the Gippsland Base Hospital where he later died.
- 24 Dec 52** Meteor F.8 A77-852 77SQN. Pilot SQNLDR Frederick James Lawrenson O22005 DFC, AFC, MID Shot down by ground fire in Korea.

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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