

Aussie Jingle Bells

*Dashing through the bush, in a rusty Holden Ute,
Kicking up the dust, esky in the boot,
Kelpie by my side, singing Christmas songs,
It's Summer time and I am in my singlet, shorts and thongs*

*Oh! Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way,
Christmas in Australia on a scorching summers day, Hey!
Jingle bells, jingle bells, Christmas time is beaut !,
Oh what fun it is to ride in a rusty Holden Ute.*

*Engine's getting hot, we dodge the kangaroos,
The swaggie climbs aboard, he is welcome too.
All the family's there, sitting by the pool,
Christmas Day the Aussie way, by the barbecue.*

*Oh! Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way,
Christmas in Australia on a scorching summers day, Hey!
Jingle bells, jingle bells, Christmas time is beaut!,
Oh what fun it is to ride in a rusty Holden Ute.*

*Come the afternoon, Grandpa has a doze,
The kids and Uncle Bruce, are swimming in their clothes.
The time comes 'round to go, we take the family snap,
Pack the car and all shoot through, before the washing up.*

*Oh! Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way,
Christmas in Australia on a scorching summers day, Hey!
Jingle bells, jingle bells, Christmas time is beaut!,
Oh what fun it is to ride in a rusty Holden Ute.*

Wishing you all the best during the festive season.
Have a happy, healthy and safe time, see you again in 2012



Presidents Log

Seasons greetings to all our members, families and friends. I hope you have a peaceful and relaxing break, and an absorbing New Year in 2012.

We've had a busy time in the MAAA recently, with a stalwart few continuing work on A52-600 at the RAAF Museum, Point Cook, Victoria. Our newest recruit James Fitzsimmons is already showing his worth, and I'm sure his cabinet making experience will be put to good use next year.



Last month, your Committee made a submission to the Director of the RAAF Museum, David Gardner to help with A52-600's wing. Preparation of a Business Case study is already under way, and there will be more news in the next Bulletin.

We had a combined end-of-year barbecue with the Friends of the RAAF Museum on Sunday 11 December which was a fitting way for active volunteers to round off the year's work. On a couple of Thursday visits to the Museum recently, it was gratifying to see the number of volunteers working on the Mossie (and other projects) during the week. We've also started preparations for next years' RAAF Museum

Pageant which will be held on Sunday 26 February 2012 at Point Cook. If any of our country, interstate or overseas readers intend visiting, please contact us in the Restoration Hangar, somewhere near the fuselage of A52-600 should find us; we hope to see you there. The Pageant will be closely followed by Tyabb's Air Show the following weekend if you're around and about.

In the mean time, thanks to Bob Stevens for another newsy edition of the "Aussie Mossie" bulletin, and to all our contributors throughout the year.

Best wishes to all,
Terry Burke

RAAF Museum Air Pageant 2012

Diary entry required -

The RAAF Museum Air Pageant, which features various RAAF historical aircraft strutting through the air, will take place on Sunday 26 February 2012. Naturally, details on the event and volunteer participation will be provided in the coming months. Bring your family and friends !!

I've learned.... That just one person saying to me, "You've made my day!" makes my day.

Coomalie News with Richard Luxton and TRB

Merlin Night at Coomalie was the highlight of the last few months, living up to the high standards of previous events. Held in early August, the fly-in was lead by the huge Antonov AN-2 biplane which has recently been restored by a dedicated crew in Darwin. It was supported by a Tiger Moth, Harvard, Yak 52 and many other light and ultralight aircraft. Ground

support was provided by two ex-WW2 Jeeps and other classic, while an RV provided the usual polished aerobatics display. Saturday was rounded off with a barbecue, folk singing group and campfire, while Sunday started with a dawn patrol, and concluded with a service in the re-built 31 Squadron Chapel attended by over a hundred people. It's great to see the for-



mer home of the 87 Squadron Mossies retain its usual life.

Since then a Dornier maritime Search and Rescue aircraft together with ground crew has conducted a day/night target identification and supply drop training exercise at the airfield, displaying startlingly accurate target identification capabilities, especially at night. During this exercise, two flares were

lit at the threshold of Runway 17 in memory of former MAAA members, Peter Lake and Richard (Richie or Dick) Searle.

More bits and pieces of Mossies have been excavated from a recently discovered site, but details will have to wait ; a couple of photos are included to whet our appetites. More news next issue.

RL/TRB



I've learned ... That it is best to give advice in only two circumstances; when it is requested and when it is a life threatening situation.

Something to Remember— Part 4

Last year Air Commodore Mark Lax CSM (Retd) granted our Association access to reproducing his Mosquito story about No 1 Squadron. The fourth abridged instalment of his story has been included this month along with supporting photos donated by Max Williams, Julia Elder, Alan Middleton, Keith Chew & David Vincent. Extract created by David Devenish

TRAINING DAYS

In September 1939, at the outbreak of the war in Europe, the RAAF had just 310 officers and 3,179 airmen with 164 operational aircraft at their disposal. For a country newly committed to assist Britain fight the German menace, this was a disgraceful state of affairs and a massive training effort was immediately required.

By November that same year, Australia had volunteered to train 28,000 aircrew under the Empire Air Training Scheme (EATS) over the term of the agreement which was three years. This was a large commitment by any standard given the fact that the RAAF was a volunteer

force and a war in Europe was such a long way away. A totally new recruitment and training system had to be developed for not only aircrew but ground crew as well.

By 1941, the war had spread to the Pacific, but despite reviews of the EATS scheme and political wranglings over whether Australia, now under direct threat, should continue to support a war in Europe, Australia was still expected to contribute the agreed number of crews for European Service. By mid 1943, this equated to 432 pilots, 226 observers and 393 wireless operator-air gunners² per month. Such a high demand led to the formation of 44 training schools³ in Australia, which catered for both

domestic and a percentage of the British EATS training requirement.

Under EATS, aircrew hopefuls would enter an Initial Training School for 12 weeks where they would be categorised suitable for pilot, navigator, air observer or wireless-air gunner training. Pilots would progress to an Elementary Flying Training School for their 8 week course followed by a further 16 weeks



Group portrait of #10 Rooky squad (Max Williams 3rd row, 2nd from left). After Initial Training School for 12 weeks the rookies are categorised for pilot, navigator, air observer or wireless-air gunner training. July 1941, Mt Gambier, SA. (c/o Max Williams)

I've learned.... That everyone wants to live on top of the mountain, but all the happiness and growth occurs while you're climbing it.

Something to Remember— Part 4

at a Service Flying Training School before graduating with wings. Navigators, on the other hand, completed a 28 week course at an Air Navigation School, before likewise graduating with their wings.

Not only would basic aircrew training be required, but some form of operational training also. Basic training taught you how to fly or navigate the aircraft, operational training taught you how to use the aircraft to the fullest. As such, Operational Training Units or OTUs were established to take aircrew who had earned their wings and could fly and turn them into operators of a particular aircraft type. Aircrew graduates would be selected for aircraft type depending on performance on their respective aircrew courses.

Those fortunate to be selected for Mosquito operations were first posted to No 5 Operational Training Unit (OTU) at Williamtown, New South Wales to undergo conversion training.



Instructional photo. Part of a parachute jump practical instruction. C.1942. 2 A.O.S, RAAF. Location: Mt Gambier, SA. (c/o Max Williams)

Pilot, navigators and technical airmen were posted there for periods of up to six months depending upon circumstances.

No 5 Operational Training Unit



Avro Anson & A3, DH-89 Dragon Rapide used for pilot and air crew training. C.1942. 2 A.O.S, RAAF. Location: Mt Gambier, SA. (c/o Max Williams).

In all, eight OTUs were established to satisfy demands for operational aircrews. No 5 OTU was one of those schools. Formed at Forrest Hill (Wagga) in October 1942, the unit was destined to become the RAAF's twin-engine fighter attack training unit. The Unit's first courses were Beaufighter operational conversions. Suitable crews would be identified while under elementary training and posted to con-

I've learned.... That I can't choose how I feel, but I can choose what I do about it.

Something to Remember— Part 4



A52-50 Mosquito fighter bomber used by No 5 OTU. (c/o Furniture History Society, NSW)

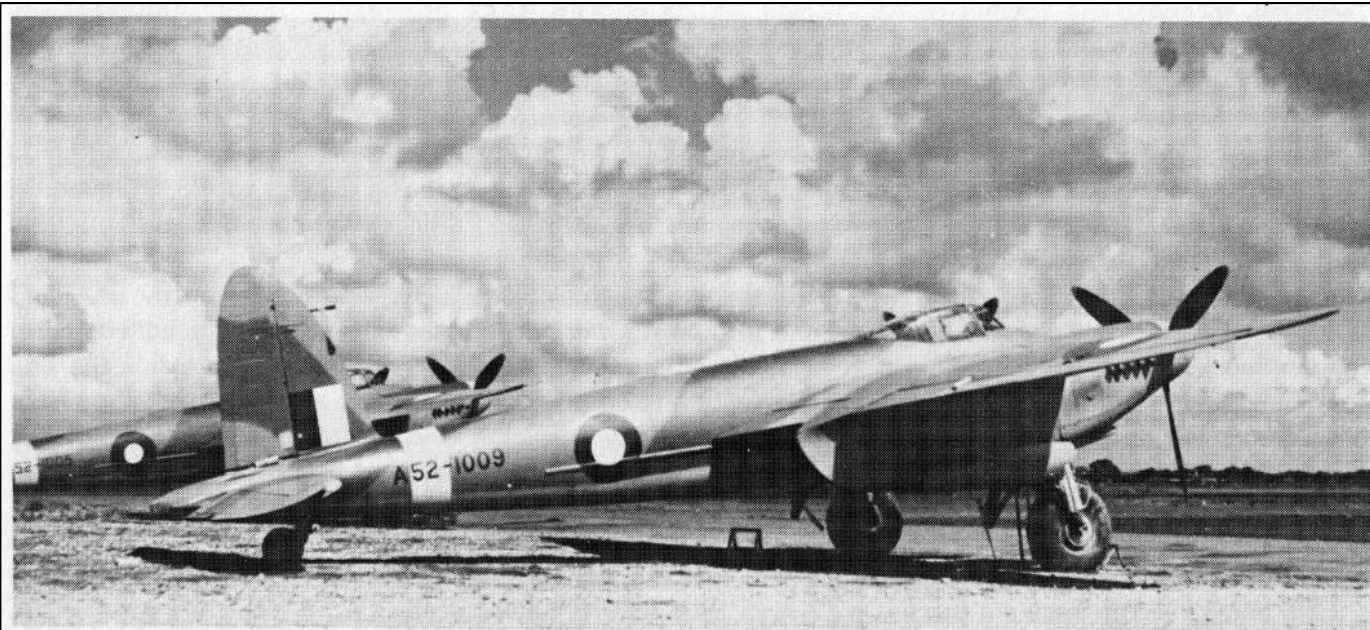
cumwal had been identified as the training base for the introduction of the RAAF's first truly 'heavy' bomber - the B-24 Liberator and with the expected congestion and circuit traffic posing a problem, the unit again moved to Williamstown when No 4 OTU -Vultee Vengeance dive bomber training ceased. Coincident with the move was the arrival of five T Mk III Mosquito trainers, the first of many to serve with the Unit over the next eighteen months.

The training unit was very large by present standards.

vert onto the Beaufighter aircraft then progress to operational training before heading into the theatre.

A year after formation, a move to Tocumwal was made where there was a large base, good weather and plenty of open space. But To-

A strength of over 1000 personnel, including students, and 53 aircraft made it one of the largest training units in the country. At the end of 1944, No 5 OTU was the twin-engined attack aircraft conversion unit and owned two Beauforts, 26 Beaufighters, 18 Mosquitoes, four Oxfords, a pair of Tiger Moths and a Spit-



Two of No 5 OTU's T Mk IIIs in an aesthetic setting. Against a bid for 20 of this version requested for 1944 usage, the RAAF received 14.

I've learned.... That a smile is an inexpensive way to improve your looks.

Something to Remember— Part 4

fire. This mix no doubt ensured many interesting hours in the circuit!

When the unit received its first T Mk III trainer aircraft it became the first RAAF unit to operate the Mosquito in Australia. A52-1002 arrived on Monday, 13 November 1944. Nine of these trainers flew with the Unit, but numbers were boosted with the gradual arrival of Australian made FB.40, T.41 and T.43 airframes and a pair of British built photo reconnaissance PR Mk XVI's.

By July 1944, No 5 OTU had settled into its new base and Mosquito training could commence. All instructors had at least two operational tours behind them, many having flown Mosquitos with the RAF and RAAF in Europe. No 1 Mosquito Conversion Course began with crews initially trained to fill the most pressing need that of the Photo Reconnaissance Mosquitoes and the graduates all were subsequently posted to No 1 Photo Reconnaissance Unit, which later became No 87 Squadron.

On 2 August 1944, the second course of pilots and navigators, many of whom had seen previous operational experience, commenced. A great many crews arrived from No 1 OTU at Sale where they had flown Beauforts, which had trained a sufficient number of Beaufort crews to sustain war operations.

The Mosquito courses lasted five weeks, where the fliers undertook aircraft familiarisation, conversion flying and later, operational train-

ing. Pilots concentrated on air work and emergency procedures while navigators had to become familiar with the navigation, wireless and bombing systems. Operational training consisted of cross-country navigation exercises, gunnery, bombing, night flying and sea searches - all essential skills for effective operations and survival in the war zone.



FLt N.G. 'Bosko' Johnston (P) & unknown navigator beside DH98 Mosquito A52-32, a model FB Mk 40 converted to T Mk3 for training crews. 5 OTU, RAAF. Location: Williamtown, NSW. 1944. (c/o Julia Elder)

By the end of the year, crew training had been refined and the Unit commenced the first Mosquito (Attack) Course with four crews on 9 November. Graduates of this course would form the cadre of the newly reformed No 1 Squadron. Sadly, a week later, the first of a number of accidents occurred and the aircraft and crew were lost without trace. The aircraft, A52-40, crashed into Port Stephens and investigators could only speculate as to the cause. The problem with the introduction of a new aircraft type combined with hurried training to meet ever pressing operational needs meant some accidents would be inevitable. No 5 OTU was not

I've learned.... That one should keep his words both soft and tender, because tomorrow he may have to eat them.

Something to Remember— Part 4

spared this curse and a series of major accidents ensued.

Losses for the month of November 1944 as recorded in the 5 OTU Unit History sheets is by no means atypical; For this month, the depressing tally was 11 dead and five aircraft lost.

But war needs were pressing and the training continued, despite the seemingly high casualty rate. What must also be remembered are the high number of minor 'prangs' that are not recorded. One problem very typical of 'tail draggers' was the ground loop. If a pilot overpowered one engine against the other, or applied uneven breaking, the aircraft would swing violently in the direction of the lower powered engine.

Such swings could be catastrophic for the undercarriage leading to collapse, engine and air-frame damage and in many cases, conversion of the aircraft to components (also called a write-off).

Such human errors were also matched by structural problems, particularly with the Australian built Mosquitoes that No 5 OTU was using. Such was the case of the tragic accident that occurred the last day of January 1945. A52-29, flown by Flying Officer Francis White and Pilot Officer Bob Tucker, broke up in mid-air following an air-to ground gunnery practice at the nearby Saltash range.

Both were killed on impact as the starboard wing separated from the aircraft over the base in full view on many onlookers. Starboard main spar separation due to defective glue was put down as the cause. No 1 Squadron and the RAAF as a whole was robbed of two potential members. All aircraft were grounded for several days pending full inspection and subsequent fault rectification.



Passout parade of No? Photographic Reconnaissance Course , 5 OTU, RAAF. L to R: FO H.L 'Laurie' Williamson (N), FLt N.G. 'Bosko' Johnston (P), FLt J.T. 'Jim' Kearney (P), FO J.A. 'Jack' Hardwick (N), Unknown, Unknown. Behind is a DH98 Mosquito T Mk3, one of five received May 1944 for training crews. (p176 David Vincent). Location: Williamtown, NSW. C. Jan 1945. (c/o Julia Elder)

The newly converted crews were posted to No 1 Squadron and commenced arriving at Kingaroy on 31 January 1945. By 10 April, a total of 29 crews had arrived, a testament to the capacity and prodigious output of the training or-

I've learned.... That when you plan to get even with someone, you are only letting that person continue to hurt you.

Something to Remember— Part 4



No 94 Squadron aircrew from No 5 OTU's No 27 Mosquito course (c/o Alan Middleton)

After two more crashes during February, Major Geoffrey de Havilland, who was in Australia visiting the factory at Bankstown, personally visited the Unit to discuss the Mosquito problems with staff and students.

Main plane problems were eventually solved and flying recommenced.

organisation. Many of the final arrivals on 10 April had commenced their No 5 OTU course on 17 January 1945 but owing to yet another Mosquito grounding and fault rectification program, took seven weeks to complete their training.

De Havilland must have felt some need to undertake a public relations program, or at least the need to reassure the crews that their aircraft were safe because a week after Major de Havilland had visited the Williamstown Base, Mr Martin Warner, a de Havilland representative, paid a similar visit to Kingaroy. He became a regular visitor there,



RAAF Fitter graduation, Brunswick (Vic) Technical School, 1942 (c/o Keith Chew).

I've learned.... That life is like a roll of toilet paper. The closer it gets to the end, the faster it goes.

Something to Remember— Part 4

returning a month later to investigate the crash of A52-501, which was lost under similar circumstances to A52-29.

Once the Photo Reconnaissance Squadron, No 87, and No 1 Squadron's demand for trained Mosquito crews was satisfied, No 5 OTU progressed to crew training for No 94 Squadron, also a Mosquito Unit and recently formed at Castlereagh, near Penrith, NSW.

All the graduates of No 26 Mosquito (Attack) Course were posted to the new unit which was intended to supplement No 86 (Attack) Wing at Labuan, but they were never to see operational service, with the end of the war putting paid to any plans to deploy the Unit into the islands.

After cessation of hostilities, No 5 OTU soldiered on until February 1946 when it was renamed Crew Conversion Unit (Fighter) and a new training era began. The Mosquito remained with both 5 OTU and CCU until the death throes of each in mid-1947 and all remaining Mosquitoes were sent for disposal.

Airmen Training

Training adequate numbers of aircrew was only half the problem. For every aviator, at least six ground staff were required to equip and maintain complex machines such as the Mosquito and keep the aircraft in the air. Trades such as fitters for engines, airframes and armament together with wireless technicians and electricians were essential.

Clerks, storemen and orderlies were also needed and all had to be adequately trained before they could deploy with a squadron into the operational area. Table 2.1, the initial 'paper' establishment of the Squadron, illustrates the variety of trades and musters needed.

These personnel were to be divided into a Headquarters and two flights, namely A and B. Perhaps surprisingly, this table does not allow for any aircraft trades, either because the initial intention was to conduct all the maintenance at a maintenance unit or this was the pre-aircraft allocation establishment. Whichever may be the case, the unit went off to Labuan with 364 personnel on strength, a sixfold increase on the originally planned number.



Initial Training School, 6 S.F.T.S, RAAF, Mallala, SA. (c/o Max Williams)

Obviously, some form of training was required of the RAAF's specialist ground crews. To fulfil the requirements for fully self-supporting, operational squadrons, the RAAF devised a similar three-tier system for training technical airmen as it had for the EATS system for aircrew.

I've learned.... That everyone wants to live on top of the mountain, but all the happiness and growth occurs while you're climbing it.

Something to Remember— Part 4

Table 2.1 -Initial Establishment of No 1 Squadron

Duty	Number
Commanding Officer	1
Adjutant	1
Medical Officer	1
Operations Officer	1
Pilots	13
Navigators	14
Warrant Officer	1
Aircraft Hand	1
Clerk Accounts	1
Clerk	2
Clerk -General	2
Clerk -Stores	1
Equipment Assistant	2
Fitter Armourer	1
General Hand	8
Medical Orderly	2
Office Orderly	1
Photographer	1
Telegraphists	4
TOTAL	58

After completion of induction training at a Training Depot, recruits underwent a 10-18 week initial trade course at a School of Technical Training (STT) which taught recruits the basics of metalworking, woodworking, machine theory and so on.

Recruits with a technical bent then progressed onto specific aircraft trade training at No 1 Engineering School at the Melbourne Showgrounds which offered courses in engines, airframes, armament, electrical and instruments. Later, wireless and armament training were included as separate streams.

Although an airman may have left the Engineering School with a trade, this was still not the end of the training road, before progression to an operational unit. On-the-job experience at a repair depot or maintenance unit was required as was advanced training on particular systems. Thus, a Fitter IIE (who was trained in aircraft engines) would be required to learn the specifics of the Merlin before a posting to the Squadron whose aircraft had Merlins fitted. In all, over 70,000 airmen were taught trades this way, a remarkable feat of achievement in just six years.

Typical was the training experienced by Max Ripper, an LAC Fitter IIE:

I was attached from Wireless-Air Gunner (WAG) School at West Sale to Richmond base in October 1944, where I undertook a conversion course onto Mosquito fighter bombers. We on the course had a hand in the assembly of the aircraft, which had arrived from England in gigantic crates. These beautiful aircraft were a far cry from the Air-speed Oxfords, Avro Ansons and Fairy Battles which had been my previous experience. In my case it was love at first sight. On my return to Sale, I was posted to No 1 Squadron at Kingaroy.

The unit's airman strength would be drawn from all over the RAAF. Some were newly trained recruits, but many had already completed at least one tour either at home or abroad. The Personnel Occurrence Reports preserved by the RAAF indicate that postings from aircraft depots, operational squadrons and personnel depots were the predominant source of this manpower. Regardless of their origin, all were brought together at Kingaroy in Queensland, where they continued their work-up training and awaited orders to move out into the war zone.

I've learned.... That I can't choose how I feel, but I can choose what I do about it.

Excerpts from the Diary of Gordon Nunn DFC

Explanatory Notes

V1s were a jet propelled pilotless aircraft carrying a ton of high explosive. They had a ram jet engine which sounded like an over-grown motor bike. They were easily seen at night, having a flame ten feet long coming out of their tail pipe. Very fast, they had a speed of 350 - 400 mph, so only the top fighters could catch them. The technique was to patrol the French Coast a few thousand feet higher than the V1s and then try and shoot them down in the Channel. Of course the Germans sent fighters to chase our fighters, so things got lively at times.

The V1s which got past that fighter screen met with anti-aircraft fire when they crossed the English coast. Occasionally we copped some of this, although how anyone could mistake a Mosquito for a V1 was beyond our comprehension. The final shield was a balloon barrage, and this was erected in the Gravesend area. The V1s started about nightfall and continued through the night. I can remember they gave us a narrow corridor to fly down to Thorney Island. Supposedly this was a safety zone.

The V1s were a very effective weapon. Only for the big raids on Peenamunde where they produced these weapons, England could have had a very rough time and the war prolonged. The bombing not only destroyed large factories but also killed many scientists working on these weapons.

The second secret weapon was the V2. This was a rocket propelled bomb which went straight up, curved over in the stratosphere, and landed at some predetermined spot in England. There was nothing to be done about these once they were launched. They travelled at over 1,000 mph.

The German counter to the factory bombing was to go underground, and they did this very successfully, as they also did with their aircraft factories.

V1s (Buzz Bombs)

We were never given the specific task of destroying the buzz bombs, but were quite free to have a go if we met one.

I saw many V1s from the ground, but only three in the air. We met one over France legging it out in the direction of Germany, so we waved to it and said, "Hope you drop on the Berchesgaden!". (The Berchesgaden was Hitler's private hideaway in the mountains). Presumably a gyro had toppled.



Another I saw was when I was practically out of ammunition and had only a few machine gun bullets left. I gave it a squirt but nothing happened.

The other time I was nearing base at Thorney Island when control called me, "Roman 21, don't look now, but you're being followed!" The buzz bomb was heading for Portsmouth and as I was in direct line, me also. As he was doing 350 mph and I was only cruising at 250 mph I had to do a quick wing over to avoid collision.

Strafing and Bombing under flares

On dark nights we carried two parachute flares. If we saw something promising on the ground we climbed to 1,000 ft and dropped a flare. These had a very short duration of maybe two minutes, so you had to be quick to strafe or bomb. The flares produced an intense white light, which lit up the country for maybe a mile in diameter. It was quite an eerie sensation to be in this lighted area surrounded by darkness. They extinguished remarkably suddenly - one second you were diving towards a target looking through the gun sight, the next

I've learned.... That opportunities are never lost; someone will take the ones you miss.

Excerpts from the Diary of Gordon Nunn DFC

second in complete blackness: night vision gone. All you could do was pull back on the control column and hope you could see the instruments before the aircraft got out of control.

Strafing could be most hair-raising in darkness. You had to wait until your first cannon shell hit the ground before you could judge your height. I think a lot of our aircraft met their doom hitting the ground.

For a short time they had B25s (Mitchells) dropping flares for us to strafe under. However they were sitting ducks for the enemy night fighters so they had to terminate that tactic and we then had to drop our own flares.

Navigational Problems

One cloudy rainy night our electric's failed completely. No radio to call base for a homing bearing, no GEE to pin point our position. Fortunately we flew over a Pundit flashing two letters. (A Pundit is a navigational aid.) I put the aircraft into a steep turn and tried to read the flashing letters. My navigator and I had a difference of opinion as to what they were. It was then that I regretted sleeping through those signal classes! Anyway we took his interpretation, looked up the code book and found our exact position. From there we were able to plot a course to base. When we arrived I fired off a red Very cartridge to let them know we were in trouble, and it was a great relief to see the sodium lights at the end of the runway turn on.

Operational Service with 464 Squadron 1945

January 1st 1945

Patrolling in front of the US lines in the Ardennes. A heavy haze obscured most of the ground features. Enemy night fighters equipped with radar betrayed their presence continually by dropping flares near us. In spite of constant vigilance one jumped us and tracer bullets poured over our wings and around us. I half rolled and dived close to the ground. We had just had a message from Mauston to say that all bases in England were closed, and to make haste to Cambrai as the front was a nasty one and fast moving.

I flew low level to Cambrai to find that we were No 15 to land. I noticed a plane doing a right hand circuit, so informed control we had a bandit amongst us, and flew out into the country a bit to wait my turn to land. It was touch and go when my turn came, with low cloud and heavy rain. However I managed to just spot the sodium lights at the end of the runway and it was a great relief to hear the wheels squelch on the wet tarmac. We had just turned off when there was a mighty explosion as

the German night fighter dropped a bomb on the runway. Fortunately I was the last in. There was a truck waiting for us; they whisked us over to the mess to a surprise waiting for us - steak and eggs, strawberries and ice cream.

January 15th

Quite upset. Justin Mulligan, an old friend, missing. Gillmore had to ditch in the Channel - impossible to do anything to rescue him. Most depressing.

January 16th

Patrolling the battle area in front of the US Army in the St Vith area. Bombed a large convoy after dropping flares. Strafing with cannon and machine guns; saw explosions and left big fires burning. Called in one of the other aircraft and returned to base.

January 30th

Three of us picked to go on a daylight beat up on Gestapo Headquarters in Copenhagen. Dunk, the WinCo, and self, along with representatives of the other two squadrons. We took off at 3.30pm in fairly bad weather and flew to Fersfield in East Anglia where we were to refuel and stay the night. Just our bad luck it started to snow.

February 3rd

An old friend and I, the only two sent out tonight. I strafed motor transports and bombed a rail junction. Received an urgent call to return as quickly as possible as all bases were closing in. Had a terrible time trying to get below the cloud base to find the flare path. Ted was just behind me and hit a church on top of a hill. We had been friends ever since our training days and was the last of my old pals. There were five of us, and now I was the only survivor. A couple of days before we were having a couple of beers in the bar before dinner. He seemed depressed; quite unlike him, and said "Well old chap, it looks as though the dry rot has set in." I replied that three of us had gone for a Burton; we were the two lucky ones. I really think he had a premonition that he would be killed. (Burton is the name of a beer. In Air Force parlance meant killed.)

February 5th

Packed my kit and stowed it in my aircraft. My tail wheel blew out so I didn't leave till 4pm. Bad weather; cloud base down to 200ft at Rosiers and about 15 Mossies and 6 Dakotas milling around trying to land. One of the DC3s crashed and on the way back to England another pranged.

I've learned.... That no one is perfect until you fall in love with them.

Excerpts from the Diary of Gordon Nunn DFC

February 6th

The C.O. called me in and told me that the M.O. had said that he wouldn't be responsible for my health any longer so I would have to leave the squadron. I said that I would like to stay until we did a daylight trip and he agreed to this. (Thirty trips was the number set for the second tour, but at this time it was changed to an hourly maximum of 200hrs. I had done this, so had a couple of other chaps.)

February 7th

Rail patrol Holland. Bombed a rail and road junction. My first trip from a French field. When we take off from here we can see the outlines of the World War I trenches along the Somme River. How did they ever fight in the trenches in this shocking weather?

February 10th

"The C.O. wants to see you", the orderly room bloke said. Better get it over, I thought, and walked straight in.

He didn't have a particularly happy look on his face, and he didn't mince words. "Doc Oldum wants you to leave the squadron - said he wouldn't be responsible for your health if you stayed' I'd been having sleep problems - nightmares etc. Occasionally Eddie would give me 24hrs off flying and a knockout pill. This treatment didn't help any: I'd wake up thick headed and feeling terrible.

"Can I stay until we do a daylight operation?" I asked. After some hesitation he said "OK, but you'll be packing your bags the next day. I didn't fly again until Feb 20th - did a rail patrol in the Koblenz-Rhurf area. There were plenty of enemy night fighters around dropping flares; an aircraft flashed past and as I turned to get on his tail he dived into the cloud.

The Last Trip

February 22nd

This is the day I've been waiting for; a big daylight beat up in the Hanover — Bremen area. The three squadrons are operating forty aircraft altogether. We are due to takeoff 11.30.

We were to fly to the area in formation, split up, and then every man for himself. Dunk led our formation - "You fly wing man" he said, "I don't want some sprog pilot chewing my tail off".

I walked over to my aircraft early to check it out and was met with an unpleasant surprise. There was a swarm of fitters working on it. "Don't look so worried," the sergeant said, "it's the hydraulics and we should have it ready in time." They knew it was my last trip. I wandered aimlessly around as the crews arrived and climbed into their cockpits. "It won't be much longer now," said the sergeant, so we strapped up ready.

I watched the Merlins around me start to fire up with a crackle and puffs of smoke, and as the flights taxied out for take off, the ground crew gave me the thumbs up and I pressed the starter buttons. I nearly made the mistake of taxiing too fast and collapsing the undercarriage turning the corners. We reached the runway and I slid the throttles wide open.

I hadn't checked the motors, but they sounded good, and in spite of a heavy load of bombs, ammunition and fuel, it didn't take long to catch up and I flew into position. Today we had on wing tanks; these would be used first and then jettisoned as a bullet through an empty wing tank meant an explosion which would blow the wing off.

This was the first time I had been on a mass raid with the whole wing, and the forty aircraft formation looked great. We arrived at the area and the formation broke up; - a half roll and a dive down on to the deck to commence the search.

We seemed to pick the right railway line that day - five trains and five loco engines were bombed and strafed. The aircraft had an oblique camera, which faced down and backwards so I was able to do quite a bit of photographing.

Enemy fighters and that deadly flak accounted for eight of our aircraft, - with many more damaged. In fact the next day we only had seven serviceable. C Charlie was damaged but nothing vital was hit. Flying back to base an American Thunderbolt formed on our wing and indicated he wanted me to apply full power to see what speed the Mossie could do, but I had to refuse the invitation not knowing how badly we were hit.

I left C Charlie with the ground crew, Ron Spence and Freddie Stokes and wondered who was going to take it over and if they would have the luck I had. They put our cine-camera reels through the projector and displayed the photos. I then went off to pack in preparation for the trip to Holland as liaison officer to the 11th Hussars who were spearheading the army advance. I idly wondered if this was a sane move and decided that it probably was not.

More in upcoming Bulletins

I've learned.... That everyone you meet deserves to be greeted with a smile.

From the Mail Bag

On 19th August my Father LAC 151233 Richard Searle passed away.

Only back in May did I renew his subscriptions with MAAA when I visited him in Winton.

So Richie is now travelling his last Mission.

We have many fond memories of our times together with the 60th VP Celebrations at Coomalie Creek in 2005 and the visit to Pt Cook in 2007 which was enjoyed by Dad with thanks to everyone at MAAA for their great hospitality.

Richard is survived by his wife Joyce Searle, daughters Lyn Hutton, Robyn Haig and Beth Brewitt and families.

I felt and so did my sisters that the reconnection with his time in the RAAF at Coomalie Creek and meeting up with an old mate was very special to Richie and he was able to enjoy very much the positive events of those years.

Thank you MAAA for being part of his Life albeit a little short.

Best Wishes
Lyn Hutton

PS After 2005 (VP Celebrations at Coomalie Creek) my husband and I purchased from The Franklin Mint - Armour Collection a 1:48 Scale die-cast Mosquito Plane.

Dad was overjoyed with this gift which is still in its box and has the Collectors Certificate of Authenticity.

So of course, it is in his personal belongings and we have come to conclusion that no one wishes to keep it. Ross & I are thinking of advertising it on E-Bay and I am not sure how this would go.

Is there in anyway that it could be sold through the Aussie Mozzie Bulletin or do you have another avenue to reach those who would be most interested

in purchasing this item Second Hand? I would be willing to donate a percentage of the sale to the Association following further discussions.

Thank you and would appreciate any suggestions you might have.

Kind regards
Lyn Hutton (08) 8931 3743

From Google:

Franklin Mint Precision Models bring you a superbly designed and detailed model, engineered to exact scale and crafted to the highest standards! Each Franklin Mint model is hand-assembled and hand-painted to ensure quality and authentic detail.

To create each exciting precision model replica, the designers and engineers make an exhaustive examination of the subject replica from every conceivable angle: photographing, sketching, historical data and in many cases studying the actual plans.

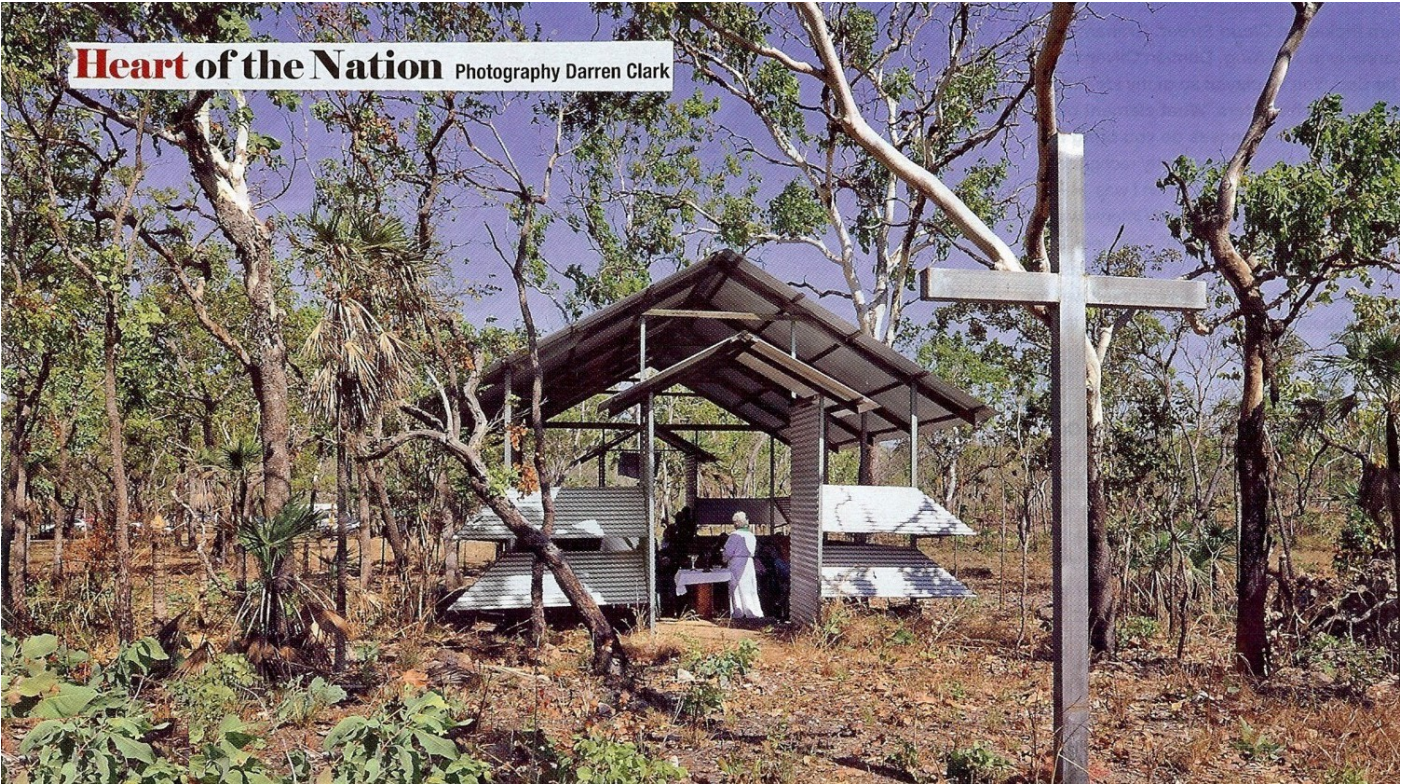
**WING SPAN: 14 INCHES
U.K. RAF 680 SQUADRON
"BARBER POLE", ITALY, 1944, WWII**



I've learned.... That the easiest way for me to grow as a person is to surround myself with people smarter than I am.

From the Mail Bag

Heart of the Nation Photography Darren Clark



This article on the Coomalie Creek chapel appeared in the magazine section of weekend's 'Weekend Australian' - thanks to Richard Luxton.

Anglican priest Ian McDonald says he knows what indigenous people mean when they talk of "sacred country": some places just have a strange kind of power, he muses. And this simple chapel at Coomalie Creek, 80km south of Darwin, is one of them. It's "very peaceful, very moving", he says; there's a profound silence that's punctuated only by occasional birdcalls.

It was a different story during World War II, when RAAF Mosquitos and Beaufighters were flying out of nearby Coomalie airfield bound for Timor and Indonesia on bombing and reconnaissance missions. At its height, the camp that sprang up in the bush 2km from the airfield (where the trees afforded some cover from Japanese planes) was home to 450 RAAF personnel. In 1943 they built a little chapel in the camp.

That original chapel is long gone, but in 1992 this replica was built on the very same spot. And for the past decade, McDonald has led a service there on the Sunday closest to August 15. That date - VJ Day - has a special significance for Coomalie: it was from here that the RAAF flew its last sortie of the war (the single Mosquito was halfway to Timor on a reconnaissance mission when Japan's surrender was announced; the pilot was radioed to return home, and performed a spectacular low pass over jubilant scenes at the airfield).

McDonald, pictured preparing for this year's service, says the event's popularity "has grown and grown". Dozens of people now arrive by 4WD or vintage plane - it's still a working airfield - from all over Australia. This year the service included a prayer written by the wartime chaplain, Bill Dunbar, for his congregation on Christmas Day in 1943.

You might think a chapel with no walls would be a novel experience for McDonald, but in fact his regular church at Freds Pass near Darwin is

I've learned.... That no matter how serious your life requires you to be, everyone needs a friend to act goofy with.

From the Mail Bag

similarly open to the elements. It sounds pretty quirky. "We get birds flying around our heads during services," he says. "And sometimes I'll be giving the sermon and I'll notice that everyone has stopped paying attention - they're all looking at a wallaby outside." What does he do in that situation? "Oh, I'll look at the wallaby too." ROSS BILTON



From the UK :

At a Signing Event that we have organised at the de Havilland Aircraft Heritage Centre (DHAHC) Mossie Museum, had approximately 20 ex Mosquito Aircrew attending, will send you photos etc.

Phillip West has created a wonderful Mossie Pencil Print to be purchased & signed.

The ex Mosquito Aircrew Reunion that Andy Dawson & I are organising, following on from last years success, is confirmed & arranged for Saturday/Sunday 31st June/01st July 2012 at the York Air Museum Elvington, will send more Details & Invites etc. soonest.

We would welcome any representative from Down Under & if any one would like to give a Presentation of what is occurring in the Land of Oz he, she would be made very welcome we hope to have over a 100 ex Aircrew, Ground Crew etc. present plus Relatives & Enthusiasts.

We have a few surprises arranged so it will be a great event.

Kind Regards
Dave Coeshall

Check out :

www.dehavillandmuseum.co.uk



Thanks for including a note about Peter Lake's passing. However, I must point out that Peter's wife Lois passed away back in January this year. Peter was also involved in the attack against the Gestapo HQ, Shell House in Copenhagen in addition to the earlier one in Aarhus. Peter completed 52 ops as a navigator with 464 Sqn.

Best regards,
Derek Carter



MESSAGE FROM RESTORATION PROJECT MANAGER

(Brett Redway is currently on leave for the remainder of this year)

Over the past couple of months some progress has been made with several key components of the Mosquito fuselage beginning to take shape, leading to the re-establishment of the lower skin around Bulkhead #4.

There have been some constraints with progress on this project such as computing difficulties but it is hoped that the form block will be established in the near future to allow for the complete lower skin to be manufactured and spliced back into the fuselage.

The Mosquito Association have progressed on several small components, but have more notably begun the reassembly of one of the engine bay firewalls. Unfortunately drawn out delays in the upgrade of the paint shop continue to hinder any new restoration efforts.

My sincere thanks to all the volunteers involved this year for your contribution, and understanding of the current constraints.

I've learned.... That the less time I have to work with, the more things I get done.

A52-1 from Archivist David Devenish



Being test flown over NSW, Mar 1944



At Laverton, Victoria , Mar-Jun 1944

A52-1 was the first Mosquito built in Australia and first flew out of Bankstown, NSW on the 23rd June 1943.

It was not accepted by the RAAF until the 5th Mar 1944 due largely to the trial and error nature of the early production, a number of alterations found caused necessary and exhaustive testing.

A52-1 had only a short life being irreparably damaged when an air cylinder exploded whilst being charged wrecking the fuselage, Laverton, Vic 14th June 1944.



At a Car Dealership: "The best way to get back on your feet - miss a car payment."

Spitfire recovered to Point Cook

SPITFIRE NEWS

(Provided by Gary Walsh – Point Cook
RAAF Museum Registrar)

Around April this year saw the arrival from France of artefacts recovered from the crash site of Flight Lieutenant Henry Lacy Smith, No 453 (RAAF) Squadron in the UK.

The remains of FLTLT Smith and his Mk.IXb Spitfire were recovered in February 2011; he was buried with full military honours at the Commonwealth War Graves cemetery at Ranville, Normandy on the 19 April 2011.

Registration Staff at the RAAF Museum processed these initial items into the RAAF Heritage Collection while awaiting the arrival of the main part of the aircraft. On 7 September 2011 after much planning and preparation Spitfire MJ789 finally arrived at the Museum.

Following the necessary quarantine inspections, the aircraft was removed from the shipping container. This was a highly significant and poignant moment as it has been on several previous occasions that the Museum has been involved with the recovery of war-time wrecks.

Flight Lieutenant Henry 'Lacy' Smith from Sydney, NSW was flying the Spitfire when it was shot down by anti-aircraft fire on 11 June 1944. The Spitfire MJ789 crashed into the River Orne, near Caen, in northern France.

The aircraft was not found until 2010. Flight Lieutenant Smith was buried with full military honours at the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery, Ranville, Normandy, France in April this year. His aircraft was brought to Australia in September 2011.

Left to right are conservers Brett Clowes, Terry Roberts and Gary Walsh working on the fuselage remains. The team is flushing out the rubber fuel cell with fresh water.

To commence the conservation process, a team of



RAAF Museum technical and curatorial personnel have mechanically cleaned all items of the aircraft, to ensure maximum desalination of the engine and fuselage. The desalination process is expected to take six to eight months.

Final display treatment will occur once the Museum is happy with the desalination process. This is vital to ensure the aircraft's long term preservation and prevent further deterioration.

On a Plastic Surgeon's Office door: "Hello. Can we pick your nose?"

Retirement benefits

A Lincolnshire (England) couple used their retirement money to buy a home and a few acres in Portugal .

The modest farmhouse had been vacant for 15 years after the owner and his wife had died, leaving no heirs. The house was sold to pay back taxes. The property included a large ugly barn with steel doors welded shut. The new owners decided to tear it down. So, after buying a generator and angle grinders...



In a Restaurant window: "Don't stand there and be hungry, Come on in and get fed up."

Retirement benefits



Thanks to member Ray Arthur for this article.



Valued at \$35 Million dollars. This is a true story.
The man and his wife were able to claim the lot.
THEY HAD A GREAT RETIREMENT.

In a Veterinarian's waiting room: "Be back in 5 minutes Sit! Stay!"

Vale

It is with regret that the Association must relay the passing of the following members:

Boase, Maxwell of Numurkah, Victoria

Hawkins, Maurice William of Booval, Queensland

Lake, Peter Rosslyn of Hawthorn, Victoria

Searle, Richard of Winton, Queensland

Trevenen, Herbert of Traralgon, Victoria

The Association's condolences are extended to all the Member's loved ones.

New Members

The Association is pleased to announce and welcome

Boase, Hazel of Numurkah, Victoria

Welcome to you Hazel and thank you for continuing your family association with the MAAA and A52-600.

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At a Towing Company: "We don't charge an arm and a leg. We want tows."