

# The Mosquito Aircraft Association of Australia

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## BULLETIN - No 2. DECEMBER 1992



The Mosquito shown above is A52-609 (Mk.XV1)PR., more affectionately known on 87 Squadron at Coomallie Creek as "BOSCO'S BUS" (Bosco being F/Lt. Neil Johnston, dec.) The photograph was taken by Keith Granger the photographic officer, as this was to be the last wartime operation by 87, the date being the 15th; August 1945, with the official surrender being expected any minute.

The crowd and the photographer were there solely to see and record the take off of the Squadron's final mission of the War. The beautiful vapour trail spirals off the Port prop were purely the idea of "Miss A52-609" (who knew she was the most photographed and photogenic Mossier on the Squadron !!)

Bill Maitland(P) and Bill Reedy (N) were undertaking their first and the Squadron's last operation, for although the War was technically over - no surrender had been announced. As Jack Baesjou puts it "War technically over - NO WORD of cancellation from Area, so the intrepid pair took off, with the best wishes of their assembled mates, got halfway to somewhere before they were recalled" when the surrender was officially announced.

Sadly, after the War, Mosquito A52-609 was lost when it swung on take off following engine failure at Balikpapan on 26th; January 1946. S/Ldr. Bob Green(P) and F/Lt. "Pop" Bowden fortunately escaped unhurt from the crash. A52-609 is now featured on our Letterhead.

This is a truly remarkable photograph, particularly as it records a historic event in the Squadron's history.

The reunion for RAAF Mosquito Units (Pacific Area) - War and post-war service, is well on line. For those who have already Registered please "Calendarize" the dates : - THE WEEKEND OF FRIDAY 26th; SATURDAY 27th; & SUNDAY 28th; FEBRUARY 1993.

Try to time your arrival at 2.30 pm. or prior for the Reunion Registration & informal Welcome at the Rum Corps Resort.

To date 95 persons have registered, with representation from No.1 , No 94, No. 87 Squadrons, No. 1 PRU, Survey Flight, Survey Squadron, 5 OTU , & Ferry Flight.

The visit to the RAAF Base at Richmond on the Saturday will include an inspection of A52-600, Luncheon and the Reunion Meeting in the Afternoon at which F/Lts Mike Shaw & Mike Mayfield will speak on the progress & problems of the restoration. With other Speakers & an open forum, this will prove to be a most interesting part of the Reunion.

Many of the more formal aspects of a Reunion have been dispensed with for our first Reunion, in order to make the most of our limited time together, in fellowship & undoubtedly, quite a few "Do you remembers". Many of us will be meeting with old mates we have not seen for up to 50 years.

YES !! "P/O Prune" will be there - Gawd help us - He's the Orderly Officer !! He enclosed the attached photo of a recent three point landing (?) he seems inordinately proud of!!! Well - "He walked away from it!"



SEE YOU AT WINDSOR IN FEBRUARY 1993.

Whilst the deadline for Motel Booking has expired, there is some room for post entries if anyone out there is inclined for a late rush. Registration Forms Available from your Secretary.

#### ASSOCIATION ACTION.

Four of the Executive Committee visited RAAF Base Richmond in October, namely, Max Ripper President, Allan Davies Sec. and Committeemen Herb Gamble and Joe Burns. The A52-600 Restoration Project was viewed and discussed in detail. Team members and Committee members met and got to know each other.

At a Committee meeting held on the Base on Sat. 17th; Oct; emphasis was placed on the following matters.

- 1) The need to recruit younger membership to ensure continuity of our support as an Association, to the Restoration Team. eg. Some of our younger family members and friends may well become interested in the project.
- 2) Lapel Badges. Type, design, estimated cost etc, were discussed and Committee man Herb Gamble deputed to investigate. The matter is progressing and nearing fruition.
- 3) Corporate Membership and Sponsorship.
- 4) Possible changes to be recommended, to the Constitution.

Membership of the Association now totals 133 and this has been achieved since foundation only 4 months ago. Some of our members are playing a very active part in furthering our Objects.

Ron Vassie of 33 Parthenia St; Dolans Bay NSW. (ex photo

section 87 Sqdn.) has undertaken research "on the spot" on Three Mosquitos in NZ. A recent letter tells he has "found" & inspected them all. He will be writing a full report which could prove extremely helpful to the Restoration team.

John Sandford (ex 94) of 116 Leith St; Ballarat, Vic; has had an article published in the Ballarat Courier of the 27th; Oct; 1993 with this headline & Photograph as shown.

Two new members have resulted from this publicity. Great PR John.

He has also located 2 Wing Drop Tanks which may well be from a Mosquito Aircraft.

Allan Ellis (ex Survey Flight) of 21 Kinsale St; Reservoir Vic; on taking off to Oshkosh(USA)

Aerial Pageant, asked if he could be of help "over there" - Your editor suggested he keep his eyes open for "Mossies" - and HE DID, finding Mosquito RS712. (Kermit Week's MK. B35 - mentioned in the first Bulletin). It was esconced on loan as a static display at the famous Eagle Hangar - Air Adventure Museum at Oshkosh. Allan is still lost for words, and anyone who knows Allan, will realize that sounds like the height of impossibility. Good work Allan.

Perhaps it was a kind fate that prompted this loan. This Mosquito and the Week's Spitfire were undoubtedly saved from damage by the cyclone which hit Florida, by this loan to the Museum.

Many other Members have forwarded photographs and information which will prove to be of help. This magic old aircraft (A52-600) has certainly given a lot of us a good shove in a new direction.



This photo of a RAAF mechanic standing in front of a de Havilland Mosquito was taken in August 1945 near the Nepean River in the Blue Mountains, NSW, by Jock Sandford using a brownie box camera.

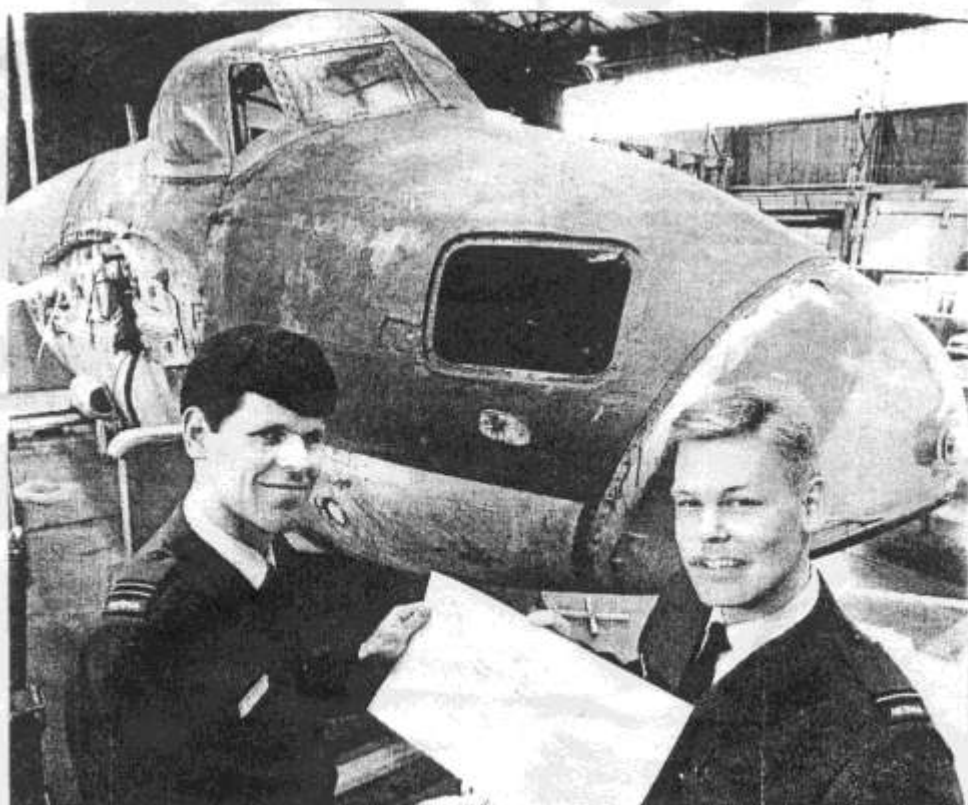
**de Havilland's plywood masterpiece**

## Mighty Mosquito to fly once more

### Personalities of the Restoration Team.

F/Lt. Mike Shaw & F/O Martin Harris have been "on" the project since A52-600 arrived at 503 Wing. Mike is the aeronautical engineer i/c restoration team, ably assisted by Martin & the rest of the team.

The intense enthusiasm for this project, shown by the whole team is revealed in the huge amount of work accomplished since 1989 when this restoration first commenced. The Bulletin will try to bring you photos of other members of this volunteer group in later editions. Yes! the "Forlorn" object is A52-600, before work commenced in 1989.



FLTLT Mike Shaw (left) and FLGOFF Martin Harris

Model of A52-600. Your Committee is currently considering the commissioning of a Model, to be based at the project premises at RAAF Base Richmond NSW. It would be used for PR purposes when occasions arise. This would be a large Model of approx. 84 inch wingspan & exact in the detail of a Mk XVI PR Mosquito.

Yes - the Model would have A52-600 identification & carry 21 "cameras" denoting the number of war time operations completed by the aircraft. More on this Model in later issues.

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#### Mosquito A52-600 - Brief Status Report.

1) Radio. Keith Muller of Penrith has completed his work & handed over the aircraft's radio equipment to the project. Our thanks are due to Keith for his contribution to the Restoration

2) A Roll Over Stand - which will permit the fuselage to be turned longitudinally through 360 degrees, is expected to be completed this year. The Stand will permit ready access to any section for repair work, removal of the Wing centre & make movement of the fuselage completely safe.

3) Working & storage space. - The project has now out-grown the present accommodation, an early move (within the Base at Richmond) is expected. This move will provide for the layout of the Wing when this reconstruction commences & provide storage for completed works awaiting the assembly stage, which, (fingers crossed) is hoped to be commenced in two years time.

4) Woodwork. - Considerable repair has been effected in the critical area around the cockpit & wing root where moisture had caused some damage. The outer skin & Balsa filling has been removed & Balsa replaced. The inner skin has proved to be unaffected & responds to glueing processes. The inner cockpit door and rear access hatch have been restored. The fin structure is completed and awaiting supplies, for plywood skin to be fixed. All glue mixes are fracture tested. This all important, specialised work is being carried out by Cpl. Harry Howard & Athol Holtham, (our civilian wood frame consultant).

The grateful thanks of our membership is due to the small, dedicated team of volunteers who are breathing life into this very special old aircraft.

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Mosquito A52-319. Gerry Gray, i/c this restoration at H.D.H. Technical Training Centre at Bankstown NSW. has supplied a full report, excerpts being - rudder pedal support structure rebuilt & installed. Cockpit canopy & windscreen restored & installed. Trial fittings have been made for, camera control panel, camera controller, hydraulic selector panel, ASI plumbing, Crews cold air ducting, trailing aerial bearers, extinguisher rack.

Aged wooden aircraft can spring many surprises, A52-319 is no exception. Gerry reports the following "surprises" - old fibre glass repairs, no fabric in some areas - just paint, delamination of inner & outer skins, dry rot & other "nasties". As Gerry says "However nothing that can't be rectified" Space will not permit a full report, regrettably, but from the above detail it is obvious that Gerry & his Team are well on the way to completion of this static display. Gerry has asked that Association members be advised they are welcomed at HDH to view A52-319 - ring (02) 7728535 to arrange a convenient time.

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Mosquito Musings. Peter Henley, Vice President ATP Operations BAE and the pilot of Mosquito RR299 in England has been in touch. He expects to be in Australia early in 1993 & will bring his 35 mm colour slides & is prepared to address "our membership on the Mosquito Aircraft in general (his & ours in particular). He will advise us "when & where" later.

Mosquito TV959 Mk T III. - previously owned by the Imperial War Museum, has been purchased by a Mr. Stephen Gray who hopes to restore it to airworthiness. (Information supplied by Gerry Gray) Stephen Gray is associated with the Mosquito Aircraft Museum in England.

Mosquito Aircrew Association. This organisation was formed in England in Nov. 1991 & recently reached 400 in membership. They distribute a quarterly Bulletin entitled "The Mossie". Their object is to "strengthen the contact between ex Mosquito Unit personnel and to perpetuate the Mossie legend". We are in touch with this Association through the foundation. Chairman, Eric Atkins DFC. 100 Grenville Court, Ham View, Shirley, Croydon, Surrey CRO 7XB, England. The address is given for any of our RAAF members who served on Mosquitos in England, who may require further detail, or wish to join. Stuart Howe, the author of 3 books on the Mosquito aircraft advises he recently attended their annual meeting, at which several Australian members were present. He tells us their Chairman made particular mention of our Association. Their annual subscription prior to the recent AGM was S £5.

We thank the Mosquito Aircrew Association for the idea for a Xmas Card which we have cheerfully plagiarised.

Mosquito Mk. Prototype - E0234, later & now W4050 - is owned by the Mosquito Aircraft Museum and is a static display at Salisbury Hall (P.O. Box 107) London Colney, Herts. UK. AL2 1BU, where it is housed in its own Hangar. This is the most famous & historic Mosquito in the World. In 1939 the design & planning of the DH Mosquito commenced at Salisbury Hall and a year later in November 1940, W4050 was completed and had systems and engine checks. The first flights were made at Hatfield on November the 25th; It is indeed fitting that this "first of the 7781" Mosquitos built, should be housed at Salisbury Hall where the DH 98 Mosquito originated.

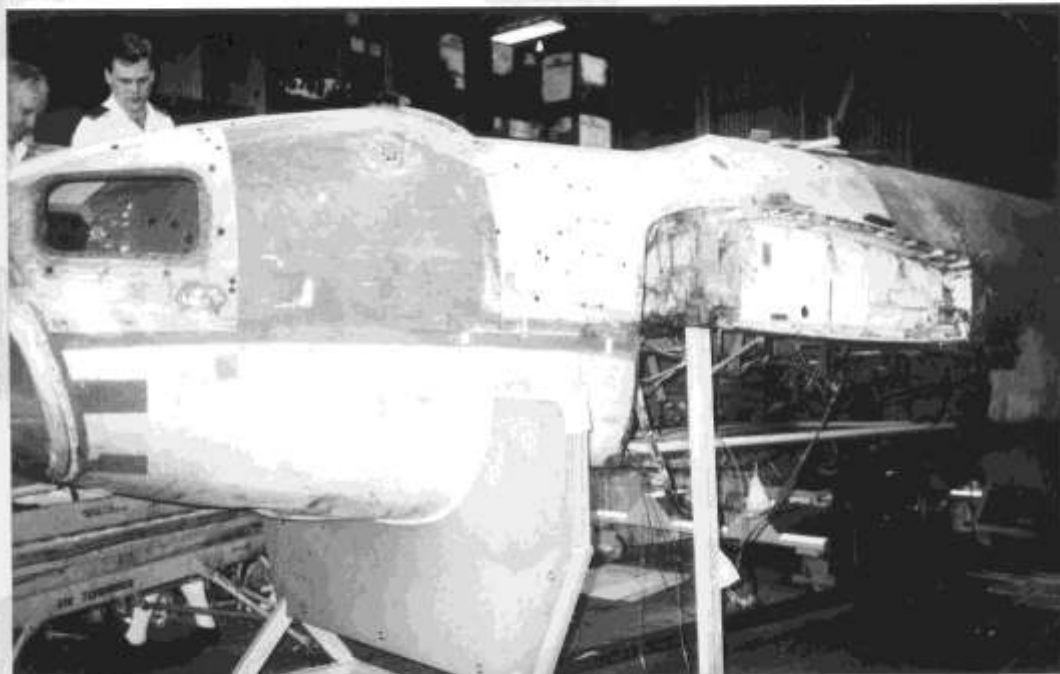
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Membership. Our Membership continues to grow and this is an indication of the great interest in the A52-600 Restoration Project. We naturally have a strong nucleus of ex-members of RAAF Mosquito Units, both ground crews & air crews. However it is good to find quite a good number of younger people joining our ranks. Pragmatically we should all endeavour to encourage this form of membership to ensure a strong, virile Association will continue to support the restoration of A52-600 in the years ahead. This will be a long and sometimes frustrating task for the volunteer team & our membership of this Association must be as sustained from year to year, as the continuity of the team's work on the restoration.

It is pleasing to note that our membership includes a good number of serving RAAF personnel and recent experience indicates membership from this source can be expected to grow.

Application Form is attached to this Bulletin & your efforts to recruit members will be appreciated.

Thanks to Bob Cowper , Ray Lackey & others, we now have a good representation from 456 & 464 Squadrons. Other units represented are No's 1 , 94 , 80 , 467, 460 , 87 (PR), Survey Squadrons, 1PRU No. 5 OTU, Survey Flight & Ferry Flight. There are probably others too, where units have not been advised. If writing to us please let us have details of your service. It should be noted that membership is not limited to service on Mosquito Units, or for that matter any service at all. Anyone with an interest in the Mosquito aircraft & wishing to be of assistance to our goal of restoring A52-600 to airworthy condition, is most welcome to join us.



This photo shows detail of the considerable work completed on fuselage woodwork, as described earlier in this bulletin. The young Pilot gazing into the cockpit is Flt Lt. Mike Mayfield, who has been actively involved in this project since A52-600 arrived at 503 Wing in 1989. Mike has been transferred to flying duty at Townsville, but will be keeping tabs on the project & helping when he can.



**A MERRY XMAS**  
and **A HAPPY NEW YEAR** from  
your **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.**  
**BULLETIN EDITOR and STAFF**

In late April 1993, RAAF at East Sale (Vic.) is celebrating a 50th Anniversary, it is hoped that the Association can play a part in this event. With RAAF approval a hangar stall could be set up & manned by Committee & members, at which information on the A52-600 project would be made available & possibly a scale model of that aircraft be on display.

This would provide a great opportunity to canvass M'ship, & publicise the restoration plans.

Also, in May 1993, at Sale, the State Conference of the RAAF Association will be held. It is hoped that an opportunity may arise to acquaint Delegates "that a Mosquito Aircraft is going to fly again in Australia".

Well !! there's only enough room left to say "**CHEERS TILL NEXT TIME**" Our Best Wishes for the festive season are shown on the left.  
Signing off - Your Editor,

*Alan*