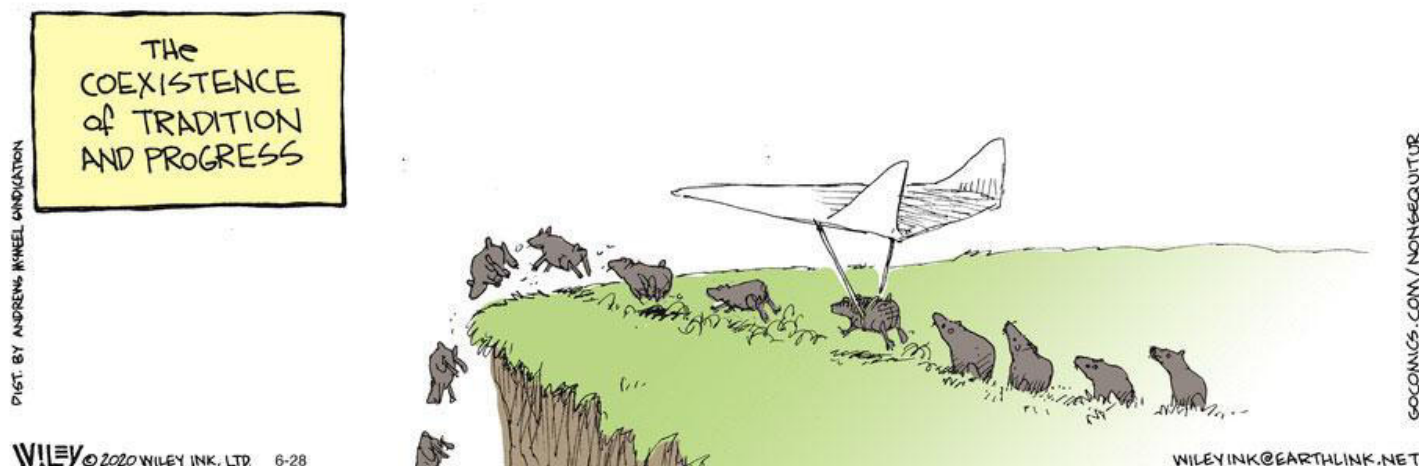




January 2026
Aviation Historical Society of Australia (Qld) Inc.

Find out more about us at <http://www.ahsaqld.org.au>

Contributions and suggestions welcome! Send to the editor Jeff Nielsen – jeff@fragra.au



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Important Dates for Members

- 27th February – **AGM and Members' Chat Night**
- 20th March – **"Powered by Nature"**
by Laurie Webb
- 24th April – **"RAAF in South Australia WW2"**
by Peter Ingman
- 29th May – **"200 Special Duties Flight and Z Special Unit at Leyburn"**
by Ian Waters
- 26th June – **"CAC IKARA Missile System"**
by Denis Baker

AVIATION HERITAGE



Aviation Heritage is the journal of the AHSA, providing carefully researched articles on topics related to aviation history in Australia. It is usually published in March, June, September and December.

Available to AHSA (Qld) Inc. financial Members for \$30 per year.

Uncle Bob Bacon's Brain Teaser

Hello all and welcome to 2026: Uncle Bob has a whole eleven months to irritate those of you who like to play my little guessing game. This time I was sent a link to November's singular aircraft.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n9aYT9VX4s4>



John Pike was first in again with this answer: Bill Holswich (who sent the link above) wasn't far behind with a correct answer...and then it all went quiet! That's a nice little challenge to finish off the year!! There was a bit of head-scratching going on as I tried to unravel the story, but here goes.

The aircraft was a one-off, built in 1929 by the Chicago-Midwest company, and named the X101. It was designed to carry a crew of two and either 6 or 8 passengers, (depending on the reference material). It was powered by a pair of Wright Cyclone R-1750 engines of 525 hp, mounted in tandem above a wing with a span of 67 feet which was purchased from Fokker. Oddly, the tractor engine had a two-bladed propeller, while the pusher engine had a three-blade arrangement. With a registration of X3094, the aircraft flew for around 80 hours before coming to grief (cause not specified). In 1930 Chicago-Midwest became Dayton Aviation and the aircraft was rebuilt, becoming known as the Dayton Overmount X. At this time the engine configuration was changed, with both engines now in the tractor position. The aircraft was withdrawn from service in 1934. The short field performance was excellent, with a take-off run of around 225 feet, but it was a bit slow on the cruise, ambling along at 93 knots. Not a bad concept but further development may have been affected by the manufacturing costs and the Great Depression.

For January I have selected an aircraft which looks like a number of popular twins but may not be any of them.



Send your answer direct to me, Bob Livingstone, at ev982@netspace.net.au

Good luck
Uncle Bob

USAAF Brothers Meet for the First Time

by Peter Dunn OAM

Mary Jo Kidwell Hanna in the USA approached me on 18 January 2026 asking if I could help her find any information about her father's service in Australia during WWII. Mary Jo told me that he was in the 4th Air Depot Supply Squadron and his name was Joseph "Joe" Lee Kidwell.

I knew that the 4th Air Depot Supply Squadron was one of the US Army Air Force units attached to the 4th Air Depot Group at Depot #2, the large American Air Depot near Mount Louisa in Townsville. I did a search in Trove for Joe's name just in case he appeared in any random newspaper articles.

To my total surprise I found the following article:-

Sunday Mail (Brisbane, Qld. : 1926 - 1954), Sunday 15 August 1943, page 4

U.S. SOLDIER-BROTHERS MEET FOR FIRST TIME

TWO Americans—full brothers, with different names, who did not know each other—have met while serving with the American Army in Australia. The story is told in the latest issue of Yank Down Under, U.S. Army paper published in Australia.

Pte. Joe L. Kidwell stopped his truck and his song long enough to pick up a hitch-hiking U.S. Air Force lieutenant, says Yank. Then Pte. Kidwell shifted back into gear and resumed his singing of "It Makes No Difference Now."

"You from Oklahoma?" asked the officer.

"Oklahoma City. Why?"

"Oh, you sound like an Oklahoman," said the officer. "Know any people there named Magar?"

"Sure," replied the driver. "That was my name before I was adopted. Got a brother and sister with that name. Haven't seen my brother since I was a baby, though."

"My name's Munroe Magar," the lieutenant said.

"I'll be damned," said the driver.

The two looked at each other and smiled.

"Hi ya, brother," said the lieutenant.

The driver again started singing "It Makes No Difference Now," but in a livelier tempo. His brother joined him in a duet.



Private Joseph "Joe" L. Kidwell

I asked Mary Jo, if her father had told the family about meeting his brother in Australia during WWII.

"No, I was not aware this had happened. I called my sister last night, at 2am, and asked her if she knew about this and she is in shock also. (We both stay up late at night.)"

"Jackie, my sister, helped Daddy find his birth family years after our grandparents passed. He had two sisters still living. Daddy never mentioned that he had met his brother in Australia. It is so weird that he went to the other side of the world and met his brother!"

An amazing story! I was at a carpet place this morning and told the fellow there the story. He then told me that his father was an American soldier in Townsville during World War Two and he was adopted.

His father was in the 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment US Army in Australia during World War Two.

Peter

C-47 photos that just turn up on the internet

– is this VHCTD or VHCTO?

By Ian McDonell

Some of you may not know of my obsession with the DC-3 and its derivatives, so I frequently get photos that are worth investigating. The one below is an example. From the AWM, but with no information.



The A65- is not clear but the VHCTD and the E G (RE G but R cut off by open door) are distinct. There were only two squadrons in WW2 that had an “E” as the second letter in the coding – 4 Sqn which used Wirraway and later Boomerang aircraft, and 36 Sqn which used the C-47. It is clear that the code has to be RE-G. This would make the aircraft A65-4 but the fuselage serial does not look like that. Could it be VH-CTO?

VH-CTO was A65-15 which was used by 33 and 35 squadrons, using BT and BK codes respectively, so it cannot be VH-CTO.

Note about the identity VH-CTO etc:

During WW2 primarily to aid in visual and radio identification, US aircraft were allocated VH*** call signs. Consider a radio callsign of CTO in phonetics against 32861 gave a better identification. There appears to be other reasons including not “advertising” to the enemy of how many aircraft were being built at the time, especially in the biggest years, as the numerical identification is directly related to this.

This logic also applies to RAAF aircraft with Axx-xxx serials.

From ADF Serials website for A65-4:

C-47A-20-DL cn 9107. Ex 42-32861 departed USA 12/03/1943 powered by Twin Row Wasp R1830-92 radials.

Delivered to the RAAF 26/03/43 at Amberley AFB. Originally marked A30-18.

Received by 36 Sqn RAAF ex 3ADX 03/04/43. Coded RE-G 36 Sqn RAAF 11/05/43 and carried DAT Rego VH-CTD. Accident 05/12/43 when port engine cut out on landing at Garbutt Strip. Later the engine burst into flames and was extinguished.

Accident 1448hrs 12/12/44 when aircraft made an emergency landing after losing oil in starboard engine during transport flight, some 260 miles from Merauke Western New Guinea.

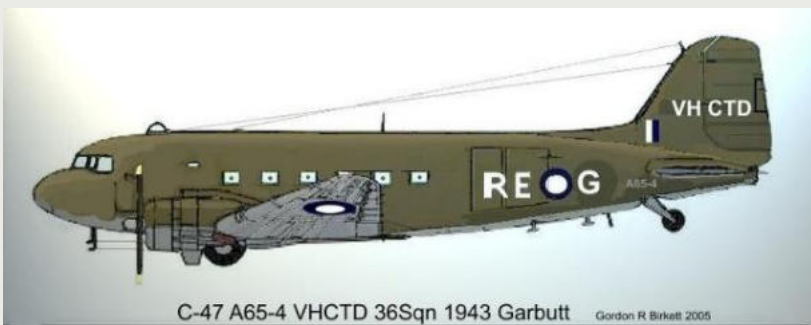
Aircraft returned to Merauke. Crew and 8 passengers not injured.

Issued 1 Communications Unit ex 1AD 22/02/46. Accident 1135hrs 19/05/46 when engine failed in flight near Cairns. Crew and 12 passengers not injured.

Issued 18/08/46, to ANA for spares.

On the right is Gordon Birkett's excellent rendition of the aircraft while based at Garbutt. It is possible that the main photo above was also taken there. This is also supported by our editor.

Below right is another photo of A65-4 in different marking location, possibly near the end or after the war when squadron codes may have been dropped. Perhaps a reader may be able to clarify this.



Due to senility or other insanity, I decided to do a new generation AI search on this aircraft. The results were:

“The registration VH-CTD was assigned to a Douglas C-47A-20-DK Skytrain, serial number 42-92838, when it was with the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). It was later taken on charge by the RAAF as A65-56 and used with the callsign VH-CTD. The aircraft was later sold to civilian operators and eventually became VH-MMB.”

Here's a more detailed breakdown:

- **Military Service:**

The C-47A-20-DK, serial number 42-92838, was initially part of the United States Army Air Force before being transferred to the RAAF and given the serial number A65-56.

- **RAAF Call Sign:**

While with the RAAF, the aircraft was assigned the call sign VH-CTD.

- **Civilian Use:**

The aircraft was eventually sold to civilian operators. It was first registered as VH-MMB.”

At the end of the totally incorrect material is the statement:

“AI responses may include mistakes.”

The “Kangaroo Squadron” – Part 5

by Peter Dunn

Continuing the transcript of the diary of the USAAF 88th Reconnaissance Squadron.

Editor's note:

At the end of Part 4, 5 B-17s of the 88th Squadron and 3 of the 22nd Squadron had arrived in Townsville, but with *“ground crew and equipment spread all over Australia. Some of our men are putting P-40s together. Our locker trunks are in storage at Brisbane, will be shipped back we understand. Most of the ground men of the 7th Group is in Java.”*

Feb. 21, 1942 Saturday

Townsville to Cloncurry, Australia -- And now we seemed on the retreat, for before dawn, Major Carmichael left the field in a Hudson bomber. He radioed from Cloncurry for us to follow him inland, which we did, all except one ship. The other 22nd ships had come in, all except Capt. Swenson, who had motor trouble in the Fiji. Lt. Roberts and crew stayed behind in Townsville awaiting Swenson and trying to dig the tail wheel of their ship from the mud. The edge of the runway is soft, and his tail wheel got a little outside the edge when he was turning.

All the Americans had been agreeably surprised with the liveability of Townsville, its tropical, air housing, it's successful camouflage. Food was excellent, and the Enlisted Men did not complain too much about the canvas tied between two-by-fours they slept on.

As we flew over the nearly 400 miles of almost uninhabited area of Australia (Still free kangaroo country) and landed at Cloncurry we became convinced we'd never see Townsville again. At Cloncurry we took over the eight hotels of the town, hired drivers and trucks to haul us about.

Our planes were two miles from town, two miles of winding, trail-like road.

Cloncurry is a hot dry place of a million flies per cubic foot of air. The men who kept out of the bar rooms found comfort and rest in shows, 6 to 12 months old, American made. The theatres were four walls, with a ceiling of sky. Seats were canvas, outdoor type, half bed and half chair. Lt. Morris was made O. D., and two men per ship stood guard thereat.

We figured we'd come to stay and we figured Cloncurry didn't offer much the Japs would be interested in.

Feb. 22, 1942

Cloncurry to Townsville---to combat mission:

We find that Capt. Swenson had come in while we were away, and this gave us 11 planes. Chaffin was still at Amberely. Faulkner's had to be left at Cloncurry, engine trouble. That left 10 planes.

Orders were to be back in Townsville by noon, and well we needed to be for there was work to be done. We were to attack Rabaul harbor.

Two of the four six-hundred-pound bombs we had carried so long were to be pulled out by us (we still have no ground crew) and four 300 pound bombs put in instead. In attempting to get his tail wheel unmired Roberts had damaged his wheel, now faced the big job of getting the ship off the runway so the others could take off. Without equipment that was a huge task for no weight could safely be placed on the tail wheel. It was such a big job that it was after dark before he had it completed. -- and in completing it the fuselage was damaged -- the ship made absolutely unflyable. This leaves out of our 12 original ships: Nine for attack.

Men worked gassing the ships, distributing baggage, handling, fusing the bombs, the same men who were to fly the mission, many until dark. All were up at 10:15, ate, assembled for last minute instructions from Major Carmichael, crawled in for a trip all were sceptical about.

But the night was dark and all that came out of it was not good. Two ships crashed, Rawls ramming Bostrom, Rawls losing a wing tip to Bostrom's prop. DuBose had watered gasoline, couldn't take off.

Result: Six ships take off, assemble for the attack at dawn.

Pilots and crews who made it were:- Carmichael, ever-present when there is danger, Brandon, Capt. Lewis, Capt. Swenson, Eaton, and Spieth.

Feb. 23, 1942 Monday

Townsville Incidents:-

And while those left behind waited good news--Spieth came back, saying that he had lost the formation in bad weather. His ship and that of DuBose were sent to Cloncurry for dispersal. No use to leave our ships here to attract the Japs. If they come let them find little.

Rawls ship needed a new wing tip. Bostrom's ship probably could have been flown as it was, but there was some question about the engine and propeller which had chewed Rawls wing. Major Twaddell, with Chaffin, Faulkner and DuBose decided that Rawls could have a wing from Bostrom. This seems to be the beginning of the end for #41-2416 for no other reason than that we must have spare parts. This is the only way to get them.

Afternoon brought news--bad news first--one ship as down 220 miles from Moresby, down in a marsh - out of gas. The ship was that of Eaton -- and all were reported by him over radio to be safe. At 3 pm Lewis came in without a bullet hole--reported bombing his target through clouds, reported that Eaton had made two additional passes over the target trying to get in a hit. The flight had had to go through a very bad storm. Lewis reported he and Eaton arrived over the target before the Carmichael flight and that they therefore did not receive any competition. This was not the plan of attack, but weather interfered. Carmichael landed shortly after Lewis, turned S/S Mouser with a knee wound and Pfc Sutton with a foot wound over to Doc. Luke. Only two bullets entered the ship. Each got a man.

Swenson came in next, had many more bullet holes in his ship, he having flown on the side toward the sun in the formation. Lt. Cihyak, bombardier had a knee injury, Lt Brandon was not able to come in today. He had had the worst beating of all, for one of his engines had caught fire. Another on the same side had quit, and he had landed in Moresby with little gas. All engines quit, out of gas, before he could taxi from the runway. Carmichael and some of the others did not drop their bombs not having been able to make sure of the target. Brandon dropped bomb bay tank.

Sgt W.E. Johnson brought down a Jap Zero fighter, and some of the others thought they scored damaging hits, weren't sure. There is a lot of repair work to be done. It will be handled by crews who did not fly.

Feb. 24, 1942 Tuesday

Rawls had promised what seemed the impossible -- to have his wing on by noon the next day. He worked most of the night and was ready to test hop by noon, accomplishing a job overnight that Sacramento would have required weeks to accomplish, this with very little needed equipment.

Brandon came in from Moresby, had taken off just prior to a Jap reprisal attack on the harbour there. Eaton's plane was seen by an Australian reconnaissance flight, was reported in a marsh and not to be salvaged. The crew had apparently left hunting for civilization. Those 45s the men carry may come in handy against the local headhunters, and the tropical animals. A plane was reported sent out to drop them food.

Lt. Zubco, 38th pilot who failed to take off with us on the night at Dec. 6, arrived here today on his way to Darwin. He has an LB-30. He is awaiting orders here since the Japs closed the Port Darwin route.

Feb. 25, 1942 Wednesday

Lt. Faulkner left on an inspection trip in an Australian plane. He is visiting the airports at the towns North of us, viewing them as possible alternate landing fields. He will return on the morrow.

Planes of Rawls, Swenson, Carmichael and Lewis leave for the safety of Cloncurry at dawn. Thacker brought his from there for additional work, returned. He now has Faulkner's ship.

We now have seven ships at Cloncurry.

Men in the hospital are reported doing very well.

Feb. 26, 1942 Thursday

Faulkner returns from his inspection. Brandon leaves for Cloncurry, making eight ships. Eaton's in the swamp, Chaffins at Amberley, Bostrom's unflyable and Robert's ship, still being worked on makes the total 12.

DuBose flies in with two teeth knocked out from a scuffle. Lewis takes the ship back.

Feb. 27, 1942 Friday

Robert's ship is ready and Bostrom's crew takes it over. General Royce pays us a visit.

All ships were called from Cloncurry during the afternoon and an attack on enemy objectives was contemplated, failed to be carried out. The attack was to be made after an overnight stop at Moresby. All bombs, no bomb bay tank was to be carried. The crews got a workout taking out the extra tanks and putting in bombs. Australian crews are pitching in and doing a lot of this work for us.

Lt. Surles came in from Amberley at 10:30 pm, bring ship No. 30 which had been repaired after the transport or airliner damage. With him came Brig. Gen. Royce, formerly of Hamilton and Fort Douglas. Gen. Royce is well liked by the members of the squadrons who have had previous contact with him. The General has just returned from England.

Feb. 28, Saturday

All ships and crews return to Cloncurry, Lt. Bostrom and crew taking Capt. Swenson's ship. Bostrom's old ship and the one Surles brought in remained behind. Additional work has to be done on that plane before it can be considered for combat purposes. Sgt Weeks and Sgt W.E. Johnson stay behind to do the work.

Surles picked up two additional men at Amberley, left Sgt. Collins behind. He is still ill. Two new men are: Cpl Albin F. Lenander, 6933237 and Pvt Paul Panosian, 6552836, now assigned to the 88th Recon.

Thirteen P-40 pursuit ships land here for the night. With them came an O-47, assigned to us for our use. A B-17 of the C or D class landed here and refuelled. This ship may be assigned to us later.

Major Nichols of Headquarters in Melbourne paid us a visit. He was here for the purpose of letting us know that we are not the forgotten men. If he gets some promotions through for us, gets commissions for our four cadets, gets flying pay for Lt. Johnson, who flew across the Pacific without benefit of reimbursement, if well, we'll believe that maybe we are not the forgotten. All our classmates over here are at least one rank ahead of us.

March 1, Sunday

This Sunday for a change has been one of comparative leisure. Lt. George H. Davidson and Pvt. Fred Nabisker? bring O-47A to command?

March 2, 1932 Monday

Lt. W. H. Johnson and Lt. A. R. Johnson were busy trying to get per diem for everyone. Work on ship No. 30 proceeds. Lt. Stewart, Engineering Officer has been receiving some new stock -- tanks of oxygen, airplane parts of minor weight. He is building up a Tech supply room here. - But the Japs are overrunning Java, apparently reaching down.

Lt. Eaton and crew have been definitely located, possibly picked up.

March 3, 1942 Tuesday

Still no flying. We wonder if there might not have been a change of vision or strategy, if perhaps Uncle Sam was beginning to see that he would need a lot of equipment and men, not a smattering here and there to win the war.

Ship 30 was ready for a test hop, passed it, but weather prevented Capt. Swenson taking the ship to Cloncurry.

March 4, 1942

Capt. Swenson ill with Dengue fever, as well as Sgt Pouncey and Pvt Lee, Capt. Lewis took 30 to Cloncurry, leaving the remains of 16 only as the Fortress representation in Townsville. Major Twaddell is attempting to get parts for 16.

During the afternoon five ships were called from Cloncurry. Men are to pick up all, belongings -- all ship equipment will be shipped. We are moving from Townsville, bag and baggage. Lt. W. H. Johnson paid per diem to all crews.

March 5, 1942

Capt. Lewis and Major Carmichael departed Townsville for Brisbane at 4 am.

The crews of the other four ships, with Chaffin and Faulkner piloting took off at 7 am for Cloncurry. But four Officers were left behind in addition to those ill: Major Twaddell, Lt DuBose, Lt Stewart and Lt. W.H. Johnson. Officers in the hospital here are: Capt. Swenson, Lt. McIntyre, with the fever. Lt. Cihak remains behind for medical care.

Remaining Enlisted Men are Sgt. Weeks, Sgt Johnson. Remaining behind for medical care are Pfc. Sutton, foot wound - Pfc Lee and M/S Pouncey with the fever. S/S Mouser is still in the hospital with a bullet yet in his leg.

Crews from Cloncurry report Lt. Thacker of the 88th in the hospital, Lt. Roberts of the 22nd Enlisted Men, names not known by the recorder. So far the 88th has just one fever case.

All personnel paid 15 days per diem, Officers at the rate of \$6 per day and Enlisted Men at the rate of \$4 per day.

A platoon of ordinance men under the leadership of a Lt. Merrill arrived today to handle the ferrying of bombs from the bomb dump to the planes. The Lt. has a bunch of recruits under him, men who have not had drill much less bomb experience. Our own crew men will still have to load the bombs in the ships.

March 6, 1942 Friday

Since all crews were left at Cloncurry on the previous day in the change of command post, Townsville items are meagre today.

Capt. Lewis took the lone B-17 back to Cloncurry in the morning, took it back with a skeleton crew and without a co-pilot. The Captain is considered an excellent pilot, as he is undoubtedly.

He has had a lot of airliner time back of him. Still, to him as to all the rest is new the flying which is done without radio aids, proper weather reports, night landings on fields poorly lighted, runways rough and short, landings made in a direct cross wind because that's the way the wind is blowing at the airport which has a single runway.

The Army in peacetime should have learned to get along without radio knowing that radio would not be used except in emergency during war time.

There is no Finance Officer at fly-ridden Cloncurry. The Finance Officer at Townsville is Class B and must witness the paying of all money, can appoint no one else to do the job for him. Since all of our men are rarely at the same place at one time it begins to appear that we may have to make a flying Finance Officer of our Lt. Craven.

Men other than Lt. Craven with whom we have been working are Major Irwin, CO of the Headquarters Squadron, Lt. Bunte, Adjutant, Major Livingston, Medical. Capt. Fowler is American Operations Officer at this airdrome.

March 7, 1942 Saturday

Major Carmichael returned in the evening from Melbourne and Brisbane. His presence here is a sign or signal, for he has been among the planners and he knows and can estimate tomorrow. Today's affairs were routine, ominous in their insignificance if one can believe that there's an awful quiet before a bomb explodes.

March 8, Sunday

Chief navigator for the 88th and the Southern Bombers is Lt Meyers, trusted and likeable. His comment might be a good introduction for today's affair. Said he, "A little while ago I was planning to go to church. Now I must go out and help kill somebody."

Men returning late from shows began to hear rumours.

By 1:30 am on Sunday everyone in the Southern Bomber Group, of which Major Carmichael is the Chief, Major Twaddell the Executive Officer, Lt. Stewart the Engineering Officer, Lt. Chaffin the Operations Officer, Lt. W.H. Johnson the Adjutant, was up and busy.

The plan was formulated in the face of a known Japanese advance toward New Guinea. Four planes loaded with one bomb bay tank and half a load of bombs would proceed directly to Horn Island, gas up there, hit the enemy at his chosen landing places, Lae and Salamaua. Four ships were to come to Townsville from Cloncurry unload extra gas tanks take a full load of bombs, take off from here after word was received from Capt. Lewis after the completion of his earlier mission.

But ---- we who started with 12 planes, still have ten, and eleven crews (Eaton is still in New Guinea) were unable to completely crew eight ships. The fever had trimmed us down and requested additional personnel have not arrived. As a result, two co-pilots flew one plane from Cloncurry to Townsville during the early morning hours, made their first landing as pilots before the dawn. Lt. Campbell acted as pilot, Lt. Cook as co-pilot. First pilots flew up without co-pilots.

The Lewis mission was not successful because of the weather but the information he brought back proved useful. Lt. Bostrom immediately upon landing went to Horn Island at Australia's northern tip to join the flight. The object in holding the three remaining ships here was to make sure we had enough ships left to make a good showing in a joint manoeuvre to come, one long scheduled.

March 9, 1942 Monday

The morning was spent working on the planes, in conferences with Marine and Naval representatives, in watching the first Australian pilots to fly P-40s in this region.

Early afternoon eight ships and crews led by Major Carmichael and Capt. Lewis took off for Horn to spend the night and attack at the designated time on the morrow. Five men from Brisbane arrived just in time to get in the planes. New men, attached to the 88th are:- M/Sgt David Semple; 6002568, T/S Leonard L. Herron, 6729693, Sgt. De an H. Anholt, 6569943, Cpl. Donald E. Doty, 6579788, Pvt. Waymon E. Curry, 19013210

The job was to hit Japanese ships off New Guinea after our Navy had done most of the work. We were to cover their retreat. There was a lot of rush work done on the four ships returning from Sunday's attack, but all eight ships were successfully put into condition. All ships arrived at Horn Island on the tip of Australia in position for the following morning's work.

March 10, 1942 Tuesday

The Japs hit us at Pearl Harbor on Sunday Dec 7. Tuesday March the 10th is an important day for us.

The 89th Bomb Squadron led by Lt. Donal Hall has moved in to handle our ground work while awaiting assembly of their own dive bombers or the arrival of our ground crews. The men are eager and willing, but they are just a handful, and few have had B-17 experience. Total men available from them are: 40 in armament, 59 engineers and 7 communications. Lt. Wueprel heads communications, Lt. Carter, engineering and Lt. Lauer, armament. They are to play an important part in our feats of the morrow.

During the afternoon while the small contingent of men left behind awaited the arrival of our ships a lone B-17 from Brisbane brought us reinforcements to replace the 31 men we have in the hospital with the fever.

In the assortment were Capt. Keys, Fred M O-386226, 1st Lt. Maurice C. Horgan, 7th Bomb., 0-395158. Lt. Elliott, Robert W. 7th Bomb, ASN unknown, Lt. Yerrington, Edward R., 7th Bomb 0-434558 and Lt Paul R. Tarbutton, 0-420878, 19th Bomb as is Capt. Keys.

The 19th Bomb men are veterans of the Philippines and Java, the 7th Bomb veterans of Java and Macassar Straights, long to be remembered, Enlisted Men included M.S. Durward W. Fesmire, 6246350, S/S Max Baca, Jr, 6555898, S/S Herbert E. Weist, 6871595, Sgt. Eugene D. Schafer, 6935947, Sgt Jean A. Byers, 6291071, Pfc Alvara A. Limatainen, 16021712 , Pfc Louis A. Chytil, 18010385, and Cpl. D. W. Brown.

Lt. Luke the Doctor falls ill with the fever!

Lt. Eckberg flying an O-47 joins the unit, giving us an additional baggage and supply plane.

All eight ships came back, reporting the Navy had done an excellent job. Based South of New Guinea their dive bombers had swooped in on the Japs, Crews reported seeing four ships on fire, others sinking. Our own bombers were unopposed, hit a cruiser and another and smaller vessel. Our work was hindered by the fact that the bomb sight in the lead ship went out when sighted on the target. Lt. Pascoe lead bombardier was very disappointed. Lt. Stewart was very much relieved when he set foot on the ground. "Well," he said, "We won't have to worry about those 600 pound bombs we've treasured ever since we left Hawaii.

While the flight was out many things happened. Officers were moved from the barracks down to the front porch of the Club. Australian Officer's outranked everyone except the two Majors. Most of the Officers were irritated by having their stuff moved by our Allies during their absence. Our orderly room was lifted bodily and without consultation and placed in our former supply room -- also very irritating. Reason -- At last the Aussie have planes. A P-40 Squadron is here.

March 11 Wednesday

The A-20 boys worked all night and most of the morning and part of the afternoon getting five ships ready to fly. Skeleton crews brought our two remaining ships from Cloncurry and with the aid of new personnel, we were able to man five ships. Lt. Johnson, Adjutant, was left in charge of the night work. Lt. Faulkner with Major Twaddell as co-pilot led the flight, one which was to prove one of the most successful, to date.

News releases on yesterday's victory gave 11 credits to the RAAF. Our Navy and our B-17s were not mentioned -- but we know the story.

March 12, Thursday

Still the A-20 crews are working. Six more ships are sent off in the afternoon, but one, Capt. Swenson is forced to turn back before reaching Port Moresby. Our five ships at Horn Island took off and completed their attack.

One and possibly two Jap Zero fighters were shot down. Every gun in the five ship formation was brought into play and the men came back with enthusiasm at its highest peak in a long time. Sgt Mackey believes he put on the finishing touches. Another Jap loss was reported. One and probably two Naval ships damaged, a Jap held airport hit, docks destroyed along with buildings. Place --- See Operations Orders.

Major Twaddell instructed all navigators and others to draw maps of what they saw and the intelligence reports brought back were the best so far.

March 13 Friday

The five ships which left yesterday used Port Moresby as the over-night stopping base instead of Horn Island. We've used that several days in a row and it is believed that a Zero fighter followed the flight long enough to know where we were hitting them from.

Beezley, DuBose and Horgan return directly from Moresby. Lt. Bostrom returned after reaching a point one half hour from the target. All had motor trouble of some kind. Capt. Lewis alone went over the airport near Rabaul in New Britain and hit at the ships on the ground, destroyed three and probably damaged more.

All ships carried 300 pound bombs, 14 in number for hitting the airport. Lewis dropped bombs down the runway and on airport buildings and facilities. A telegram of congratulations was sent from Melbourne for him and his crew.

Major Carmichael grounded all ships awaiting parts.

Lewis was unchallenged by the Japs. He struck from 30,000. While the Japs can reach the altitude it takes them some time. Our own P-40s cannot reach the altitude, are less manoeuvrable than the Jap Zero.

Weather separated the ships after their dawn takeoff.

March 14 Saturday

All ships still grounded. A B-17 previously in the Java area is now stationed at Melbourne. Pilot Bar, Cp Putman of the Seventh group brought a lot of rank from headquarters here to visit. Bar reports Lt DuFrane, Major Robinson, Lt. Burnie and others of the Seventh Group lost at Macassar Straights. Little is left of the Seventh Group equipment.

Since men are working and on the alert during the daytime our two Majors purchased from Major Irwin two cases of cigarettes with their own money. These were sold to the men by Lt Johnson. We are not sure where the money for the cigarettes goes, but we appreciate the cigarettes. Australian brands are generally very biting.

Per Diem for the second 15 days was paid to all, Officers \$6 and men \$4, daily.

Horn Island was hit today the American Pursuit making a good showing.

They downed three Zero fighters, one bomber, lost one ship but no personnel. The pilot of one which crashed was picked up. One of the men under Capt. Moresby, who brought his Squadron through here a few days ago won distinction by diving on a Jap ship on the tail of a P-40 and cutting off the Japs canopy. His own guns having jammed he made this desperate choice to save his brother fighter. He succeeded in landing his own crippled ship.

All men still confined to the post to work on the ships with the 89th boys.

The Australian C. O. who had previously furnished guards for our ships suddenly and without warning took them all off. Now we have a new problem.

The visit of rank, which included Brig Gen. Royce, brought on a secret mission. Stewart, Johnson and Major Twaddell almost unassisted prepared four ships for take-off at 3 am.

Fourteen extra parachutes, 14 extra oxygen masks, and fourteen extra life vests had to be located for each ship. Nearly all the others were stripped. Heavy flying equipment was assembled and placed in plane no 34, 08, 29 and 47. Major Carmichael, Lt. Chaffin, Capt. Lewis and Lt. Bostrom and picked crews were to man the ships. Co-pilots for the four planes were officers previously in the Philippines - Mission: Secret.

Aviation Events Calendar by Ian McDonell

March 2026

1 Tyabb Airshow
27-29 Fly'n for Fun Parkes NSW
28-29 Warbirds over Scone

April 2026

4-5 Easter Fly-in Holbrook NSW
6 Barossa Air Show Rowland Flat
11 Beverley Air Show WA
16-19 National Fly-in AAAA Corowa NSW
18-19 Anzac week airshow West Sale

May 2026

15-17 Frogs Hollow Fly-in NSW (near Bega)
16-17 Wings over Shellharbour Albion Park

August 2026

14-16 Gold Coast Air Show
21-23 Grassroots Fly-in AAAA Leeton NSW

September 2026

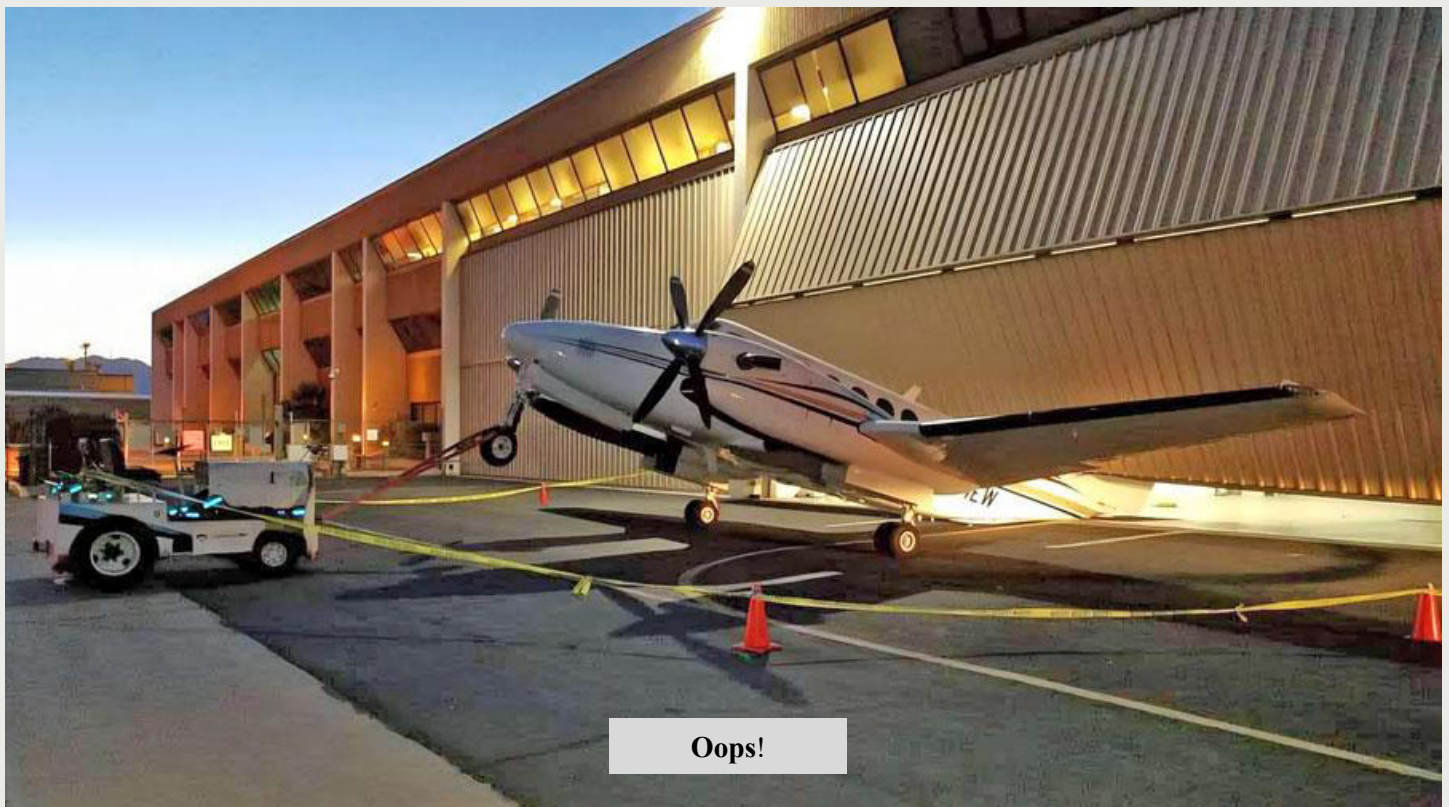
Jabiru International Film festival – see web site

October 2026

9-11 Spring Fly-in AAAA Wentworth NSW

November 2026

28 AAAA Toy Run Caboolture



Oops!

Background Check

by Ian McDonell

The “where” is easy - the “what”, “why” and “what elses” may not be!



Background check for November at left:

David Carter identified the location as Essendon, November 1984 and the twin behind VH-HBM as a Dornier 228 (he went for a flight in it on Friday 16th November).

When - between May 1982 and June 1989 based on spread of registrations.

VH-DKT is Cessna 421C Golden Eagle registered in May 1977 and went to Corpair Perth a bit later in its life. Sold to USA in July 1992.

VH-CSK is Baron 95-B55 registered September 1977 and is still current.

VH- HBM is a rare Cessna 425 Corsair registered May 1982. One of only 3 brought to Australia it was marketed as pressurised, an easy to fly 8 seat turbine twin, capable of 380 kt cruise. All three returned to the USA in the 1980s.

VH-FOX is a Lear 35A registered September 1981 and returned to USA March 1997.

Two unusual matters - as the second VH-FOX it did not belong to Fox Industries, as were nearly all of the many later VH-FOX helicopters.

The markings on the aircraft show that it was used / leased? by the RAAF for undisclosed matters, possible radar tracking or target calibration, etc.

This month's Background Check (below) is sure to prompt a feeling of nostalgia among some of our members.





Zoom online meeting

Friday 27 February 2026

Logon 7:15pm QLD

Start 7:30pm QLD

zoom

Annual General Meeting & Members' Chat Night

**This Zoom meeting is
for Queensland AHSA members only**

**We will start the night with our AGM
which should take less than 10 minutes.**

This will be followed by the following
presentations:-

- **Bob Livingstone "The Course of True Love Never Did Run Smooth!"**
- **Peter Dunn OAM "QANTAS Never Crashed"**
- **Trevor Potter "No. 460 Squadron (RAAF)"**
- **Ian McDonell "Different Collectables"**
- **Jeff Nielsen "RAAF Townsville Aviation Heritage Centre"**



Bob's Back Page

Two images of the Ray Parer and John McIntosh DH-9 G-EAQM which they entered the 1919 England-Australia Air Race. If you don't know the story, do please Google it. The first image (this is not one of mine) is what it looked like in June 1986 when the restoration was nearly complete. The restoration was taking place in the AWM's Treloar Annex when a driver lost control of his car, and it smashed into the building and totally wrecked the aircraft.

They had to practically start from scratch, but it was completed in time to be displayed at the 1988 Bi-Centennial Air Show; this IS one of mine and a favourite. It spent years on display in the Australian War Memorial, but when the display area was demolished in 2020 it went into storage. It is intended to be restored to display when the works are completed.

