



THE QUEENSLAND VINTAGE AEROPLANE GROUP
& AUSTRALIAN FLYING MUSEUM INC

AUSTRALIAN VINTAGE AEROPLANE NEWS



Piper Colt VH-DGH restored, owned and flown by Doug Muir, based at Kilcoy Airfield

Vol. 16/05

Australian Vintage Aeroplane News

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Membership Matters

Annual Membership Fee Due

Hello to all QVAG/AFM members and supporters, by this time members should have received an email from our Membership Officer advising it's time to renew your membership by paying the annual fee. Some of you have already paid and won't be receiving an email.

The fees are: Full Member A\$50.00 Associate Member A\$25.00 (Partner of full member) Junior Member A\$12.50 (Under 18yrs.) Payment can be made by cheque, money order, direct credit or cash. Payment details are:

Account Name: QVAG AFM Inc. BSB: 484799 Account No: 044580907. If paying by direct deposit please include your surname in the reference field.

If you don't want to pay by direct deposit you can go to the bank and do an over the counter deposit to the above account or alternatively post a cheque to:

Queensland Vintage Aeroplane Group, PO Box 794 Archerfield Qld 4108

Wouldn't it be Nice

It would be great if you can recruit just one new member to our group. There is strength in numbers and I am not referring to political strength, rather strength in comradeship, strength in having the opportunity to meet like-minded people.

Our target demographic is people who own a Vintage or Warbird aeroplane and people who have a strong interest in those types of aircraft. QVAG/AFM needs the support of these people, the greater the numbers of our membership, the more worthwhile and satisfying for the committee to organise events knowing that the support is there.

Our web site at www.qvag.org on the home page contains an introduction to QVAG/AFM and what our key values are. Remember the key values are at a high level and are aspirational. Refer the prospective member to the group's web site but please don't rely on them printing a membership form from the web site.

Please print a form yourself and fill it out for them, collect the membership fee and then submit the form and the payment to our membership officer at membership@qvag.org

Passing of Robin Bernhardt

Recently past QVAG member died from a heart attack. Robin at one time was an extremely active and enthusiastic member of QVAG and her efforts were greatly appreciated. Vale Robin!

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The next QVAG Grass Roots Fly-in

QVAG/AFM organises a number of smaller fly-ins each year at various airfields to allow vintage /warbird aeroplane pilots and enthusiasts to socialise with each other.

The next Grass Roots Fly-in is at Gatton Airpark on Saturday 23 July 2016 commencing about 0900 and running through to 1300 hrs.

The airpark is to the south west of the Gatton Township as shown in the image below.



The location of the fly-in is at the hangar of member and QVAG VP Steve Newing. No doubt Steve will have his vintage aeroplanes available to have a close look at (Fairchild Argus and Great Lakes Biplane).

If you want to get weather reports for Gatton go to this web site:

<https://www.wunderground.com/q/zmw:00000.2.94562>

We have three other flying events planned for the year – two more grass roots fly-ins (one at Caloundra and one at Murwillumbah and a fly away to Kingaroy in September.

Tea Coffee and light refreshments will be available – hope to see some of you there.

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Brisbane Valley Air Show



Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield is proud to invite all aviation enthusiasts, pilots and public alike, to the Brisbane Valley Air Show which is being held on the 27th - 28th August 2016.

A massive weekend is planned with a full air show featuring a wide variety of aircraft from South East Queensland. Expect to see aircraft types including military aircraft, warbirds representative of WW1 and WW2, vintage, aerobatic and homebuilt aeroplanes as well as a wide cross section of general aviation aircraft including helicopters and models.

There will be many stalls, static displays, car clubs, ex-military vehicle displays and other exhibits in keeping with a major fly-in. A jumping castle and face painting will keep the kids entertained for hours.

A wide range of food and drinks are available on both days. Saturday night will feature live entertainment and a crowd pleasing roast dinner so that everyone can sit back, relax and enjoy. Onsite camping is encouraged in the dedicated caravan camping area.

[Download the event poster](#) for all the information and don't forget to regularly check the [Brisbane Valley Airshow Website](#) and [Facebook Page](#) for all the latest news!

From a QVAG/AFM perspective it is a great and pleasing achievement that Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield is holding an airshow to coincide with 30 years since we regained control over the field.

In 1986/87 when we were designing the layout of the airfield we were careful to make it so that an airshow could be held there (clearances from crowd line/buildings, the extra runway length and on site car parking being three of the parameters we took into account.

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Would you like to know what the weather is like at Watts Bridge Airfield?

Author: Ross Stenhouse

It has been brought to my attention by member Mark Purdie that a local resident has a weather station very near the Watts Bridge. Its readings are available to all off the web via the following link:

<https://www.wunderground.com/personal-weather-station/dashboard?!ID=IQUENSL709#history>

After looking at the site in the browser I was amazed to see the level of detail for the local weather at Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield. Historical information going back for over a year and importantly a 10 day forecast of the future weather together with real time data about the current weather. It made me think about how far technology had advanced and how the forecasting worked.

If a recent former life, I was employed as a senior analyst/senior programmer by Sparq Solutions, a company that is the ICT arm of the energy companies, Energex and Ergon. I was in the workforce team and as such was heavily involved in the computer applications that automatically decided which crew to send to faults in the electricity network. It was in this role I became exposed to forecasting engines.

In a storm, the a forecasting module which was part of very large computer system was used to automatically decide how many crews, what type of crews and which crews to send to an area heavily hit by a storm. The system used the crew availability, rosters, skill sets, geographical locations together with weather forecasts, real time data from weather stations installed on the electricity network and network outages from the other computer systems.

In making those decisions, the WU forecasting engine using its algorithms together with big data as an input (i.e. the real time data from the local weather station – temp, humidity, rainfall, wind speed and direction together with Bureau of Meteorology data/ forecasts and historical data from the local weather station stored by WU) is to come up with forecast for the locality of the weather station.

It's the intelligence contained in the back end (in this case WUnderground.com) that is the really clever bit not the local weather station.

The driver for the development of technology such as this is agribusiness – business such as big cattle feedlots (one near Goondiwindi has 50,000 head of cattle shortly to be expanded to 90,000 head) and big cropping concerns. In large feedlots cattle (and especially black cattle) can be overcome by heat stress so it's vital to have the local prevailing weather conditions and reasonable forecasts in order to take reactive and proactive actions to protect the health of the cattle or crop.

Users of Watts Bridge Airfield are now able to gain a very good appraisal of the weather - past, current and future! What we need at Watts Bridge is a webcam showing the runways so that we can see what the visibility is like (fog).

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Aeroplane of the Month A20-695

The aeroplane of the month this issue is the CAC Wirraway and the local representative is of the type is VH-MFW. It is owned by the Warplanes Pty Ltd, Queensland operating as the Mustang Fighter Trust. I hope you enjoy reading the article I have compiled from various sources. I have given many references together with hyperlinks that you can use to gain additional information. I have tried to give the article a Queensland focus and used aeroplanes to illustrate the article that have a Queensland connection.



Photo Above: A20-695 at Watts Bridge, June 2016.

A20-695's Military History

VH-MFW was delivered to the Royal Australian Air Force as A20-695. The aeroplane is a CA-16 Mk.III. Its construction # is 1147.

It was received by the RAAF on 27 February 1945 at 1AD and modified for target towing duties. Subsequently it was placed into storage on the 15 January 1946. On 17 September 1955 the aeroplane was received by 1 BTFS (Basic Flying Training School).

1 BTFS along with 1 IFTS (Initial Flying Training School) had been formed in response to the increased demand for aircrew during the Korean War and the Malayan Emergency. 1 BTFS was established in December 1951 at the RAAF Base Uranquinty, NSW where it operated Tiger Moths and Wirraways. The school absorbed the activities of 1 IFTS in January 1955 as the demand for aircrew flying training had decreased following the end of the Korean War. 1 BTFS was relocated to RAAF Base Point Cook, Victoria in May 1958 following the closure of RAAF Uranquinty on 18 December 1958 and was exclusively flying CAC Wirraways.

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Interestingly in 1951 1 Initial Training School was formed and in 1952 renamed to 1 IFTS at RAAF Station Archerfield, Queensland to instruct students with general aeronautical and military knowledge after which they received their flight grading during 12 hours flying on Tiger Moths.¹

A20-695 was transferred back to 1 AD (Aircraft Depot) on 18 January 1957 and approval was granted for its disposal on 30 October 1958.

RAAF Base Uranquinty



Photo above: RAAF Base Uranquinty

Since A20-695 spent part of its RAAF life with 1 BFTS and this Unit spent a significant portion of its RAAF existence at Uranquinty I thought it would be useful to detail the basic details of this RAAF Base as Uranquinty is not a well-known RAAF base to Queensland folk.

Uranquinty is a small town approximately 15 kilometres south of Wagga Wagga, in the Riverina region of New South Wales. The RAAF base there should not be confused with the RAAF base Forrest Hill that was developed during WW2 and subsequently became RAAF Wagga. RAAF Base Wagga is located 10.7 km south east of Wagga Wagga and was established as the home of No 2 Flying Training School.²

¹ Wikipedia – No 1 Basic Flying Training School - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No._1_Basic_Flying_Training_School_RAAF

² RAAF Base Wagga - http://www.airforce.gov.au/Bases/New_South_Wales/RAAF_Base_Wagga/?RAAF-DpYABGb1cy7zXCjBYvpaFwjmGRrb0RT

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The land for the RAAF Uranquinty was requisitioned in 1940 for the establishment of No 5 Service Flying Training School as part of the Empire Air Training School. Flying training then commenced at the base within a year and continued until flying training ended in 1945.

Graduate pilots of No. 1 IFTS (located at Archerfield) went on to 1 BFTS, where they underwent further instruction that included instrument, formation and night flying, as well as aerobatics and navigation. The first part of their training at No. 1 BFTS included 40 hours on Tiger Moths, after which they would fly 50 hours on Wirraways. Successful students finally transferred to No. 1 AFTS, before graduating as sergeant pilots. By 1945 about 1515 graduate pilots had been trained by the unit.³

Courses at the service flying training schools consisted of two streams, intermediate and advanced; the total duration varied during the war as demand for aircrew fluctuated. Initially running for sixteen weeks, the course was cut to ten weeks (which included 75 hours flying time) in October 1940. A year later it was raised to twelve weeks (including 100 hours flying time), and again to sixteen weeks two months later. It continued to increase after this, peaking at 28 weeks in June 1944.



The photo above is of the "Main Street" of No 5 SFTS at Uranquinty taken in 1943. Nice rows of white rocks out the front.

The base was closed in 1947 and the Uranquinty control tower was relocated to the RAAF Woomera Test Range. The tower was disassembled by No 2 Airfield Construction Squadron in the late 1940s and shipped to Woomera where it was re-erected and reopened in the early 1950s. It is still active at RAAF Woomera and is likely to remain so for many years to come.

³ RAAF Museum - <http://www.airforce.gov.au/raafmuseum/research/bases/uranquinty.htm>

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The land was used as a migrant centre until September 1951, when the RAAF required the base to be reopened for 1 BFTS. In 1951 when 1 BFTS opened it had 377 staff, 37 Tiger Moths and 37 Wirraways. From January 1956 to February 1957, the Winjeel gradually replaced both the Tiger Moth and the Wirraway as No. 1 BFTS's training aircraft.

1 BFTS remained at Uranquinty until 18 December 1958 when it was relocated to RAAF Base Point Cook. 1 BFTS started operations at Point Cook on 19 December 1958.

1 BFTS at RAAF Base Point Cook

At Point Cook 1 BFTS RAAF trainees could expect to fly approximately 85 hours (initially on Wirraways and subsequently just on Winjeels) after which they progressed onto fly 125 hours on Vampires at 1 AFTS. Upon graduating from 1 AFTS they gained a short-service commission as pilot officers. Those interested in further reading about 1 BFTS operations at Point Cook can follow up using the link provided in the reference in the footnote below.⁴

A20-695's Civil History

A20-695 was sold to Horsham Foundry on 11 June 1959 and then resold to the Commonwealth Aircraft Factory (CAC) on 25 March 1960. The aeroplane was stored at CAC's Fisherman's Bend plant for CA-28 Ceres production, but not used.



Photo Above: CAC-28 Ceres – This aeroplane type was built from some unaltered Wirraway components however the fuselage frame was completely new and the wing substantially rebuilt to a new design. The main wheels were CAC Mustang in origin.

⁴ 1 BFTS relocation to Point Cook - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No._1_Basic_Flying_Training_School_RAAF

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Photo Above: Wirraway A20-652 parked in the back garden of the Fleet Wings Service Station at Laverton, Victoria in January 1964. This had been acquired two months earlier for £40 when CAC at Fisherman's Bend disposed of 37 Wirraways in storage for rebuilding as CA-28 Ceres. Ceres production however was terminated in 1963 after only 20 aircraft had been complete. A20-652 came from W. Gordon Scrap Metals at Werribee who purchased 26 of the CAC Wirraway storage collection in 1963.⁵ In June 2011 the Caloundra based Queensland Air Museum (QAM) announced that it had acquired A20-652.⁶ The last flight by A20-652 was piloted by Queenslander and former QVAG/AFM member Matt Denning. Following an air display on the 18 December 2010, A20-652 was handed over to the museum and unfortunately whilst the aeroplane is to be maintained by the QAM in operational condition with regular engine runs; a condition of the gift was that it never flies again.

In November 1963, A20-695 was up for disposal. It sold the same month to W. Gordon Scrap Metals at Werribee. The dealer had purchased a number of Wirraways (A20-223, A20-652, A20-670, and A20-719 being some). A20-695 was collected and held by Pearce Dunn of Warbirds Aviation Museum, Mildura from 1970-1982 along with a number of other Wirraways from the same dealer.

In 1982 A20-695 was purchased and stored by Jack McDonald. In 1986 the aeroplane was purchased by Ed Field & David Jones from Melbourne, Victoria, and held 1986-1991 pending restoration. Restoration commenced in 1993. The aircraft was registered as VH-MFW on 21 January 1997. Its first post restoration flight was on 8 July 1997. A20-695 is now owned by Warplanes P/L, Jindalee, QLD. It is displayed and flown by the Caboolture Warplane Museum, Queensland.

Ed Field is a former member of QVAG/AFM and we think it would be great to have him back. Ed had previously owned Wirraway Mk. II A20-81 (VH-WWY) which was restored to flying status in March 1995.

⁵ Military Wrecks and Relics – 1960s - <http://www.goodall.com.au/photographs/wrecks-relics/wrecksrelics.html>

⁶ Air Museum gets a Wirraway - <http://www.australianflying.com.au/news/warbirds-queensland-air-museum-gets-wirraway>

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Image above: VH-WWY (A20-81) painted to represent A20-176 of 4 SQN RAAF. A20-81 was assigned to the No.5 Service Flying Training School at Uranquinty. It operated there with 5 SFTS from 1941-1946.



Photo above: Winjeel A85-438 (VH-IOX belonging to Queenslander Bill McMonagle) for a short time was with 1 BFTS although at a later date to Wirraway A20-695. A85-438 hasn't flown for about four years, however in a recent conversation with Bill McMonagle he told me that he has done an extensive amount of maintenance on the aeroplane and we should see it back in the skies before too long. Apart from its time with 1 BFTS, in the 1970s A85-438 spent an amount of time with 10 SQN at Townsville as a squadron hack aircraft. At that time 10 SQN operated Neptune P2V-7 aircraft for maritime surveillance, anti-submarine and search and rescue duties.

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Photo Above: Wirraway VH-MFW (A20-695) at Watts Bridge, my imagination went wild and the thought crossed my mind that this shot could have been taken in December 1942 when twelve 5 SQN Wirraways along with a number of Tiger Moths were based there. The view would have looked very similar.

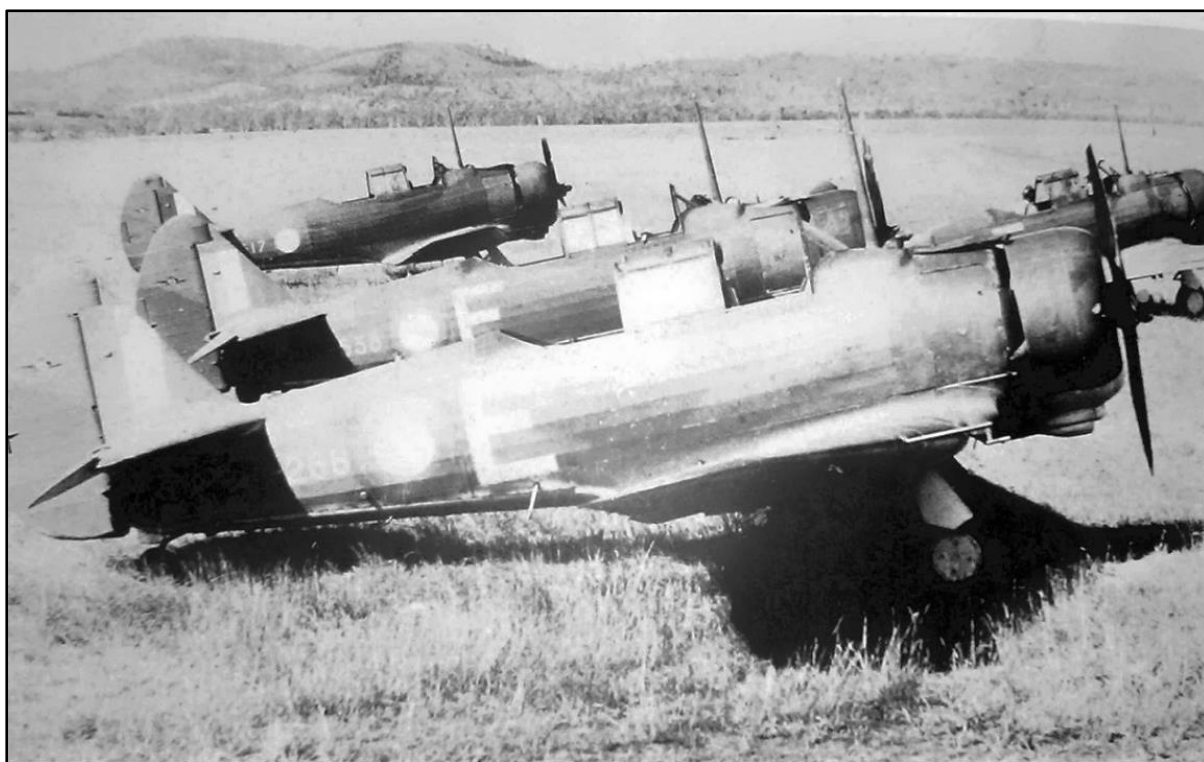


Image Above: Wirraways from 5 SQN RAAF at Watts Bridge circa Jan 1943

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PHONE **B 8728**
and change now p.m.
EIGHT TEST

Sun Girl
PHOTOS
PAGE 6

CITY: Fine, warm.

HIGH WATER (at Pile Light): 1.47 p.m.

The Sunday Mail

FREE COLOUR MAGAZINE INSIDE

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3 DIE IN BEACH CRASH

Plane rips into surf crowd

10 HURT, BUT MANY ESCAPE WIRRAWAY'S DEATH LEAP

DEATH CAME FROM THE SKIES

AN R.A.A.F. Wirraway plane yesterday crashed on to the surfing beach at Maroochydore, 72 miles north of Brisbane, killing two boys and a girl, and injuring 10 other people.

The plane hit the beach at 11.20 a.m. — at the most popular surfing hour of the day, when there were 700 people on the sands, and another 700 in the water.

Map shows position of Maroochydore.

THE CASUALTY LIST

KILLED

PAULINE ROBERT, 6, of Bill Road, Nambour.
GRAHAM BLAIR, 6, of Hut 42A, Housing Camp, Gregory Terrace, Brisbane.
LIAM MCCONNOR, 14, of Normandy Terrace, Kelvin.

Eye-witnesses say that the plane banked in steeply, lower than the 30ft. high shark lookout tower on the beach, then crashed to the sand about 10 feet away on its right wingtip.

It tore its way into a group of people, then with a horrible roar turned a gigantic Catherine wheel, jumping over about 40 people and smashing itself in the sand by the further surfing flag



Image above: A not so happy report about a RAAF Wirraway crash at Maroochydore on 30 December 1950⁷

⁷ National Archives of Australia

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Disclaimer: All views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of the author, the editor or the Queensland Vintage Aeroplane Group Australian Flying Museum Inc. They are simply opinions and are not necessarily fact.