



THE QUEENSLAND VINTAGE AEROPLANE GROUP  
& AUSTRALIAN FLYING MUSEUM INC

# Australian Vintage Aeroplane News

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Vol. 16/08



## Significant Event

On the 30<sup>th</sup> October 2016 the QVAG-AFM Annual General Meeting will be held inside the QVAG Building at Watts Bridge starting 1200 hours

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**Cover Photo:** RAAF B24 Liberators flying in a nice formation (being a wartime photo the aeroplane Identification numbers have been spotted out so it's difficult to know where it was taken)

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## News from the Editor

I am slowly getting used to being the AVAN editor. It's a lot of work but I enjoy doing all the research involved in some of the articles. I am always looking for articles, and leads to things that I can research.

I am trying to cover a wide range of topics. In this issue you see articles covering the past and the present .

The major research article this issue is RAAF Leyburn. This former RAAF WWII airfield is in SE Qld and is another one in the series. In the next edition of AVAN we will cover RAAF at Cecil Plains. I intend to steadily work my way around other former RAAF airfields in the SE QLD and Northern NSW area. There are quite a few so it will take quite a few issues to cover them all.

## Membership Matters

A new procedure is being put in place to cover membership. It is simple and makes sense.

When you join QVAG-AFM and pay the membership fee you become a member – you remain a member until you resign in writing. This is in accordance with the constitution.

You will be sent an invoice in June each year which serves as a reminder and of course lets you know how much to pay. It is a member's responsibility to pay the annual membership on time.

## BBQ's at QVAG Building on "Last Saturday Night of the Month"

A number of QVAG members have expressed interest in having a few social functions at Watts Bridge. Member Phil Ridley came up with a proposal and that was to hold a small BBQ dinner in the QVAG building on the last Saturday Night of the month.

Whilst all members are invited it's expected that these will be mainly attended by people from Watts Bridge. It's likely that these will be a fairly small affair where people have a friendly chat about things aeronautical and otherwise.

## Summary of Dates to Remember

29 <sup>th</sup> October 2016	BBQ at QVAG Building	1500 hrs	QVAG Building, Watts Bridge
30 <sup>th</sup> October 2016	QVAG-AFM AGM	1200 hrs	QVAG Building, Watts Bridge
19 <sup>th</sup> November 2016	QVAG Grass Roots Fly-in	0900 hrs	Mothcair, Murwillumbah Airfield
27 <sup>th</sup> November 2016	BBQ at QVAG Building	1500 hrs	QVAG Building, Watts Bridge

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## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Date: Sunday 30th October 2016

Time: 1200 hours

Location: QVAG Clubhouse at Watts Bridge Airfield

### Agenda for the AGM

Meeting declared open

Apologies

Adoption of minutes of 2015/16 AGM

President's report

Treasurer's report including adoption of the Auditor's report

Appointment of Auditor

Election/appointment of management committee

1. President
2. Vice-President
3. Secretary
4. Treasurer
5. Membership Officer
6. Committee Member

General Business

Meeting Closed

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If you are unable to attend how about filling in a proxy and giving/sending it to some who is.

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### THE ASSOCIATION:-

QUEENSLAND VINTAGE AEROPLANE GROUP - AUSTRALIAN FLYING MUSEUM INC.

I, ..... of ..... being a  
member of the above named Association, hereby appoint

..... of ..... or  
failing him, ..... of ....., as my  
proxy to vote for me on my behalf at the (annual) general meeting of the  
Association, to be held on the .....30th..... day of .....October.....,  
2016....., and at any adjournment thereof.

Signed this ..... day of ....., 20.....

Signature

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## Murwillumbah Grass Roots Fly-in – 19<sup>th</sup> November 2016

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This is a repeat of the notice we gave in the last issue of AVAN so please forgive us.

It's been quite a while since QVAG ventured to Murwillumbah for a fly-in. In the early days Murwillumbah used to be the BIG ONE, the one that shouldn't be missed. Well here we are again and off to Murwillumbah. Not a big fly-in this time but a small one where we all have a chat and a chance to talk to the Challinor Bros about projects going through Mothcair.

What the QVAG management committee hopes is that some of the vintage aeroplane owners' from Northern NSW attend the fly-in. We know many of them already however it would be great to meet them again and catch up on what has happened in the past few years.



More details airfield can be obtained by downloading the PDF via the link below.

[http://www.tweed.nsw.gov.au/Download.aspx?Path=~/Documents/Airfield/TSC00473\\_Murwillumbah\\_Airfield\\_Pilot\\_Notes.pdf](http://www.tweed.nsw.gov.au/Download.aspx?Path=~/Documents/Airfield/TSC00473_Murwillumbah_Airfield_Pilot_Notes.pdf)

To get indication of the weather go to (remember these are not aviation weather reports):

<https://www.wunderground.com/cgi-bin/findweather/getForecast?query=murwillumbah>

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## Flying an Auster

Member Ray Vuillermin provided the following feedback on Auster flying after reading the article on Austers presented in the last issue of AVAN (Vol. 16/07). Ray is a highly experienced pilot flying more types of aeroplanes than I have had hot breakfasts – from bug smashers and military jets through to wide body jetliners. Ray even spent some time with the “Dark Side – CASA.”

*I enjoyed the Auster article and agree completely, with the view they are a vastly underrated aeroplane.*

*I have instructed in Austers on and off since 1959 and believe I know why they had such a bad reputation, particularly in Australia.. The aero clubs and members tried to fly them like Tiger Moths and at Tiger Moth approach speeds. With 168 sq. ft. of wing the Auster would float all day and if the wheels touched and the pilot over controlled there began an exciting kangaroo impression.*

*Instead of 58Kt approach speed I would advise 45, at which the Auster's behaviour was not unlike a Tigers. So much so that I believe they are ideal for basic tail wheel endorsements. With an experienced instructor in the type the Auster can give as good a basic endorsement as the Tiger. That same efficient wing can make wheelers exciting but, with the right technique, wheelers can be achieved. Above all the versatility is amazing.*

*What other aircraft has a straight and level speed range of A.S.I. off the clock on the low side to 85 knots?*

*What other aircraft can you fly with the ASI off the clock on the low side and roll into a max rate steep turn and sustain it? No wonder it is an AOP.*

Thanks Ray for those thoughts and I found your comments to be spot on and accurate.

After years of flying little else than my Tiger Moth VH-JRS I purchased a Auster J5B VH-BGU. My experience was that after all the years of Tiger flying I had an aversion to flying below 50 knots on final. The Auster as Ray says has a final speed of 45 knots bleeding off to 35 knots over the fence. Now that is lower than the Tiger Moth's stall speed of 40 knots! The J5B Auster has a stall speed of 28 knots with full flap.

I am not too sure if I would be game to do a max rate steep turn down real low – too big a chicken. I have managed to do good wheelers and have yet to learn how to 3-point my old girl. A 3-pointer gets me a bounce every time!

## Errata

Member Ron Ennis reports that we made a mistake in the last edition of this journal when we reported that he owned the D.H. Devon VH-DHI. We should have said it was owned by DHI is owned by seven folk – Ray Vuillermin, Stephen White, Roy Watterson, Richard Goddard, Woc Woinarski, Mitch Ennis and Ron Ennis. The Devon is for sale (see add elsewhere in this journal).



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## Proctor Restorations in UK and Australia

Author: Ross Stenhouse



Many of you will remember that I am restoring Proctor Mk1 formally VH-AHY. I have been involved in that project as long as I can remember. Progress has been made but there is a long way to go. This could be a multi-generational project.

I correspond with Mike Biddulph in England about his Proctor Mk.1 Project. The latest news I recently received is as follows:

***All well here in Blighty with good progress for LZ791. Waiting for the engine to appear from the rebuilders anytime now. Two props have been zero timed and carefully stored ready for installation next year. Last week we installed the fire wall and associated control rods, flight panel fitted and instruments plumbed in.***

***Next job is to cover the wings as soon as the fuel tanks are in. Shortly be asking the trimmers to visit and take all dims for interior fit. John leading the rebuild says 2017 is a realistic date for the Proctor to fly, I hope he's right!!***

Rebuilding a big English wooden aeroplane can be a daunting challenge. A challenge that I (Ross Stenhouse) have been trying to get a handle on for many a year and one that is greatly aided by collaborating with other Proctor restorers. I thought I would do a bit of a round-up of Percival Proctor restorations both in England and Australia.

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The photo on the left and the two on the previous page are of a restoration being carried out in Australia by Paul Gliddon.

Paul acquired the aircraft from Maurice Rolf about five years ago. The aeroplane is a Proctor Mk.1 Mk 1, VH-UXS, EX DUL. The photos are about a year old.

The photo at the bottom of the page and on the following page is also of a Proctor Mk. 1 VH-AHY. This restoration project is being carried myself (Ross Stenhouse) and is part of a very long term project.

Nothing beats working with wood and it's a skill that only comes about with lots of practice. The problem with restoring old wooden aeroplanes is that the glue has often let go and when it hasn't you usually damage the bit getting it apart. This means that these are usually huge projects.



**Photo above:** My Proctor showing part of restoration of VH-AHY cockpit.

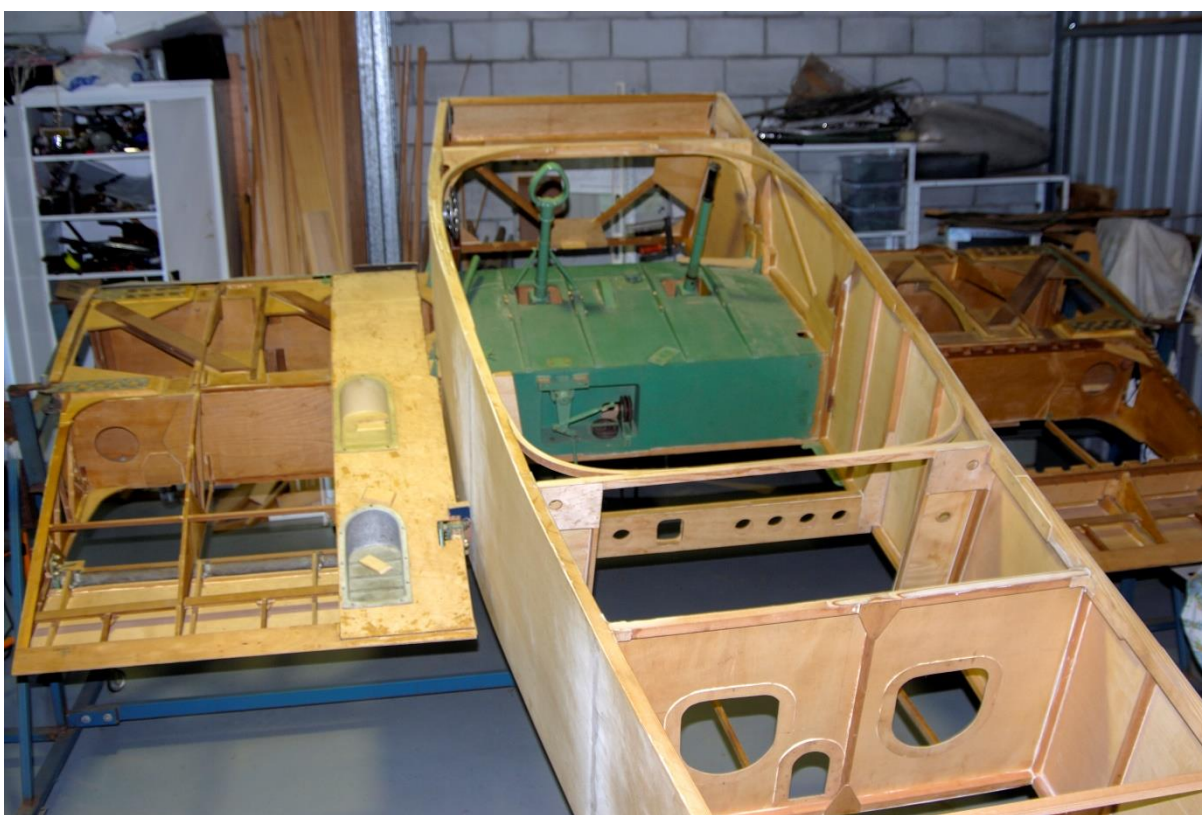


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**Photo above:** The complexity of the rear cabin floor structure is visible in this photo.



**Photo above:** A sanity check that the fuselage fitted on the centre section.

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## RAAF Leyburn

In South East Queensland there are a number of former RAAF airfields constructed during WWII and then abandoned after the war finished. Very few of those remain in active service and only one as a RAAF base (Amberley). One other (Toogoolawah – Watts Bridge) was abandoned and then 50 years later reactivated to become a major civil airfield catering for vintage, GA and recreational aviation.

Few people realise the importance of Leyburn to the Australian War effort. Leyburn Airfield, Leyburn was located 37 kms from Toowoomba between Toowoomba and Warwick. It was then one of four airfields provided for use by the USAAF's Heavy Bomber aircraft in the event of a Japanese landing near Brisbane. The Australian War Cabinet approved the urgent construction of Leyburn Airfield on 8 May 1942. This of course was just after the Battle of the Coral Sea.

In issue 16/04 of AVAN we covered the RAAF base that was at Lowood and in continuing the theme I hope you enjoy this article on Leyburn.

The arrival of US forces in Queensland from late December 1941 led to an increased demand for airfields to accommodate US aircraft. Existing RAAF airfields were used, and new fields were also constructed. Leyburn was one of four airfields built for US heavy bombers (Leyburn, Cecil Plains, Jondaryan and Condamine). These inland airfields could be used to launch bombing missions if the Japanese ever landed near Brisbane.



The Leyburn site was proposed in March 1942, and although the War Cabinet approved work on Leyburn on 8 May 1942, work had already commenced. By 3 May the northwest-southeast (138 degree) strip had been cleared and graded for 7000' (2.14km). Graveling of the northeast-southwest (36 degree) runway was to commence on 5 May 1942. The camp site was about 3 miles (4.8km) south of the airfield hidden in a forest on the Leyburn to Clifton Road, and the camp buildings were painted by March 1943.

In the absence of a Japanese invasion of Queensland, the US never needed to use Leyburn, but it was later used by RAAF B-

24 Liberator heavy bombers from mid-1944 to late 1945.



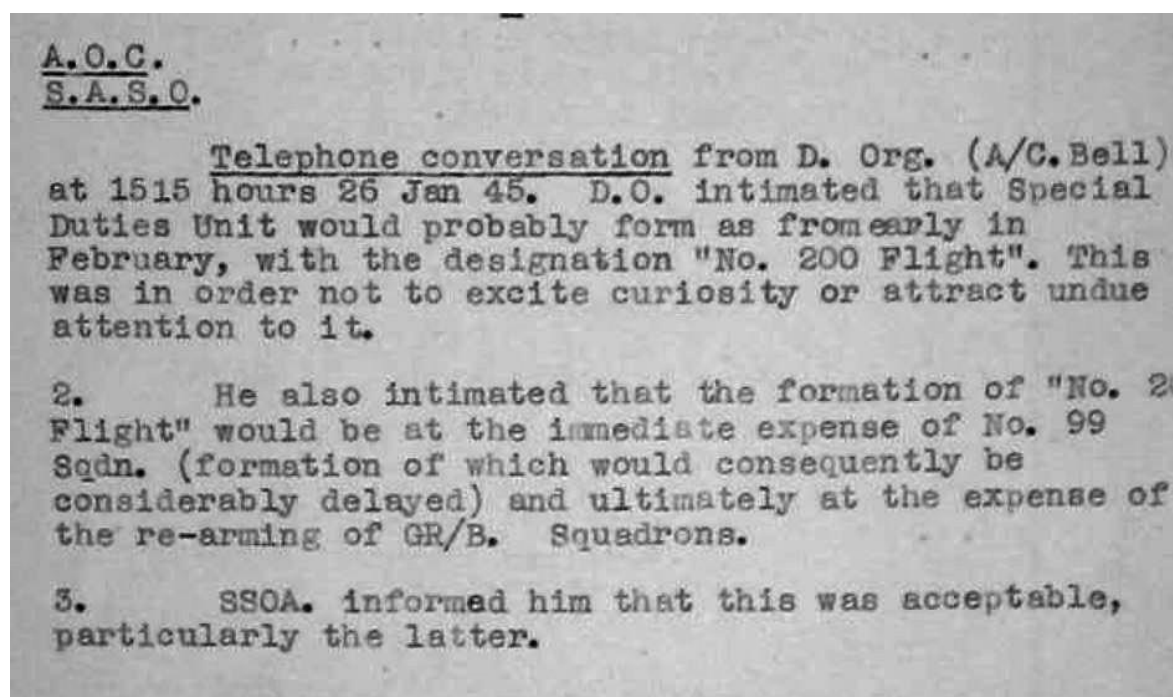
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A report in May 1943 noted that Leyburn consisted of two sealed runways in clear undulating country. Taxiways had been constructed to hideout areas, but no hideouts existed, other than 16 partly constructed and then abandoned. The north ends of the runways were connected by a 50' (15.2m) wide sealed taxiway and the airfield was suitable for all types of aircraft, although it had been designed for heavy bombers. There were no accommodation buildings, although a mess hall/kitchen building existed, along with ablution facilities and latrines. There were also no operational buildings, hangars, blast pens or bomb stores, but two 12,000 gallon underground petrol tanks existed by mid-1944. In July 1943 Leyburn joined a list of some 17 unoccupied aerodromes in Queensland, and was listed as having buildings and services for 450 personnel, but no sleeping accommodation.

An April 1944 US report on Leyburn claimed that the airfield (which was still not in use at that point) was developed entirely by the RAAF, and was operated, maintained and controlled by the RAAF. The US had only requested hideouts. A RAAF map of the field in June 1945 reported a 138 degree runway 5350' long by 150' wide (1.63km by 45.7m); and a 36 degree runway 7000' by 150' (2.14km by 45.7m). At this time the former was used for parking aircraft and needed patching, while the latter was in good condition. A gravelled taxiway, badly in need of grading, ran from the camp to the south end of the 36 degree runway.

Maintenance inspections were carried out by personnel from 14 Operational Base Unit (OBU) from RAAF Station Lowood, and a Main Roads Board repair and maintenance party was stationed at Leyburn by January 1945 (withdrawn by October 1945) to keep the runways serviceable.



RAAF units stationed at Leyburn at various times between July 1944 and December 1945 included 21 Squadron, 23 Squadron, 99 Squadron and 200 Special Duties Flight, all flying B-24 Liberator bombers. RAAF 21 and 23 Squadrons had previously flown Vultee Vengeance aircraft. RAAF 99 Squadron and 200 Flight were both formed at Leyburn in February 1945. Many of the 200 Flight's air and ground crew were transferred to it from No. 99 Squadron.



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In June 1944 it was decided that the Allied Intelligence Bureau (AIB) and the Services Reconnaissance Department (SRD) should have an RAAF unit allocated to it to assist it in delivering agents and supplies of the Australian Army's 'Z' Special Operations Unit by parachute into enemy territory. Consequently 200 Flight RAAF was formed as a Special Duties (SD) unit at Leyburn airfield on 20 February 1945.

200 Flight's mission was to assist in delivering agents and supplies of the Australian Army's 'Z' Special Unit by parachute into enemy territory. The flight was controlled by the Allied Intelligence Bureau (AIB). The role of the AIB was to obtain information about the enemy, *"to weaken the enemy by sabotage and destruction of morale and to lend aid and assistance to local effort to the same end in enemy territories"*.



200 Flight was tasked with the insertion and supply of intelligence gathering parties behind Japanese lines. Due to the secrecy of these tasks personnel from the flight were forbidden to speak about their duties at any time.

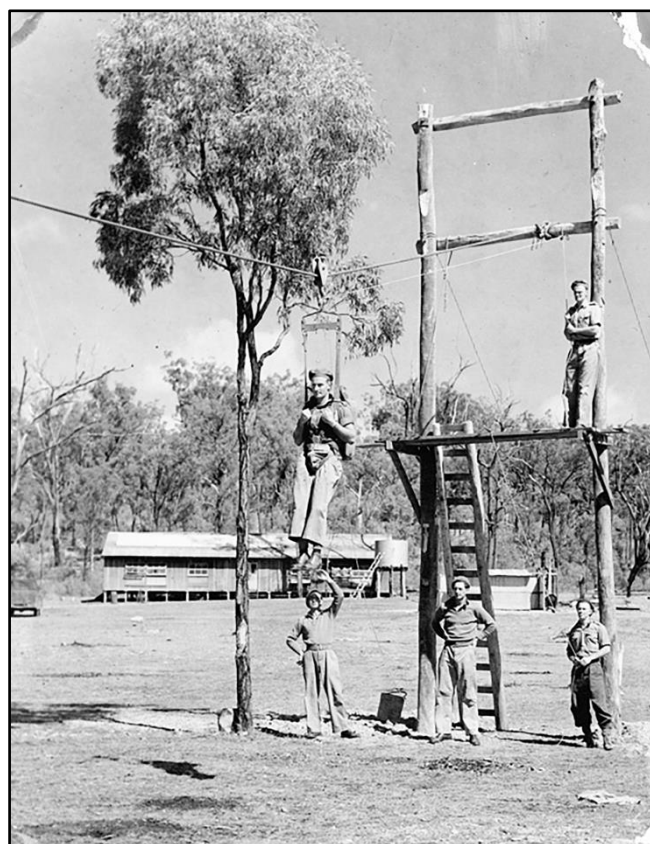
Squadron Leader H.G 'Graham' Pockley DFC was posted home to Australia and in early 1945 he took command of 200 Flight RAAF, a special duties (SD) unit

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The Flight used Liberators to deliver agents and supplies of the Australian Army's Z Special Operations Unit by parachute into enemy territory. Once 200 Flight was fully operational, it had six Liberators and nine eleven-man crews with about 450 ground staff. It was possible for a "stick" of five jumpers to exit a hatch in the modified Liberators in under 10 seconds, and the jumpers carried a top secret "S" phone which could communicate with the aircraft during and after the drop.



In the middle of March 1945 two Liberators, one (A72-91) captained by Pockley, left for McGuire Field on Mindoro Island in the Philippines for their first mission. Two days later they took off to drop some Z' Special 'Semut 1' agents into Borneo. The mission was aborted due to low cloud. A second

attempt on 21 March also failed due to bad weather. Finally on 24 March they were able to drop the men into Borneo. A72-91 and Pockley's crew did not return from the mission. It is believed that it may have been shot down by a vessel that it was attacking.

No. 200 Flight continued to support Z Special Force's operations (designated 'Semut 1') around Bario for the next few months, and eventually flew in 30 of the 42 personnel involved. Wing Commander E. V. Read succeeded Pockley as CO of 200 Flight on 15 April 1945.

No. 200 Flight continued supporting AIB operations until the end of the war. On the night of 15/16 April three of its aircraft dropped personnel assigned to the 'Semut 2' operation in Borneo. It



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subsequently flew over 30 operations to drop AIB personnel and supplies in Borneo, Ambon, Lombok, Sumatra and Timor. These operations were successful, though the flight was hampered by the difficulty of locating its drop zones and inadequate support from the Australian First Tactical Air Force at Morotai, its main forward operational base.<sup>1</sup>

200 Flight lost three aeroplanes during its operations along with 46 men which included 'Z' Special Operations Unit agents.

No. 99 Squadron was the first RAAF unit to use Leyburn; however its stay at Leyburn was short. Subsequently it transferred to Jondaryan. In early April, Wing Commander Arthur Cross took over command of the squadron, which had grown in size to include 82 officers and 581 other ranks, equipped with a variety of aircraft: eight Liberators, as well as one Tiger Moth and one Avro Anson. That month the squadron was declared operational in April and it began moving to Darwin, Northern Territory in May ahead of commencing combat operations. As the move continued, the squadron received another six Liberators. The squadron was still in the process of concentrating in Darwin when the war ended in August, with the move finally being completed in late September. As a result, the squadron did not see action against the Japanese.

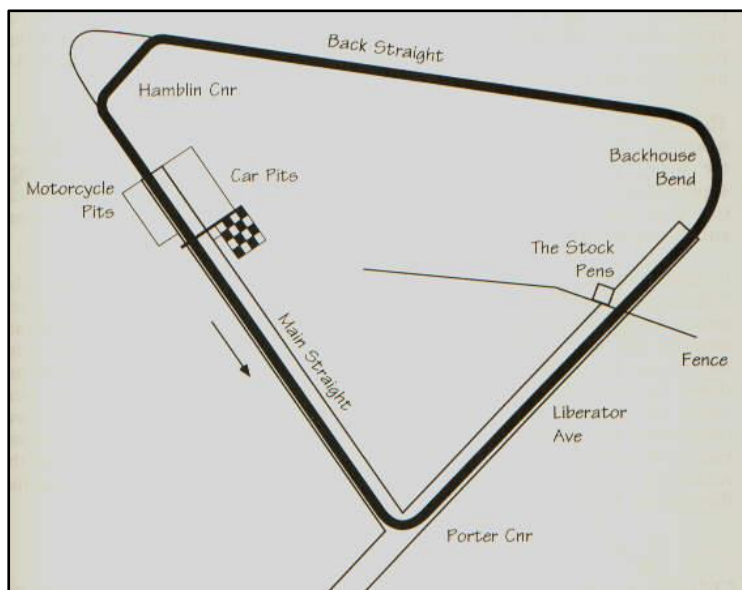


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<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No.\\_200\\_Flight\\_RAAF](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No._200_Flight_RAAF)

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By late February 1945 the airfield was crowded, with 1000 to 1300 personnel, and 99 Squadron was moved to Jondaryan in March 1945. 200 Special Duties Flight was the last unit to use Leyburn, disbanding in December 1945



After the war the runway and taxiway circuit was used for motor racing.

As can be seen in the diagram left, the circuit was formed by the two bitumen runways and the bitumen taxiway linking their north ends.

The 1949 Australian Grand Prix was held at the former airfield, the first time it had been held in Queensland<sup>2</sup>.

## What remains at Leyburn today?

The image from Google Earth on the right shows an aerial view of what you can expect to see if you overfly the remains of Leyburn airfield today.



Clearly visible are the remains of the runways and taxiways. The two runways of Leyburn airfield are located over 5km north of Leyburn (northwest of Warwick), between Wirraway Avenue and Elerby Road. Liberator Place, which runs northeast from Wirraway Avenue, follows the route of a former gravelled taxiway to the south end of the 36 degree runway. It then continues along that runway (remnants of the taxiway also continue south of Wirraway Avenue). The 138 degree runway heads northwest from its intersection with the 36 degree runway, and crosses Macquarie Drive and Hamblin Road. A bitumen taxiway then loops northward before heading back across Macquarie Drive to join the northern end of the 36 degree runway, forming a large triangle. No other structures remain on site, but a dam that appeared on wartime maps still exists within the northeast loop of the taxiway.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ww2places.qld.gov.au/places/?id=858>



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## A Mystery No More

*For 49 ½ years the fate of a United States Army Air Force B24-Liberator, called “Beautiful Betsy” (see illustration previous) remained a mystery. The aircraft disappeared on a flight from Darwin to Brisbane on 27 February 1946; Bob Livingstone a wartime historian discovers the story of the Liberator, sad end to a mystery.*

It was US Army Brigadier General Eugene L Enbank who made the remark “You men are a shambles and nothing but a flying circus”, when visiting the 380<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group (Heavy Bomber) at Lowry Field, Colorado in March 1943. The Group was at the end of its final phase of training prior to being posted overseas and their destination, unknown to them, was Australia. The four squadrons of the Group had been selected for assignment to the 5<sup>th</sup> Army Force USAAF as a replacement for the 90<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group which had been operating in Australia since November 1942.

The “Flying Circus” flew the Pacific with their B24D Liberators in April 1943 and after combat orientation in New Guinea with the 43<sup>rd</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> Bomb Groups, their first mission to Casmata, New Britain on 21 May 1943. Their base was located at the newly built Fenton Field, about 80 miles south of Darwin. One of the Liberators that flew that day was Liberator 42-40387 assigned to the 528<sup>th</sup> Squadron USAAF. The aircraft commander was 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Joe Roth and he named the aeroplane “Beautiful Betsy” after his wife. Some of the group were diverted to Charters Towers on their arrival, to have a B-24 tail-turret installed on the aircraft nose replacing the ordinary covering, but “Beautiful Betsy” did not have time for this so the aircraft entered combat immediately.

In August 1943 from Australia the Group mounted one of their most famous raids on a Japanese target – the oil refineries at Balikpapan in Borneo. The refineries were going full blast producing 60 percent of the Japanese aviation fuel needs. The nearest heavy bomber base was at Darwin, some 2,700 miles away. Twelve Liberators from the 380<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group were selected for the mission flying to Darwin for the briefing, ammunition and refuel however “Beautiful Betsy” damaged a tail wheel whilst heavily landing and was unable to go on the raid. After repairs the aeroplane flew a number of missions, but in November 1943, during a mission to Rabaul it came close to colliding with another aeroplane as the formation passed a storm. Still loaded with bombs and full fuel, it spun out of the formation and the pressure on the airframe during the recovery was so severe that it was retired from combat. The aeroplane had accumulated over 1,300 flying hours and 21 missions at that time.



Photo above: Parachute exit in belly of Liberator

In December 1943 “Betsy” was selected for a special task as it was the only one of this type available in Australia to undertake a mission of dropping agents behind enemy lines. At this time, the RAAF did not have its own Liberators and this aircraft was not suitable for combat missions. On Boxing Day in 1943 the aircraft commenced trials in dropping procedures and after the tasks were completed it together with other aeroplanes was posted to 200 Special Duties Flight RAAF when it formed in February 1945.

After 14 parachute trials it was eventually decided that the

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aircraft would be withdrawn from operations and would become a “hack”, so it was stripped of its armour and turrets, and remained at the unit as a transport and general purpose aeroplane. Eventually “Betsy” was returned to the USAAF.

USAAF units in Australia used to supplement their rations by buying items with mess funds. Each member of the Squadron paid a levy to establish a kitty fund for the purpose. By mid-February The Group had enough finances to buy some extra rations, so “Beautiful Betsy” was detailed on 26 February 1945 to prepare for a flight to Brisbane after which it was intended to have it salvaged as its airframe had accumulated some 1,500 hours.

Apart from the six USAAF crew, there were two RAAF spitfire pilots as passengers. One was going to Brisbane to be married and the other was going to be his best man.

With Lieutenant McDaniel as skipper a course was set to reach the coast south of Townsville and follows the coastal plain down to Brisbane. After the Liberator failed to arrive, search aircraft were sent out along the proposed route but nothing was seen or heard from the missing aeroplane.

In late July 1994 Queensland National Parks Ranger Mark Roe was monitoring the program of some back burning in the Kroombit Tops National Park south-east of Gladstone when he stumbled across the remains of an aircraft at the top of a steep ridge adjacent to the picnic area. After the arrival of a American Inquiry team it was confirmed that the aircraft was certainly the remains of the missing B24 bomber.

It would appear that the Skipper though he was nearing the coastal plain and therefore thought be safe to descend gradually. Being lost he did not realise that he was flying low over mountainous terrain. They just missed the top of a ridge and apparently did not see the foresaid ridge ahead. “Betsy” slammed into the ridge face and exploded with the front section disintegrating and the tail assembly flipping over upside down. As the years passed the scrub grew over and hid the wreckage until it was found by chance.

-oOo-



## Like to buy a DH Dove?

The syndicate that owns the aeroplane shown on the left reluctantly has put it up for sale.

The particulars are: TIS is under 11000 hrs. All TNS up to date. Current MR to April next year. Engines approx 800 HTR. Good times on props. King Gold Crown avionics. VFR only because A/C is not ADSB compliant.

\$80,000

Contact: Ron Ennis - mobile 0414 883 864

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## The RAAF Liberator Lives On



A voluntary group "B24 Liberator Memorial Australia Inc."<sup>3</sup> was formed quite some time ago at Werribee, Victoria commenced a project to restore the remains of the last surviving RAAF B24 Liberator A72-146.

The aircraft is being restored in one of the original WW2 hangars on the former Werribee Satellite Aerodrome, near Point Cook, Victoria.

The project got underway in about 1988 with the intention of locating and rebuilding a B-24 as a memorial to the types service in the RAAF. In 1995 a fuselage was located in Moe, Victoria from B24M A72-176, built by Consolidated at San Diego as a B-24M-10-CO Liberator. U. S.

Army serial number 44-41956. Modified into a B-24R with search radar it was ferried overseas via Hawaii to Australia. Issued to RAAF 7 Operational Training Unit (OTU) East Sale Victoria, the aircraft was the personal mount of the 7 OTU CO G/Capt Kingwell. A72-176 had a fairly uneventful service career as a training aircraft and transport. The aircrafts last recorded flight was Sale-Dubbo-Sale, 25 March 1946 by F/Lt Rex Malcolm Whitburn, DFC, MID.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.b24australia.org.au/home>



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Later a suitable wing was located in Papua New Guinea (PNG) and retrieved by the Australian Military as a memorial to all who served in Liberators, both flight & ground crew, during WW2<sup>4</sup>

The core aspect of the project is now focused on making the B-24 a “living bomber”. It will not be flown but instead restored to a high quality as seen with other “living” warbird aircraft overseas such as the Just Jane Lancaster in the UK, which is now being upgraded to fly. The aim is for the B-24 at Werribee to be shown to the public with all elements “operational”.

It is hoped that the bomber will eventually be taxiable. To enable the B-24 to “live”, four working examples (and one spare backup) of the Pratt and Whitney Twin Wasp 1830 engines are to be used. These powerful and compact engines produce 1,200hp output via a two-row, 14-cylinder, air-cooled radial design. Some of the engines were donated, with one coming from an anonymous person, while two of the engines were purchased from Peter Starr of Dakota National Air.

Visitors to the museum can see these engines up close and listen to the sounds via monthly engine running sessions. The hangar is also home to working displays which allow visitors to see how the aircraft systems worked.



This project is in line with our group aim of “Preserving Australia’s Historic Aeroplanes in Airworthy Condition” and worth our members support by becoming a “Fund Member”.

See: <http://www.b24australia.org.au/can-you-help/how-to-become-a-fund-member>

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.warbirdsonline.com.au/2014/04/15/consolidated-b-24-liberator-australian-restoration/>



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## Kingaroy Grass Roots Fly-in a Success!

The latest Grass Roots fly-in was held at Sir Joh Bjelke Petersen Airport (Kingaroy Airport) on 17<sup>th</sup> September and was a success. Grass root fly-ins are meant to be small fly-ins where if we get five aeroplanes fly-in then that is a crowd more than five and it's a HUGE crowd.

The grass roots series of fly-ins are intended to be small and an opportunity for folks to have a conversations with and get to know each other of renew existing friendships.



**Photo above:** Tiger Moth VH-DBX belonging to Thomas Potter.

One feature of a grass roots fly-in is that you are never quite sure of what you will see and who you will meet. This fly-in was no different. When we arrived I could see the Tail of the Tiger Moth above sticking out from behind a hangar. I went around the back of the hangar to take the photo above and asked a couple of people there who owned the Tiger Moth? I was told Thomas Potter and had a conversation with Thomas. There was someone standing beside me with a hat on and to my surprise it was member Michael Redmond.



**Photo above:** VH-REO a 1947 Cessna C192A Skylane owned by Michael Redmond.



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**Photo above:** de Havilland DH60M VH-ULM owned by member Michael Redmond.

Michael has relocated the Gipsy from Caboolture (where he owns a hangar) to Kingaroy. He intends to build a hangar at Kingaroy. Michael uses his Cessna C182A VH-REO to fly from Caboolture to Kingaroy. The Cessna is a vintage aeroplane in its own right and as you can see in the photo on the previous page it looks to be very well presented.

With the wings folded the Gipsy Moth has a very small footprint for an aeroplane. Michael told me that he had done his best to ensure that the paint scheme for the Gipsy Moth was the original scheme that was on the moth when it was imported into Australia from England in the 1930. Obviously he wasn't sure about the exact shade for the colour however it is close – Well done Michael – that attention to detail needs to be applauded!



**Photo above:** Marks Hangar with Mal's Fleet aeroplane out the front.



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Mark Shipton has a very impressive hangar, one that many vintage aeroplane owners (such as me) would love to own. The hangar had been built by a Dean-Wilson Aviation and QLD Aircraft Manufacturing at Kingaroy in order to build the DE200 Whitney Boomerang. The Whitney Boomerang was designed by C.W. "Bill" Whitney as a replacement for the aging two-seat training aircraft fleets. Unfortunately The aeroplane wasn't a commercial success and the company was wound up and the assets liquidated.



**Photo above:** L-R Mal Shipton, Jan Stenhouse, Phil Ridley, Bill Finlen and Shane enjoy a chat in Marks Hangar.



**Photo above:** Mal Shipton, Bill Fenlin and Warwick Henry enjoying a chat beside Bill's wonderful de Havilland Leopard Moth.

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Giving people the chance to have a chat in comfortable and congenial conditions is a vital aspect of a grass roots fly-in. In the case of Kingaroy there was the added attraction in the form of the vintage machinery show in a paddock immediately to Mark's hangar.



We all went across to see the vintage machinery and watch the tractor pulls. Two exhibits particularly caught my attention and they were the in the photo on the left.

I am not sure what the armoured vehicle is. I don't think it's a tank so maybe a self-propelled gun.

Both it and the truck beside it were particularly well presented.

As you would expect at an exhibition of vintage machinery show there was a plentiful supply of Ferguson TE20 Tractors and stationary



engines. All in all it was very interesting and added to the enjoyment of the day.



Photo above: Fleet Model 2 VH-FLF belonging to Mal Shipton

So far I have not mentioned the 1929 Fleet Model 2 belonging to Mal Shipton and Mark Shipton's 1939 YKS-7 Waco. Both these aeroplanes are very well presented and are hangared at Kingaroy together with Mark's North American T6.

Mal told us that the model number with Waco aeroplanes can translated to describe the aeroplane. I looked it up on the internet and there is a



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description of the scheme there.



**Photo above:** Waco YKS-7 VH-YKX



**Photo Above:** Warwick Henry's beautifully presented Stinson L5 and another beauty Doug and Lorraine's Victa Airtourer.

## Wanted/For Sale

**Wanted** – Information on what tubes can be used in a Tiger Moth (including substitutes) and where to source supply – Contact Ross Stenhouse ([rossjanstenhouse@hotmail.com](mailto:rossjanstenhouse@hotmail.com))

**For Sale** - DH Devon TIS is under 11000 hrs. All TNS up to date. Current MR to April next year. Engines approx. 800 HTR. Good times on props. King Gold Crown avionics. VFR only because A/C is not ADSB compliant. Contact Ron Ennis - mobile 0414 883 864



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Because there is quite a number of these hangars in use both in Australia and the UK there is some interest in preserving them (in an operational sense) and the UK Ministry of Defence has published a booklet for use by those with responsibility for the maintenance of the hangars.

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20121026065214/http://www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/7C6B0389-2A4F-4B39-AFAA-7B01B1D4A61C/0/fs15.pdf>

The Bellman hangar is quite large but its components were capable of being built in a number of sizes (multiples of the "Standard Unit").

I am interested in hearing from anyone with an interest in these buildings as I think that methods used in their construction were novel and worth examination and reworking using modern steels and techniques.

**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.