

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN AVIATION MUSEUM

SIGNIFICANT AVIATOR & AVIATION EVENTS PROFILES

The RAAF at Mount Gambier 1937 – 1947



2AOS Anson flying over the Blue Lake, Mount Gambier. (Author collection)

Early RAAF Interest 1937-1940

RAAF interest in Mount Gambier began prior to the start of the Second World War. It was said to be an ideal distance from RAAF Laverton for navigation training flights. However, the first RAAF aircraft to use Mount Gambier appears to have been Tugan Gannet A14-1, which conducted a 340 square mile aerial photographic survey of the area in March 1937.

Possibly it was that visit that sparked RAAF interest in Mount Gambier as, in November 1938, three Hawker Demons from No. 1 Squadron at Laverton arrived to take photographs and 'make a reconnaissance of the aerodrome'. A couple of weeks later the entire squadron deployed to Mount Gambier with eight Hawker Demons. Squadron exercises included the bombing of a target towed by the destroyer HMAS *Vampire* and an attack on Laverton aerodrome.

In May 1938 a No. 2 Squadron Anson arrived at Mount Gambier for an inspection visit. From December that year, RAAF Demons and Ansons routinely began to use the aerodrome on return flights from Adelaide to Laverton (although for some reason on the outgoing flight Nhill was used instead). From March 1939 No. 2 Squadron Ansons began using Mount Gambier for seawards search flights.

This activity appeared to confirm the RAAF's interest in the location. In July 1939, following a comprehensive report by the Senior Aerodrome Inspector for Civil Aviation, the Commonwealth government purchased the site. Subsequently, arrangements were made to extend the runways to 1,200 metres in length. This

classified Mount Gambier as an “A” class airport suitable for any civil or military aircraft then in use.

In August 1939 No. 2 Squadron deployed nine Ansons to Mount Gambier and carried out exercises over two days. The *Border Watch* newspaper interviewed Wing Commander Charlesworth and reported that:

“Questioned concerning the local aerodrome, he said that it was very suitable for RAAF purposes, being well situated. It had an excellent surface, and was a splendid all weather aerodrome. No doubt Mount Gambier would be frequently used for similar manoeuvres.”

Following the declaration of war the following month, Mount Gambier was regularly used by Ansons conducting seawards searches. However the RAAF had bigger plans in mind. After an inspection visit by three senior officers on 23rd September, it was announced that the RAAF would establish a training base at Mount Gambier. A tender was accepted in December, and the first months of 1940 were spent drawing up plans for the new base. Construction began in the latter part of that year. It was the largest ever construction project undertaken in the Mount Gambier district.

Beginnings: 2AOS in 1941

In December 1939 Australia signed the Empire Air Training Scheme agreement, under which the RAAF would setup an extensive training organisation to supply aircrew for the rapidly expanding Royal Air Force. Two Air Observer Schools were initially established to provide specialised navigator training:

No. 1 Air Observer School	Cootamundra, NSW	1940
No. 2 Air Observer School	Mount Gambier, SA	1941

The function of these schools was to teach navigation in accordance with the standard RAF syllabus, using twin-engined aircraft. The trainees would usually be fresh from eight weeks at an Initial Training School where they undertook academic studies but were also introduced to service life via drills, parades and physical training. Often the trainees’ first experience in an aircraft would be at their Observer Schools.

No. 2 Air Observers School (‘2AOS’) was formed at the newly built Mount Gambier base on 6th February 1941 under Squadron Leader Shaw, an officer lent from the RAF. The first training course commenced in March, comprising 46 navigation trainees and 3 wireless operator trainees. At this stage, the standard course was around twelve weeks’ duration. New courses were begun monthly. By the end of April there were 26 officers and 519 airmen at the base. In time, it would grow to double that size.

Initially, 2AOS was equipped with just four Ansons and two DH-84 Dragon biplanes. Even by mid-1941 only around ten Ansons had been received (several of which were pre-EATS aircraft, with RAAF A4- serials), and there were concerns that Britain would not be able to supply the very large quantity of Ansons needed for all of the EATS units. Hence a small number of DH-84s supplemented the Ansons at 2AOS in the first year. The situation improved towards the end of 1941: ten Ansons were received in October, for example. A single Moth Minor was attached to the school for communications duties.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P08233.004

DH-84 Dragons and Avro Ansons lined up at Mount Gambier, circa 1941. (AWM P08233.004)

The base also faced other pressures at this time. In May 1941 2AOS received eight Fairey Battles, to enable the beginning of a course in bombing and gunnery. This was pending the opening of No. 2 Bombing and Gunnery School ('2BAGS') at Port Pirie. The situation lasted several weeks until 28 June when the last of the temporarily attached instructors, trainees and aircraft departed for the 2BAGS permanent base.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P08233.005

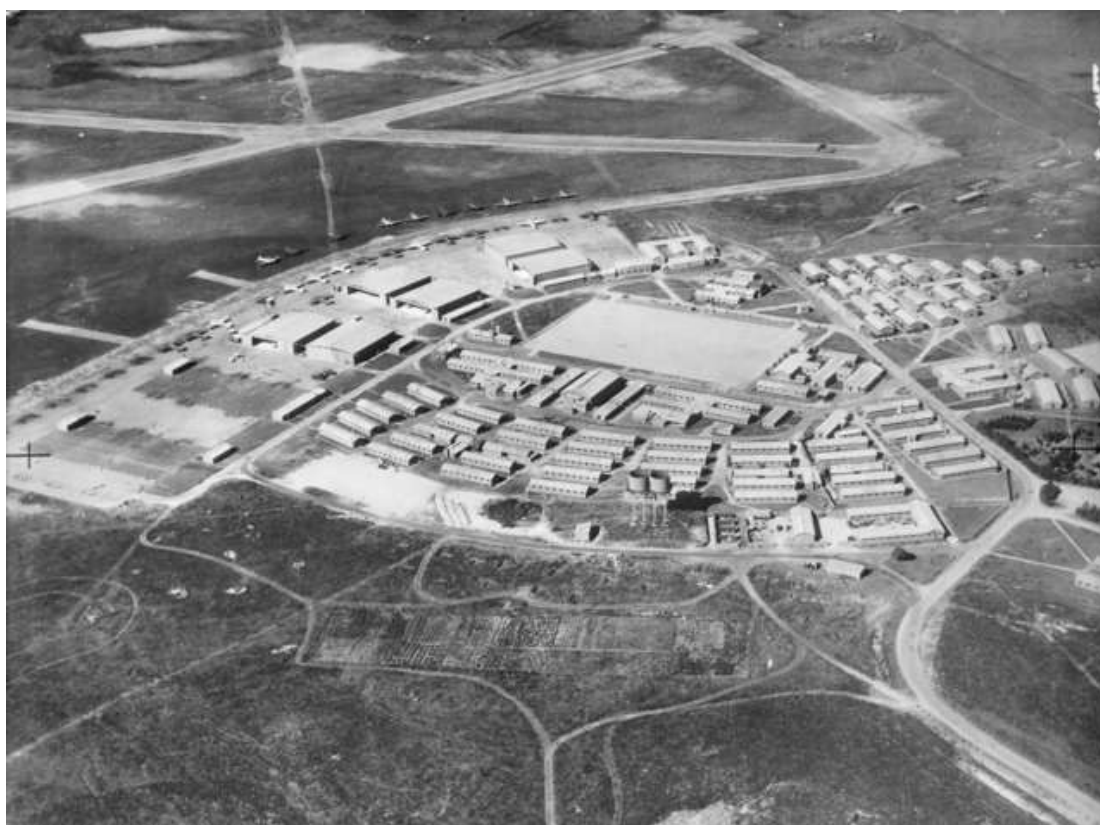
A 2AOS Anson at Mount Gambier, circa 1941. The aircraft is camouflaged with a yellow band around the fuselage. (AWM P08233.005)

Otherwise training operations continued throughout 1941, and trainee numbers steadily increased as 2AOS grew towards its intended capacity. From an initial number of around 45 airmen per course, by 1942 2AOS was running courses of double that size.

There was just one fatal accident in the first year: after a mid-air collision, an Anson crashed and all three crew were killed (see Appendix 1

for details). One of those killed in this crash was Flight Lieutenant George Peacock, an RAF officer who was the Chief Navigation Instructor at 2AOS. Peacock had been popular officer, and a large crowd attended his funeral. The *Border Watch* reported:

“The funeral was one of the most impressive Mount Gambler has seen, with a large number of airmen taking part in the memorial service at Christ Church and the graveside ceremony at the Mount Gambier cemetery. Floral tributes and messages came from many parts of Australia and the popularity and esteem in which the deceased officer was held were evidenced in many ways. Sorrowing crowds lined the streets of the town as the funeral procession passed along, the hearse being followed by a long column of RAAF men and private cars.”



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P05005.003

RAAF Mount Gambier in 1942, showing a large number of buildings around a parade ground. Many Ansons are visible parked outside of six hangars – some are camouflaged and some are yellow. (AWM P05005.003)

Mount Gambier Fighter Town! (Briefly)

At the end of February 1942 a Colonel Connell, United States Army Air Corps, visited the base. Other officers followed: presumably they assessed Mount Gambier as suitable for temporary American operations. After arriving in Melbourne on 8th March without any aircraft, the 35th Pursuit Group, USAAC, went by rail to Ballarat where they were billeted in civilian homes for a week. From there all three squadrons of the group (39th, 40th and 41st) travelled by rail to Mount Gambier, arriving on 17th March.

Here the Americans received their first Bell P-39F Airacobra fighters (some were P-400s: a P-39 variant intended for the RAF). Also joining the group were some veteran personnel: 8 pilots and 16 enlisted men who had served in Java. However, the Americans had left by early April, moving to bases in NSW and Queensland. A



A photo of USAAC P-39s/P-400s held for many years by the South Australian Aviation Museum. It was very possibly taken at Mount Gambier. The nearest aircraft is BW179, which was allocated to the 35th PG on 14th March. (SAAM)

short time later they would see combat in New Guinea.

Why was the 35th PG based in Mount Gambier at this time? It was probably related to the arrival of the *Mormac Star* in Geelong in February, with the first shipment of P-39s to reach Australia. Geelong was home to a depot which assembled arriving aircraft, and Mount Gambier was a fully equipped RAAF station reasonably

close by. However, of the 54 P-400s and 13 P-39Fs on board, 50 P-400s were reloaded on a convoy bound for New Caledonia. This left just 4 P-400s and 13 P-39Fs, which were presumably the aircraft received by the 35th PG in Mount Gambier.

Meanwhile another seven shipments of P-39s arrived in Australia prior to the end of March 1942. However, only one of these, onboard HMS *Athene*, arrived in Geelong (before being on-sent to New Caledonia). All of the other six shipments arrived in Brisbane for assembly at Amberley. Probably for this reason, the Americans' stay in Mount Gambier was relatively brief.

Pacific War 1942

Given the coastal location of Mount Gambier, the 2AOS Ansons were needed to fly maritime patrols from time to time, particularly after the outbreak of the Pacific War. To facilitate this, on 30th March 1942, 72 (Reserve) Squadron was formed at the base. A week later, 18 Air Observers arrived for duty with this squadron (the pilots would have been drawn from existing 2AOS personnel). The reserve squadrons were meant to function as 'shadow' units at the EATS bases, to be made fully operational at short notice should the need arise.

Further east, some of these Anson reserve squadrons did become operational. This was the case for 2AOS' sister unit at Cootamundra, 1AOS, with 73 Squadron. It flew from bases along the NSW coast in response to the Japanese submarine threat. Another Anson unit, 67 Squadron, (which had originally formed as a reserve unit at Mallala) was based at Laverton. This often operated in eastern Victoria between Wilsons Promontory and the NSW border, which is the farthest south that Japanese

submarines operated. 2AOS (and 72 Reserve Squadron) was theoretically in the next “sector” to 67 Squadron. It is likely that 72 Squadron would have been made operational from Mount Gambier if enemy submarines had penetrated further west.

Nevertheless, even without the activation of 72 Squadron, there was a requirement from Southern Area Headquarters for 2AOS Ansons to fly seawards patrols along the coast approximately between Cape Otway (on the Victorian coast) and Kangaroo Island. However the existing Ansons were equipped only for navigator training over land, and it was necessary to fit particular Ansons with inflatable dinghies and associated equipment for over water operations.

Most of the seawards patrols were conducted ahead of convoys, and were flown by crews made up of the most experienced personnel from 2AOS. Although often rather boring for the crews involved, they were a key part of Australia’s maritime defence strategy. The crews would often never know when their aircraft might have been spotted by an enemy submarine, and had thus been successful in deterring an attack.

There were some occasional incidents too. On 13th October 1942 an Anson piloted by Sergeant Bermann sighted a suspicious object off Cape Northumberland, which is on the coastline directly south of Mount Gambier. It was believed to be a submarine. Late in the day, Bermann led five Ansons back to the object which was attacked.¹

Southern Area Headquarters immediately cancelled all training flights, and from dawn the next day intensive armed searches were carried out by 2AOS and 67 Squadron Ansons. Over the next four days twenty-four operational flights were carried out totalling 329 flying hours.

However the most interesting event occurred over two years later. Around midday on 9th December 1944 2AOS received news that a ship had been attacked by a submarine north west of Beachport. Indeed the Greek ship *Illisos* had been attacked by the German submarine *U-862*. Mount Gambier historian Ron Telford wrote of the activity at 2AOS:

“The adrenaline began pumping and excitement rose, as word spread around the base that a ‘flap’ was on. Crews were hastily assembled and briefed. Ground crews swarmed over several Ansons as they were armed for the hunt of this alleged intruder.”

Four Ansons from 2AOS quickly flew to the location, and over the next several days intensive searches were flown. However the submarine was able to slip away from the area undetected. Over the month of December 373 sorties were flown in the area. Half of this effort was by 67 Squadron Ansons from Laverton, joined by a handful of Beauforts and Beaufighters also from Victorian bases which were detached to the area for the search. However, much of the flying was by 2AOS Ansons.

¹ This was almost certainly a case of mistaken identity, which was common in such operations. No enemy submarines were in the area at this time.



2AOS dispersal area in September 1944, not long before the 'flap' of 9th December 1944. (Flight Lieutenant A George collection)

Training Operations 1942-43

The start of the Pacific war coincided with 2AOS reaching full capacity. While around 45 trainees were passed out monthly in 1941, this doubled from the start of 1942. Indeed, a total of 25 courses were passed out between the start of 1942 and November 1943. The number of trainees passed out of each course was between 82 and 101. During this time the total personnel at the base was around one thousand.

By 1943 there were several comments in the unit record book about the low standard and poor discipline of trainees. Failure rates were as high as 20%. Part of the reason was the attitude of failed pilot trainees to their navigation courses. In March the following comment was made regarding Course 35:

“Course at first adopted an indifferent attitude towards the work of the School because of the influence of so many former pilot trainees who had been remustered after as much as 110 hours flying, and were a disgruntled section.”

In November 1943 the following comment was made in respect to Course 43, and could perhaps have been written by anyone responsible for training young men at anytime (!):

“The standard of entry of this course was slightly below average. Discipline and type generally satisfactory, but it is noticed that the youthful types do not realise the responsibilities of the job, and are inclined to sport and entertainment instead of study.”

In October 1943 2AOS flew a record of 3,356 hours of day flying and 549 hours of night flying. However this probably reflected some catch-up after winter conditions had limited flying in previous months. It amounted to almost 60 hours of flying per trainee. While most exercises were flown in the vicinity of Mount Gambier, extended training flights were flown to other RAAF bases including Deniliquin, Mildura, Parkes, Parafield, Port Pirie and Uranquinty.



Airfield building at 2AOS dispersal area, 1944. (Flight Lieutenant A George collection)

Between May 1942 and February 1944 there were six serious accidents involving 2AOS Ansons, which resulted in twenty fatalities (see Appendix 1). Two of these accidents occurred at night.

Training Operations – 1944

The end of 1943 saw No. 2 Bombing and Gunnery School at Port Pirie closed. The base was re-designated as 3AOS and took over the Anson navigation courses run by 2AOS. Indeed the commanding officer of 2AOS, Wing Commander Headlam, departed Mount Gambier to take over the newly created 3AOS at this time. Other transfers of personnel, aircraft (namely, 45 Ansons, presumably not wireless-equipped) and equipment between the two bases also took place, being completed by 9th December 1943.

While the designation of 2AOS did not change at this time, it was to take over courses formerly run by No. 1 Wireless Air Gunners School at Ballarat. The latter unit had run courses using a fleet of Wackett trainers and wireless-equipped Ansons. In December 1943 2AOS was allotted 28 of the Ansons formerly used at Ballarat. The transfer of personnel and equipment from 1WAGS was completed by 17th December.



AX642 of 2AOS which crashed at Yellangip, Vic, on 9th March 1944 ('casualty 1 sheep, 1 unborn lamb'). This was one of the wireless-equipped Ansons received in December 1943 – note the Direction Finding loop. (Flight Lieutenant A George collection)

The new courses were eventually designated as 'Navigator Wireless' training, and were longer and more complex than the previous courses. The trainees would now spend over six months with 2AOS (up to 32 weeks) and did a higher amount of night flying as well as the wireless instruction. One of the effects was a much higher failure rate, often in excess of 50% (although in most cases those trainees could re-enrol). As a result the number of trainees passing out each month fell to between 24 and 49 during 1944. The net effect of these changes was a drop in the total amount of flying hours per month. For example, 1,497 hours of day flying were flown in June 1944, while the equivalent number often exceeded 3,000 hours in 1943.

By 1945 the end of the war was clearly in sight and training operations began to run down. The last regular course passed out in March 1945 and had just 13 graduates. By this time new intakes had ceased, although training operations continued for a few more months. Even as late as July there were 779 hours of day flying and 124 hours of night flying. During 1945 Mount Gambier was visited by many aircraft from other RAAF units on training flights, including Hudsons, Ansons, Wirraways and Beauforts.

Following the surrender of Japan in August training operations ceased altogether. In December 1945 there were just 19 hours of flying by 2AOS aircraft. On 1st January 1946 2AOS was closed down. During almost five years of operation around 4,000 airmen had received training as Observers or Navigator-Wireless Operators. The Mount Gambier base was then designated as a Care and Maintenance Unit (CMU).

During 1946 a few dozen personnel remained at the base. They oversaw the storage and dismantling of aircraft on behalf of the Department of Aircraft Production. This included a number of newly arrived Airspeed Oxfords. Many of the prefabricated

buildings at the base were sold to the South Australian Housing Trust for use elsewhere. Two of the hangars and some other buildings were retained for the civil airport. January 1947 saw a four day auction at the base of all kinds of remaining equipment. On 29th May 1947 the CMU was disbanded and the RAAF presence at Mount Gambier ended.

Aircraft Types Used by 2AOS at Mount Gambier

Unfortunately 2AOS records do not state the numbers of aircraft on strength, but the following is known:

Avro Anson	Operated 1941-45; likely 50-60 on strength 1942-43
De Havilland DH-84 Dragon	At least 6 used, mainly in 1941
De Havilland Moth Minor	Included A21-23 in 1942-43
De Havilland Tiger Moth	Ron Telford says a number were always present
Fairey Battle	8 operated June 1941 pending opening of 2BAGS
Ryan STM Trainer	A50-19 and -28 used in 1943
Also	
Airspeed Oxford	Several stored with CMU in 1946
Link Trainer	Included A13-25 in 1942

Main Sources

Wilson, Stewart. Anson, Hudson & Sunderland in Australian Service. Aerospace Publications P/L, Sydney, 1992.
 Telford, Ron J. *AOSIS Airfield*. Ron Telford, Mount Gambier, 1997.
 Birkett, Gordon: email to author 24th April 2017 in respect to P-39 / P-400 shipments into Australia.
 Claringbould, Michael: emails to author April 2017 in respect to 35th Fighter Group and P-39s.
 A50 forms from 2AOS, Nos 1 & 2 Squadrons, 1WAGS; via National Archives of Australia
Border Watch newspaper via Trove.

**Peter Ingman
 History Group
 South Australian Aviation Museum Inc
 September 2017**

Appendix 1: RAAF Mount Gambier Fatal Aircraft Accidents

Fatal accidents in the immediate vicinity of Mount Gambier were few, and only five airmen were buried in Mount Gambier cemetery as a result of aircraft crashes. Three of these men were from 10TU at East Sale, killed in a Beaufort crash in 1945, which is listed below for completeness. Two other members of the RAAF are buried at Mount Gambier cemetery: 47849 AC1 Leslie Keith Ireland (aged 34) who died of natural causes when on recreation leave, and 431149 Brian John Eaton (aged 20), who's cause of death is unknown.

Six 2AOS Ansons were lost in fatal accidents in either South Australia or western Victoria. These are detailed below. In one other accident a man drowned at sea after parachuting from his aircraft. When the bodies were recovered they were usually returned to their home state for burial, although five men killed at Nhill are all buried there.

A total of 23 2AOS airmen were killed in fatal accidents during 1941-1944.

Date	Aircraft	Killed	Details
12 Jul 1941	Anson W1966	Flt Lt George Kenneth Peacock (RAF) 408203 LAC Lance Lorimer Andrew 416276 LAC Ernest Osman Milford	At 0850, at Mount Gambier, two Ansons of 2AOS collided in mid-air. The pilot of W2020 did not see W1966 emerge from a cloud during a rain squall. The port engine of W2020 hit the tailplane of W1966, causing the latter to crash, killing the pilot and two student observers. W2020 landed safely with a damaged port engine. The pilot, Flt Lt Peacock, RAF, is buried at Mount Gambier Cemetery. The two student observers are buried at Port Adelaide (LAC Andrew) and Moonta (LAC Milford).
21 May 1942	Anson W2020	406619 Flt Sgt Edward Hope Illingworth 409119 P/O George William Holman 416435 Sgt Denis Aloysius Lenihan 414269 LAC Edwin Cyril Snell	At 1030 hours, Anson W2020, of 2 AOS, piloted by Flt Sgt Illingworth, crashed at Eversley, Mount Cole, Vic. This is in mountainous country west of Ballarat. The aircraft hit a tree during a period of poor visibility. A fifth crewman, LAC Pott, survived the crash with a broken arm.
11 Aug 1942	Anson AW678	405197 Sgt John Edward Moorhouse 416804 Sgt Malcolm Albert Thiele 23964 Sgt William Nathaniel Higham Fleming 41073 LAC William Ross Bremner Fenton 410476 LAC Charles Thomas Fletcher	At 1430 Anson AW678, of 2AOS, crashed and burned at Reedy Creek, near Kingston, SA. The cause was unknown and all five crew (including two pilots and an instructor) were killed. The local RSL erected a memorial at the spot in 2007
14 Oct 1942	Anson AW849	411417 P/O Baxter Watson	At 2115, Anson AW849 of 2AOS was returning from a sea operation when it crashed and burned five miles west of Tantanoola, SA (which is about 20 miles west of Mount Gambier). The pilot was killed, but two crewmen survived, one of them slightly injured. The cause was unknown. A memorial to the pilot was unveiled at Tantanoola in 2009.
13 May 1943	Anson W2574	427546 P/O Harold Wilfred Rash 406878 F/O Leonard Fraser Gillespie Seabrook 418354 LAC Victor Vernon Darby 408457 Sgt Victor Keith Jordan 417295 Sgt David Richard James Edwards	At 0915, 8 miles north east of Nhill, Anson W2574 of 2AOS dived into the ground at high speed. It was flying a training mission from Mt Gambier to Nhill. The cloud base was just 600 feet and it was thought the pilot lost control in cloud. Avro Anson W2574, a twin-engined trainer with five crew crashed in fog just 8 miles north east of Nhill, on the 13 May 1943. The crew of five were all killed, and were buried at the Nhill cemetery.

Appendix 1: RAAF Mount Gambier Fatal Aircraft Accidents

27 May 1943	Anson R9886	423520 LAC Geoffrey David Abbott	At 1920, while setting course over the town of Port McDonnell during the second leg of a (night) navigation exercise, the pilot of Anson R9886 of 2AOS felt a fainting turn coming on and warned the crew to prepare to bail out. LAC Abbott evidently misunderstood the instructions or panicked, and rushed to the rear door and bailed out before he could be stopped. A slight northerly wind drifted him out to sea and he drowned one mile south-west of Port Macdonnell. The pilot meanwhile recovered and landed safely with the other two crewmen onboard. Abbott is buried at Mount Gambier Cemetery.
15 Feb 1944	Anson AW878	410684 Flt Sgt James Henry MacLellan 416712 Flt Sgt Dennis Leslie Baulderstone 433368 LAC Norman Thomas Kruck 436921 LAC Brian Carter Ladyman	<p>At 0800 Anson AW878 of 2AOS took off from Mount Gambier to carry out a radius of action navigation exercise to Lady Julia Percy Island (located off the Victorian coast, midway between Portland and Warrnambool) and back to Mount Gambier. By 1230 it was overdue, and that afternoon a search was instituted. No radio messages had been received from the Anson, although it had been seen during the exercise by another aircraft. At 1430 part of the mainplane was sighted on Lady Julia Percy Island. Subsequently a fishing boat searched in the vicinity of the island and passed through small pieces of wreckage strewn over about 3 miles. A further search uncovered wreckage which identified the plane beyond doubt, including fuel tank bay cover with AW878 penciled on it, and a Mae West which had been signed out by one of the crew. The bodies of the four crew were never located.</p> <p>From Ozatwar website: A memorial stone and bronze plaque remembering this tragic accident was unveiled at The Craggs Car Park overlooking Lady Julia Percy Island on 14 February 2015. The initial idea for this memorial was triggered when Warrnambool resident Andrew Coffey spotted some of the wreckage of the aircraft whilst working as an abalone diver. He had been a member of the Warrnambool East Rotary Club for many years and suggested that efforts should be made to research the crash and erect a memorial. Rotary members managed to locate some family of the deceased crew, who were able to attend the ceremony. Amongst them were LAC Brian Ladyman's sister, Elizabeth Hastings and Flight Sergeant MacLellan's daughter, Ann Sorensen.</p> <div data-bbox="901 1332 1201 1727" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Photo:- Graeme Saunders <i>The unveiled Memorial and Plaque to AW878</i></p>
27 Aug 1945	Beaufort A9-305	44248 F/O John Thomas Walton 438960 Flt Sgt Henry Neville Lord 431149 Flt Sgt Brain John Eaton	At 1923, Beaufort A9-305, from 1OTU, East Sale (Vic), took off from Mount Gambier on the final leg of a training exercise on return to East Sale. While flying at 4,000 feet the Beaufort, crashed and burned at Puralka, which is 18 miles east of Mount Gambier, just over the Victorian side of the border. The cause was unknown. All three crew were killed and are buried at Mount Gambier Cemetery.

Appendix 2 Logbooks of 417624 B. G. Daw

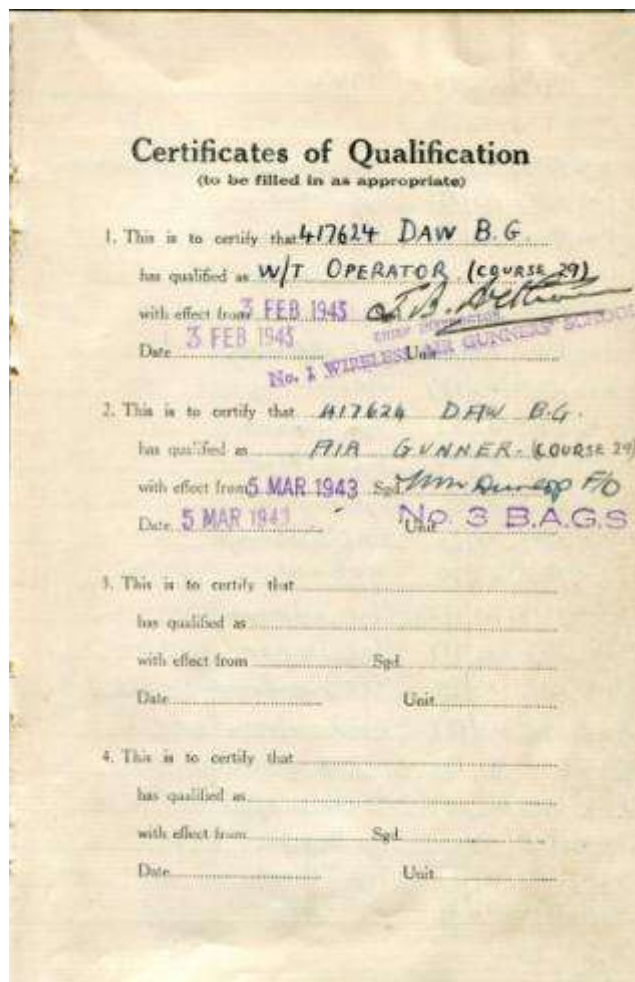
Several pages of 2AOS logbooks belonging to 417624 B. G. Daw have been provided by his son Nigel Daw. These records show typical (non-pilot) aircrew training within the Empire Air Training Scheme, following service with 2AOS at Mount Gambier.

B. G. Daw first spent eight weeks at No. 4 Initial Training School, Victor Harbor and passed out on 20 August 1942. He was then posted to No. 1 Wireless and Gunners School, Ballarat, where after three months training he graduated as a Wireless Operator in January 1943. Daw then completed a one-month Air Gunner's training course at No. 2 Bombing and Gunners School, Port Pirie.

After a short stay at an Embarkation Depot, Daw was promoted to Flight Sergeant and posted to 2AOS, Mount Gambier, from 27 March 1943. For the next nine months he served as a Wireless Operator in Avro Anson's with 2AOS. Logbooks show he completed approximately 50 hours of daytime flying per month plus a few hours of night flying. Most flights appear to have been navigation training flights over inland locations, but a number of sea patrols were also flown.

In December 1943 the courses run by 2AOS were transferred to the newly raised 3AOS at Port Pirie. Flight Sergeant Daw was among the personnel to transfer to the new location, and was attached to 3AOS from 9 December 1943. During five months service at Port Pirie he was promoted to Warrant Officer. Then in 1944 and 1945 Daw went on to serve with 34 Squadron and Nos 4 and 5 Communication Units.

The logbook pages follow.



The image shows a page from a logbook titled "Certificates of Qualification (to be filled in as appropriate)". It contains four numbered sections for certification. The first two sections are filled out with handwritten details and purple ink stamps. The first section certifies B. G. Daw as a W/T Operator (Course 29) with effect from 3 Feb 1943, signed by J. B. Bellamy, and includes a stamp for No. 1 Wireless and Gunners School. The second section certifies him as a F/A Gunner (Course 29) with effect from 5 Mar 1943, signed by J. M. Burgess F/O, and includes a stamp for No. 3 B.A.G.S. The third and fourth sections are blank.

Certificates of Qualification
(to be filled in as appropriate)

1. This is to certify that 417624 DAW B.G.
has qualified as W/T OPERATOR (COURSE 29)
with effect from 3 FEB 1943 *J. B. Bellamy*
Date 3 FEB 1943
No. 1 WIRELESS AND GUNNERS SCHOOL

2. This is to certify that 417624 DAW B.G.
has qualified as F/A GUNNER (COURSE 29)
with effect from 5 MAR 1943 *J. M. Burgess F/O*
Date 5 MAR 1943 Unit No 3 B.A.G.S

3. This is to certify that _____
has qualified as _____
with effect from _____ Sgd _____
Date _____ Unit _____

4. This is to certify that _____
has qualified as _____
with effect from _____ Sgd _____
Date _____ Unit _____

*Certificates of Qualification as a
Wireless Telegraphy Operator
and Air Gunner*

Units at which Served					
Unit	From	To	Unit	From	To
4 I.T.S.	20-6-42	19-8-42	ACTI	20-6-42	19-8-42
1 W.A.G.S.	19-8-42	29-1-43	LAC	19-8-42	28-2-43
3 B.A.G.S.	29-1-43	28-2-43	SGT	28-2-43	4-9-43
4 E.D.	28-2-43	27-3-43	F/SGT	4-9-43	4-9-44
2 A.O.S.	27-3-43	9-12-43	W/O	4-9-44	
3 A.O.S.	9-12-43	29-4-44			
1 E.F.T.S.	29-4-44	18-5-44			
34 SqAD	18-5-44	1-2-45			
RAF PARA	1-2-45	6-3-45			
5 COM UNIT	6-3-45	10-9-45			
4 COM UNIT	10-9-45	15-11-45			
4 P.D.	15-11-45	10-11-45			

Chronological record of service by unit (L/H column) and by rank (R/H column).

Logbook 2AOS June 1943

APRIL 2 A O S					Time aerial forward: 33:05	
Date	Hour	Altitude Type and No.	Place	Duty	From	To
2-4-43	0750	American 4480	Ygt Bergen	W/T	Route + interception No 3	3:15
4-4-43	1315	- AW 767	- Dandy	"	Z. Balac, Balac Base	3:20
6-4-43	1505	- AW 8 ^{REV}	P/O Kenton	"	Base Mungah, Mungah Base	3:20
10-4-43	0805	- 20746	Ygt Dandy	"	" " " "	3:25
"	1300	- 20746	" Bradford	"	" " " "	3:00
12-4-43	0810	- R3529	" Puris	"	Manachobal, Lubek	3:00
13-4-43	1310	- AR 252	P/O Fryar	"	Kingston, Limbota Base	3:00
15-4-43	0810	- 4873	P/O Gals	"	Base, Jomwal	2:55
"	1310	"	"	"	Jomwal - Wagga	2:00
16-4-43	0815	"	"	"	Wagga - Senilignun	3:00
"	1400	"	"	"	Senilignun - Base	2:50
24-4-43	0855	AR 251	"	"	Base Mill Wolsely Base	2:30
"	1310	20746	P/O Woods	"	"	2:40
27-4-43	0820	N 5904	Ygt Campbell	"	Limbota, Bondertown Base	3:10
29-4-43	0800	W 1547	P/O Merton	"	"	3:10
"	1300	"	Ygt Marshall	"	Base N/Town, Limbota	3:00
30-4-43	1315	394	" Hunter	"	Sea Patrol	3:35
"	1745	394	" Milane	"	Kanwa B/Town Base	2
"	2105	394	"	"	"	2
					TOTAL HOURS FLYING APRIL	50:40
					Total Time	83:45

Logbook 2AOS June 1943

JUNE 2 A.O.S.					Time carried forward - 133.05 20.45		
Date	Hour	Aircraft Type and No.	Pilot	Data	Spots (including results of bombing, gunnery, exercises, etc.)		Flying Time Day Night
					Day	Night	
1-6-43	0820	Avro 798	F/O George	W/T			
2-6-43	1320	Av 252	Ygt Wilson	"			
3-6-43	0915	W2591	" Pascoe	"			
4-6-43	0705	W2591	" Gallagher	"			
	1140	"	"	"			
	1315	"	"	"			
5-6-43	0710	"	"	"			
	1205	"	"	"			
8-6-43	1300	AW848	P/O Adams	"			
10-6-43	1230	Av 252	Ygt Wilkinson	"			
12-6-43	0500	DG 466	Ygt Brown	"			
14-6-43	0830	DG 725	Ygt Manswight	"			
	1305	"	Hght Roudy	"			
15-6-43	1300	Av 250	Ygt Innes	"			
	1300	Av 4-9	" Smith	"			
16-6-43	0445	DG 430	F/O Bauer	Aldia			
17-6-43	1230	AW661	P/O Wilkinson	W/T			
18-6-43	0910	AW426	Ygt Maynard	"			
					TOTAL HOURS FLYING JUNE		47.55 3.00
					Total Time		181.00 25.45

OFFICER COMMANDING
AIR TRAINING SQUADRON
No. 2 A.O.S. MT. GAMBIER, S.A.

APRIL McLENNAN
O.G. B FLIGHT
FLYING SQUADRON
2 A.O.S. MT. GAMBIER

Logbook 2AOS October 1943 (page 1)

OCTOBER 2 A.O.S.					Time carried forward - 272.50 13.45		
Date	Hour	Aircraft Type and No.	Pilot	Data	Spots (including results of bombing, gunnery, exercises, etc.)		Flying Time Day Night
					Day	Night	
1-10-43	0915	W2598	P/O Macintosh	W/T			
3-10-43	1855	DG 934	P/O Howe	"			
	2115	W2598	"	"			
4-10-43	0840	AW 751	" Scarr	"			
5-10-43	1910	LT 710	" Hall	"			
6-10-43	1310	W2599	" Wright	"			
7-10-43	0805	DG 725	" Wall	"			
	1300	"	" Invidy	"			
8-10-43	0815	M4936	" Wallis	"			
	1300	LT 711	"	"			
10-10-43	0800	LT 708	" Woodfield	"			
	1300	"	"	"			
12-10-43	0825	A9918	" O'Keefe	"			
	1305	"	" F/S Dawson	"			
15-10-43	0810	A3512	F/S Fairman	"			
	1315	AW 746	" Stone	"			
17-10-43	1310	LT 712	P/O Gallie	"			
19-10-43	0810	W1663	F/Sgt Mills	"			
	1245	AW 796	" Stone	"			
20-10-43	0900	DG 925	" Mills	"			
	1335	"	"	"			
					TOTAL TIME		326.35 29.45

