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13 Oct 57 - Death of veteran airman



c 1941

On this day, Sir Thomas Walter White, a veteran airman of both World Wars, died in Melbourne. One of the first Australian Flying Corps officers selected to train at Pt Cook, White served with the Mesopotamia Half Flight where he survived several incidents landing behind enemy lines, before he was captured by Turks and Arabs on 13 November 1915. He escaped captivity in July 1918 and made his way to London via Istanbul and Odessa, Ukraine. He was awarded the DFC and twice mentioned in dispatches for his Middle East exploits. After pursuing business interests and a political career between the Wars, White transferred to the Citizen Air Force as a temporary Squadron Leader in April 1940. Taking leave from the Federal Parliament, he commanded a training school at Somers then in 1941 went to England where he administered Australian aircrew and acted as liaison officer with the RAF. He still longed to fly, and on several occasions surreptitiously took part in operations as a second pilot. Returning to Melbourne in 1943, White served at the RAAF Staff School before being demobilized as honorary group captain on 9 December 1944 and resuming his parliamentary career.

A complete biography of Sir thomas is here: <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/white-sir-thomas-walter-12013>

13 Oct 65 - 38SQN DETA commenced operations in PNG



On this day, No 38 Squadron Detachment A began operations from Port Moresby. Two aircraft -- A4-164 and A4-225 -- had departed RAAF Richmond the previous day. The detachment provided transport support for the PNG Defence Force and tropical and mountainous condition experience for Australian-based crews. All Caribou captains were required to complete at least one two-month deployment to PNG before serving with No 35 Squadron in Vietnam. Until their withdrawal in 1975, the crews of the Detachment flew nearly 27,000 hours.

13 Oct 02 - Relief effort mounted after Bali bombings



After terrorists detonated bombs in two tourist bars on the Indonesian island of Bali on 12 October 2002, killing 202 people (88 of them Australians) and injuring another 209, the RAAF was at the forefront of the relief effort mounted by the Australian Defence Force. Permanent Air Force and Specialist Reservists from across the country were activated and C-130 Hercules transports were specially configured for aeromedical evacuation (AME) tasks. The aircraft took off from RAAF Base Richmond, NSW, in under six hours -- half the time normally required to deploy for AME -- and were on the ground at Bali's Denpasar Airport during 13 October. A total of five Hercules (three C-130Js and two C-130Hs) were used to fly out 66 casualties, including Balinese and other foreign nationals, for treatment in Australia.