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29 Sep 40 - Trainee pilot made amazing landing



On this day, two Avro Ansons from No 2 Service Flying Training School at Wagga Wagga, NSW, became involved in a remarkable incident after they collided in midair. The accident occurred above the village of Brocklesby, in the Riverina district, when the crews lost sight of each other while on a cross-country flight. The aircraft collided one on top of the other, but fortunately both crewmen from the lower machine were able to bale out and parachute to safety. The pilot of the upper Anson, Leading Aircraftman Leonard Fuller, told his observer to jump as well, but on finding that he had control of both aircraft (even though they were locked together) he decided against following suit and opted for a forced landing. This he successfully did after a 13-kilometre glide onto a farmer's property. LAC Fuller's achievement received worldwide publicity as a unique happening in aviation history.

Postscript: Leonard Fuller went on to serve in the UK with the RAF's No 37 Squadron, was awarded the DFM for an operation over Palermo, Italy, in September 1942 and soon afterwards was commissioned. Later he returned to Australia and instructed at No 1 OTU at Sale, Victoria. Ironically, Flying Officer Fuller was killed at Sale on 18 March 1944 while riding a bicycle and he is buried in the Sale War Cemetery.

YouTube footage here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lp478Tgm5gg>

29 Sep 45 - 25 RAAF personnel killed in 64 accidents since the end of WW II

On this day, Melbourne's *The Argus* newspaper reported that the Minister for Air, Mr Drakeford -- in reply to a question from Captain Harrison in the House of Representatives -- had advised that a total of 64 RAAF accidents -- 10 of them fatal -- had occurred since VP Day. Mr Drakeford disclosed that of these accidents 17 major and 16 minor ones had occurred in training units involving the loss of nine lives. Six major and 18 minor, involving the loss of four lives, had occurred in operational areas, and five major and 12 minor accidents -- involving the loss of 12 lives -- had occurred in non-

training, non-operational areas. Mr Drakeford said that since the end of hostilities unit commanders had been instructed to delete flight exercises which were no longer useful or necessary. At refresher pools, he said, a three months pool of air crew was being retained against the possible requirements of garrison forces and commitments of transport squadrons. These personnel were in the main volunteers. Operational training units were completing the courses of volunteers who were under training on V-P day, and the personnel would be used to relieve tour expired crews in operational or northern areas.

29 Sep 77 - 6SQN F-111C crashed at Evans Head



On this day, No 6 Squadron F-111C A8-133 crashed south of the Evans Head Air Weapons range killing Squadron Leader John Holt and Flight Lieutenant Phil Noordink. The crew had successfully completed two runs on the range and had started a third when the aircraft's canopy was struck by three large birds, possibly pelicans. The crew initiated ejection well outside of the safety envelope but the ejection module struck the ground killing both crew. On 29 September 2006, two cairn dedication ceremonies were held; one at the crash site and the other in the RAAF section of the Evans Head cemetery.

A 2 November 2006 Air Force news item is here: <http://www.defence.gov.au/news/raafnews/editions/4820/topstories/story08.htm>

29 Sep 97 - RAAF supported Bougainville peace process



B-707 captain talks to BRA delegation leader in Honiara

On this day, a RAAF C-130 Hercules transport landed at Buka airfield on Bougainville, on the first step towards bringing together opposing parties in the island's protracted internal conflict. For the previous nine years a separatist insurgency led by the Bougainville Revolutionary Army had closed down the giant Panguna copper and gold mine and caused a constitutional crisis for the Papua New Guinea Government. The RAAF committed two C-130s and a Boeing 707 aircraft to transport representatives of various factions from Bougainville to Honiara in the Solomon Islands, and then on to peace talks at Burnham, New Zealand. As a result, the Burnham Truce was agreed to next month. The RAAF continued to play a key role in the peace process, bringing together the opposing factions at subsequent peace talks and providing essential airlift for the Truce Monitoring Group that was subsequently established.

More on the Bougainville conflict

here: [http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary Business/Committees/House of Representatives Committees?url=jfadt/bougainville/bv_chap2.pdf](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=jfadt/bougainville/bv_chap2.pdf)

VIDEO: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lp478Tgm5gg&authuser=0>