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9 Oct 18 - 4SQN AFC captured German aircraft



The Luft-Verkehrs Gesellschaft (LVG) C VI having its German markings painted out and replaced with British insignia; LVG C VI 7243/18 on display in Adelaide as part of War Bond drive, May 1941.

At dawn on this day, No 4 Squadron Australian Flying Corps (AFC) Sopwith Camel pilots Lieutenants Kerr and Thornton were surprised to find a DFW two-seater as far over the British lines as Nieppe, northern France, as low as 4,000 feet, and actually attacking them. The two Australians shot it down to a forced landing near Nieppe and captured it intact, but Kerr -- landing near it -- crashed after striking some telephone wires and was seriously injured. The Official History of the AFC observed that 'This was a sufficiently extraordinary event, in that, during the last twelve months or more of the war air combats hardly ever occurred on the British side of the lines. Whenever the Australian airmen met German machines over Allied territory, the Germans were either at a great height -- too high to be caught or instantly turned home without accepting battle. British pilots always counted it a handicap against them that enemy machines, almost certainly destroyed, but without confirmation of the destruction by other witnesses, could so rarely be claimed by wreckage which could be visited on the ground.'

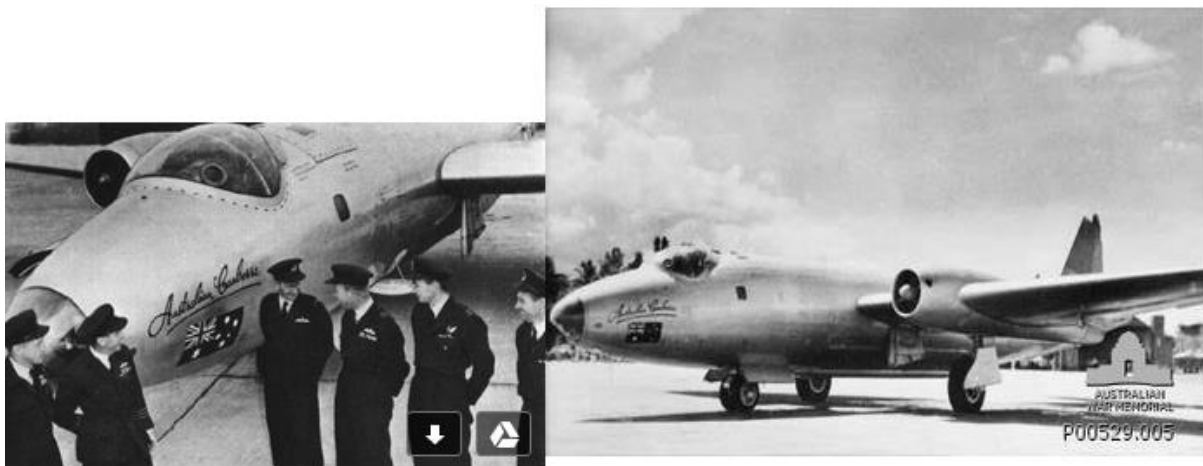
9 Oct 47 - RAAF received its first helicopter



The RAAF entered the helicopter age when its first rotary wing aircraft, a Sikorsky S-51 Dragonfly, was test-flown at Laverton air base, Victoria, on this day. The four-seat aircraft had been ordered from the US for trials and evaluation in November 1946, and arrived in Australia on board SS *Spitfire* on 25 August. After its first flights, the S-51—now designated A80-1—was used for a variety of public relations purposes, including flying a photographer from the Department of Information over the centre of Melbourne to take pictures for a film during the early afternoon of 27 November. Two more S-51s were ordered in April 1950. When these arrived in May 1951 they were allocated to Citizen Air Force squadrons in Sydney and Brisbane, to ensure that the eastern capitals each had one for emergency purposes. Orders for different helicopters (Bristol 171 Sycamores) were also placed in 1951.

More here: <http://www.airforce.gov.au/raafmuseum/research/aircraft/series2/A80.htm>

9 Oct 53 - RAAF Canberra came second in London to Christchurch Air Race



Crews of competing RAAF Canberras

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the city of Christchurch, New Zealand, the Royal Aero Club organised what was described as 'the last great across the world air race'. The event comprised two classes: speed and handicap. The RAAF decided to enter two of its new Australian-built Canberra Mk20 jet bombers in the speed section, hoping to prove the long-range and high-speed characteristics of the type, and also the modern level of technology achieved by Australia's air industry. The RAF also entered three of its Canberras in the same category. Competitors departed London at five-minute intervals on 8 October. The race was won on this day by one of the RAF machines with an elapsed time of 23 hours 51 minutes; this beat the leading RAAF Canberra, captained by SQNLDR Peter Raw, by exactly one minute of actual flying time. In third place and only eight minutes slower was another RAF aircraft.

12 Oct 53 Adelaide *The Advertiser* press reporting here: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/48935812>

More on the Race, and No 1 Long Range Flight temporarily formed at Laverton for this flight, is here (pp 442-445): <http://airpower.airforce.gov.au/Publications/Details/214/Going-Solo-The-Royal-Australian-Air-Force-19461971.aspx>

9 Oct 73 - First Chinook accepted by the RAAF



Undated photo of A15-001

On this day, the RAAF accepted A15-001, the first of 12 Boeing Vertol CH-47C Chinook medium-lift helicopters. In 1969 the government had approved the purchase of 12 medium-lift helicopters for the RAAF; the two contenders were the Boeing-Vertol CH-47 Chinook and the Sikorsky CH-53 'Jolly Green Giant'. The Chinook was selected, and this was announced by the Defence Minister on 19 August 1970. An order for 12 helicopters

was placed on 6 March 1972, making the RAAF the first foreign customer for the Chinook. However, shortly after the Australian order was announced, the Chinook began suffering turbine failures in the twin Lycoming T55-L-11 engines. Other alternatives considered were the adoption of the General Electric T64 engine of the CH-53, or the lower-rated T55-L-7 of the earlier CH-47B. After delays in solving the problems with the T55-L-11, the RAAF was finally ready to accept the Chinook.