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UNIVERSITY AIR UNITS

Commanding officers for University Air Units have been appointed by Air Board. The officers are all Permanent Air Force men:—Perth, F/L K. R. Rodd; Adelaide, F/L E. J. Dibden; Hobart, F/L S. J. Nichol, DFC; Melbourne, F/L C. J. Melchert; Sydney, F/L T. A. Berry; Brisbane, F/L W. O. K. Hewitt.

It is hoped the University Air Units will give undergraduates an interest in the RAAF. University students will be given an opportunity to do training which will fit them for service as active or reserve officers in a branch for which their academic qualifications are suited.

Each unit will have facilities to train 100 men, including 20 pilots, who will be trained at an aero club, to elementary standard. Administrative and instructional staff will be posted from the Permanent Air Force.

Students wanting to join these units must be at least 17. Medical, dental and chemistry students can join the Medical Flight in each unit. Commerce and Science students are suitable for the Equipment-Accountancy Flight; Engineering-Science-Architecture for Works Flight; Engineering-Science for Engineer Flight. The Radio Flight includes Signals and Radar. Students from any faculty can apply for pilot-training.

Selected students enlist for two years in their University Unit, after which they must spend five years on General Reserve or enlist in the RAAF, CAF or Active Reserve.

They will do 28 days' training annually in their unit and at the end of their two years' service will be commissioned as Pilot Officers. Pay for each day in training ranges from 8/6 in the first year to 9/6 in the second.

FAMOUS SQUADRON REFORMED

No. 11 Squadron, one of the best known RAAF squadrons of the Second World War, is being reformed with Lincolns and based at Pearce, Western Australia. Its job is still long-range reconnaissance, but the wartime Catalina flying boat has been replaced by a long-range landplane. The temporary CO is F/L A. B. Boyle, DFC and Bar.

No. 11 Squadron was formed at Richmond, NSW, on September 25, 1939, but immediately went to Port Moresby. It was armed with Empire flying boats taken over from QEA. Armed with Catalina flying boats before the Japanese war began, it became one of the most famous units in the South-West Pacific.

CENTRE SURVEY ENDS

An area 3½ times the size of Victoria has been photographed by the RAAF's Survey Unit, No. 37 Mosquito Squadron, this year.

The total area covered in this operation during 1950 was 325 380 square miles. The work was spread over five months and the cameras clicked 45,305 times to use 1½ tons of film. Seven Mosquito aircraft (Australian-built by de Havilland's), flew almost 1500 hours from the base at Alice Springs.

The biggest single section was a block of 130,000 square miles from Alice Springs surveyed for the UK-Australian Meat Board.

From their home base at Canberra, No. 37 Squadron Mosquitoes are now continuing the steady survey of the eastern States for local and State authorities. All of this is just part of the long-term task of surveying the whole of the Commonwealth—a task which will continue for many years to come.

STRIPES RETURN TO AIRCREW

The familiar NCO's stripes and the coat-of-arms of the W/O will be seen on RAAF aircrew tunics again. The postwar system of giving non-commissioned aircrew members special badges has been abandoned.

Announcing this, Air Force HQ explained that after the war the old system of giving NCO and Warrant ranks to aircrew was dropped and the titles of non-commissioned aircrew members were signified by Classes IF, III, II, I, and Master in the various aircrew categories. New badges of rank were introduced and were based on a wreath enclosing insignia and worn on the sleeve.

This system was introduced in order to distinguish members of aircrew from ground staff. However, the change has proved unsatisfactory.

With the reintroduction of the old system of aircrew titles and badges of rank, Sergeants, Flight Sergeants and W/O will be seen again in aircrew.

(This brings us back to where we started in the war years. The many anomalies and legitimate grievances among aircrew can never be completely removed until the pilot, at least, in his capacity of captain of the aircraft, holds officer rank.—Ed.)

MUSTANG MODEL FOR MUSEUM

The story of the Mustang flown by the late W/C Louis T. Spence, who commanded No. 77 Squadron, is to be permanently recorded for historical purposes.

Before W/C Spence was killed and his Mustang wrecked, photographs were taken of it and its record written up for the Australian War Memorial, Canberra. These have now been sent to Australia for preservation.

W/C Spence was killed on September 9 at Angangh, Korea, when his Mustang failed to recover from a dive bombing attack. Later, when the North Koreans retreated, W/C Spence's body and the wreckage of his aircraft were found by United Nations forces.

From the photos and from details supplied by the Squadron, the War Memorial will build a model of the machine. This will be on public view at Canberra. The Mustang was A68/809, accepted for service by the RAAF on September 30, 1945. W/C Spence flew it on its first combat mission on July 2, 1950—the first day the RAAF took part in the Korean war.

RECORD IN MALAYA

No. 38 Dakota Transport Squadron in Malaya broke both its own flying record and the flying record for any transport squadron in the RAF Far East Air Force, when it flew 644 hours and 5 minutes during October.

The previous record was 622 hours 40 minutes by the same squadron in September.

The squadron is engaged in carrying freight and service personnel in the operational zone and has flown to Japan, Ceylon, Siam, Australia and Burma.

ATC PILOT TRAINING

Forty Air Training Corps cadets are now being selected each year for pilot training. These cadets will be trained at aero clubs to private licence standard.

When accepted for this training, each cadet must undertake to serve in the CAF or RAAF Reserve following his 18th birthday. It is hoped that many will receive advanced flying training in the CAF and that others will join the PAF for a full flying training course. Cadets must be 16½ years of age before they can be accepted for this training, and cannot secure their licence before their 17th birthday.

The 40 boys will be chosen from every State:—12 from NSW, 9 Victoria, 6 WA, 4 SA, 4 South Queensland (Brisbane), 2 North Queensland (Townsville), 3 Tasmania.

There are 3000 boys in the ATC, in seven squadrons divided into 60 flights. Of these, 36 are in schools. **END**