

# AVRO ANSON



PLANE  
CRASH



PEOPLE  
SERIES

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# AVRO ANSON PLANE CRASH ON MT TORBRECK

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## CONTRIBUTORS

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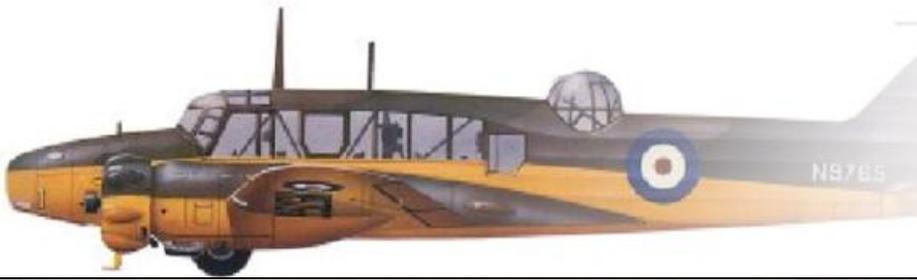
Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI)  
Point Cook RAAF Museum

Shane Bayliss  
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Steve Considine  
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Steve Nicholls  
Kelly Petersen  
Tim Slade  
Russell Sturzaker  
Robert Woolfe  
John Zerafa  
David & Debbie Hibbert

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*In Memory of the Airmen who served and lost their lives.*



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## AVRO ANSON PLANE CRASH

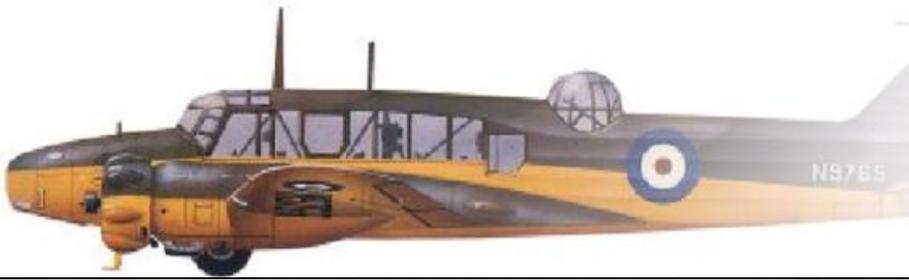
**Name:** Avro Anson  
**Call sign:** BNA  
**RAAF serial:** A4-4 (RAAF serial K6215)  
**Crashed:** 16 May 1940  
**Located:** 23 January 1941

An Avro Anson military plane, carrying one pilot and three corporals crashed into Mount Torbreck 16 May 1940. All on board died in the crash.



On 16 May 1940, a military Avro Anson aircraft with the call sign BNA, crashed into the north east face of Mount Torbreck, just 200 m below the summit. Mount Torbreck is located in central Victoria, not far from the townships of Eildon and Snobs Creek. All four military men on board were killed, with the crash site not located until eight months later.

The aircraft was one of three Avro Anson training aircraft that had flown from Pierce Air Force Base in Western Australia and were on their way to the Central Flying School at Camden in NSW. They had all successfully refuelled at Point Cook in Victoria, and had then taken off back to the skies at 11:45 am. Poor weather conditions caused plans to be altered during the next leg of the flight. After flying over Yea, and making a transmission, two of the planes decided to return to Point Cook in Victoria, with the third plotting a flight path to Cootamundra in NSW.



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

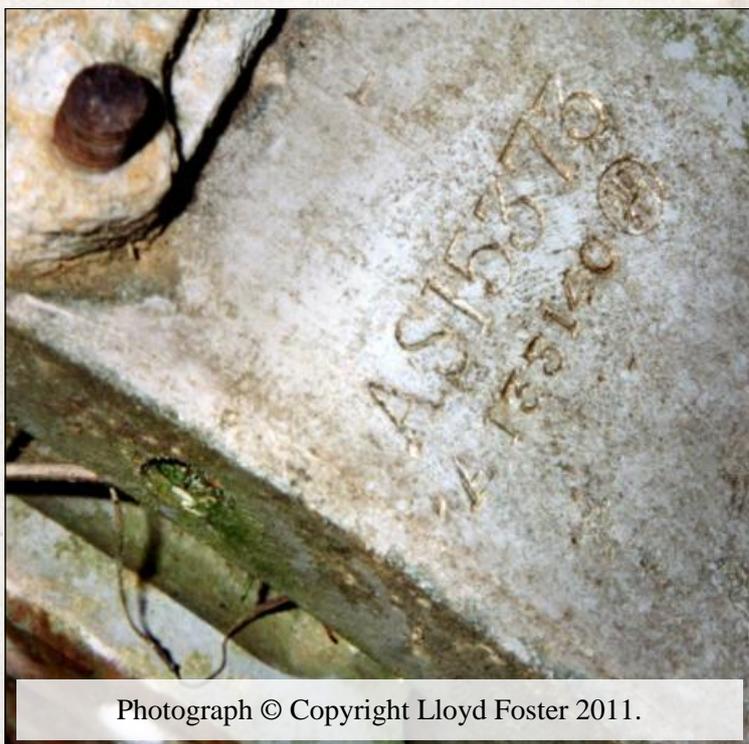
## AVRO ANSON PLANE CRASH

One of the aircraft did manage to reach Cootamundra, though only one of the two that turned back to Point Cook Air Force Base made it back safely. The other (BNA) was never heard from again. It was later discovered that it had flown into tall trees near the summit of Mount Torbreck in the Victorian High Country. The details of the three planes are as follows:

Call signs	Squadron	Outcome
BNE	RAAF 14 Squadron	Landed at Cootamundra, NSW.
BNF	RAAF 14 Squadron	Returned to Pearce Airbase
<b>BNA</b>	<b>RAAF 14 Squadron</b>	<b>Disappeared with four men on board</b>

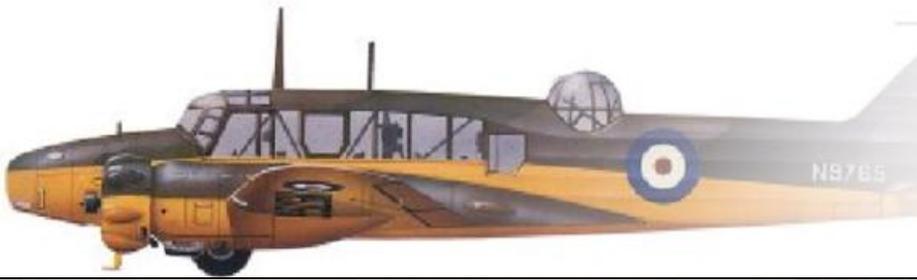
### The crew members of the lost Avro Anson Aircraft were:

<b>Pilot</b>	<b>Anthony Ashby Daniel, Age 22 of Mount Lawly, W.A.</b> - Cremated - Panel 3 (cremated Springvale Crematorium)
<b>Corporal Wireless operator</b>	<b>Ivan Lapen Stowdor, Age 25 of N.S.W.</b>
<b>Corporal</b>	<b>Francis Ettiene Hyland, Age 27 of Balwyn, Victoria</b> - Buried Fawkner Memorial Park
<b>Corporal</b>	<b>Herman Fred Sass, Age 23 of South Perth, W.A.</b> - Cremated at Perth (Karrakatta) Crematorium



Photograph © Copyright Lloyd Foster 2011.

A search involving 12 Air Force Aircraft began at dawn the following morning, though returned after just two hours due to poor visibility and bad weather. The search recommenced the next day with four more aircraft (two from Laverton and two from Canberra) with the search grid being roughly the area between Yea, Cootamundra, Canberra and Mansfield. Benalla and Albury Airdromes were used as the staging and refuelling point for the search planes. The plane was not found and the search was eventually called off.



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## AVRO ANSON PLANE CRASH

At one point, ten Avro Anson aircraft were flying low combing a grid over the high country, flying two miles apart. They did not find anything. A DC3 was used to search the higher peaks, whilst two Lockheed Hudson were also used to comb the area around the Barry Mountains.

By 20 May 20 planes were being used in the search, which was now becoming fruitless.

On 24 May a possible sighting at Mount Skene returned no wreckage, and the following day the official search was called off.

On 1 June, the mother of C. W. Hylands offered a 100 pound reward for information leading to the discovery of the plane crash site. This was in addition to the 50 pound reward already offered by Perth relatives of another of the lost airmen.

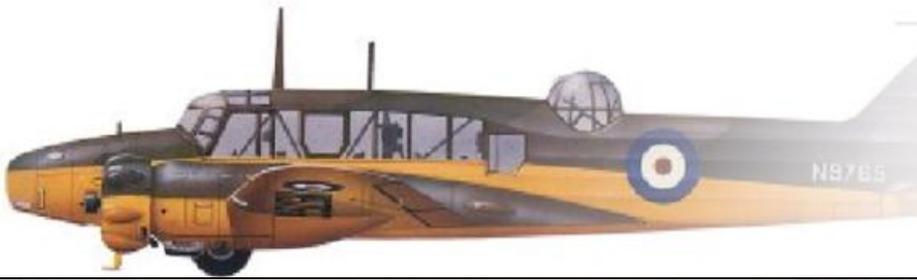
On 23 January 1941 eight months after the aircraft disappeared, two local men (Messrs Archibald Stanley Sawers and John Fry) discovered the lost military plane some 200 m below the summit of Mount Torbreck on the north east face.

At 3.15 am the next day (Friday 24 January) a recovery party left for the crash site in order to bring the bodies of the four men back to Alexandra. They drove as far as they could in their cars, though the last five and a half to six miles was conducted on foot. Conditions were reported as wet, cold and slippery under foot. Fires were lit to thaw the men out.

Locals present that day were: John Fry, Archibald Stanley Sawers, brother George Victor Sawers, Sawers Junior and Victor Roy Harold Newman. They were joined by eight Air Force staff. The RAAF members searched for and recovered the plane's log book, as well as other portions of the plane. It was reported that they had to leave their cars and go by foot six miles from the site and that the plane was a complete wreck. The party returned to Alexandra at 4 pm.

The remains of the four deceased men were taken to Alexandra in at least two vehicles. They were then transported to Melbourne that same evening.

It was reported, though this is unconfirmed, that one of the men's bodies was found leaning up against a large tree. If true, it is likely that the man initially survived the crash and dragged himself to safety. Though it was also stated that he had suffered substantial



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## AVRO ANSON PLANE CRASH

injuries and broken bones. If true, it is likely he did not survive long. The weather conditions at the time of the accident were cold and would have worked against survival.

The 14 Squadron was formed in Western Australia on 6 February 1939 and was equipped with two Avro Anson aircraft at that time. It was disbanded on 30 October 1945.

During its short existence, 14 Squadron performed duties that included:

- Reconnaissance flights on the western shoreline of Australia
- Anti submarine patrols
- Bombing of enemy submarines
- Training flights (such as the one when BNA was lost on Mount Torbreck)

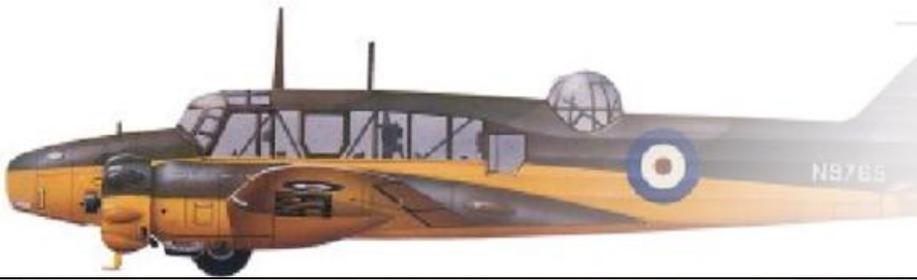
After the war was declared in Europe, 14 Squadron was outfitted with a number of Mark IV Lockheed Hudsons. Once war was declared with Japan in December 1941, 14 Squadron increased their reconnaissance and anti submarine duties.

During their short combat period, 14 Squadron were involved in the accidental bombing of an American submarine, which caused considerable damage. The pilot was later fully exonerated.

The squadron also were responsible for two sightings of Japanese Aircraft.

In another incident, one Mark IV Lockheed Hudson was shot down by Japanese aircraft after they launched a surprise attack on the township of Broome in Western Australia.

Their other activities are listed at the ozatwar website:  
[www.ozatwar.com/raaf/14sqn.htm](http://www.ozatwar.com/raaf/14sqn.htm)



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## TIMELINE OF EVENTS

**16 May 1940**

One of three Avro Anson training aircraft travelling from Peirce Airbase in Western Australia to Camden in NSW, crashed onto the North East face of Mount Torbreck, while attempting to return to Point Cook Airbase in Victoria where they had all successfully refuelled. Poor weather and visibility had made the trip too dangerous. One other of the three returned successfully, whilst the third landed at Cootamundra in NSW. The lost plane had enough fuel to remain airborne until 5.30 that night.

*12.20 pm* Bomber reported as being over Yea, Victoria.

*1.15 pm* Bomber transmitted from an indefinite position.

**17 May 1940**

A search party consisting of 12 aircraft from Point Cook in Victoria began looking for the lost Avro Anson aircraft at dawn, though returned after two hours due to bad weather and poor visibility.

**18 May 1940**

The search continued with no sign of the plane being found. At its peak, the search consisted of 20 aircraft.

**24 May 1940**

A possible sighting of wreckage on Mount Skene turned out to be incorrect.

**25 May 1940**

The first newspaper article citing how the official air search for the Avro Anson (BNA) was being called off, was published by the Burnie Advocate in Tasmania. While true, an intensified ground search began, and the Air Force command said that all reports would be investigated.

**1 June 1940**

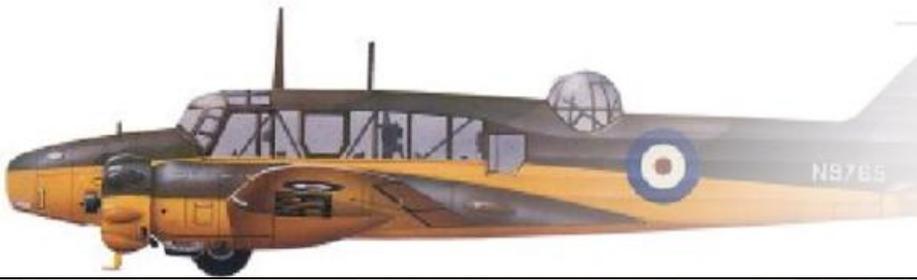
The mother of lost airman C. W. Hyland offered a 100 pound reward for information leading to the discovery of the lost plane. This was in addition to a 50 pound reward offered by Perth relatives of one of the other airmen that had already been offered. After this, the missing Avro Anson largely fell out of the news media.

**23 January 1941**

Eight months after the aircraft disappeared, two local men (Messrs Stan Sawers and J. Fry) discovered the lost military plane some 200 m below the summit of Mount Torbreck on the north east face.

**24 January 1941**

At 3.15 am the next day (Friday 24 January) a recovery party left for the crash site in order to bring the bodies of the four men back to



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Alexandra. They drove as far as they could in their cars, though the last five and a half to six miles was conducted on foot. Conditions were reported as wet, cold and slippery under foot. Fires were lit to thaw the men out.

**21 March 1941**

The Coroner (Tingle) rules the crash occurred as a result of the Avro failing to clear the summit of Mt Torbreck, and was accidental pilot error.

**1950-1960s**

A cairn and picnic area was established at the crash site.

**1950-1960s**

During this period, the crash site was opened up and easily accessible by car. Many local people travelled to the site, and paid homage to the lost men. The area was well kept and the roads maintained. During this period much of the plane was removed by those wishing to have souvenirs of the crash site. Even an engine was somehow taken. Its whereabouts was never discovered.

**1966**

Thanks to the efforts of the father of one of the deceased men, the cairn was rebuilt in a slightly different position by three RAAF men sent to the site for a week, after a tree fell and damaged the original cairn. The new cairn was also easier to access.

**June 1975**

Russell Sturzaker travelled to the crash site and took photographs that were added to this factsheet in 2014.

**18 March 1985**

David McMillan wrote to the Point Cook RAAF Museum requesting further information on the crash site and memorial.

**May 1985**

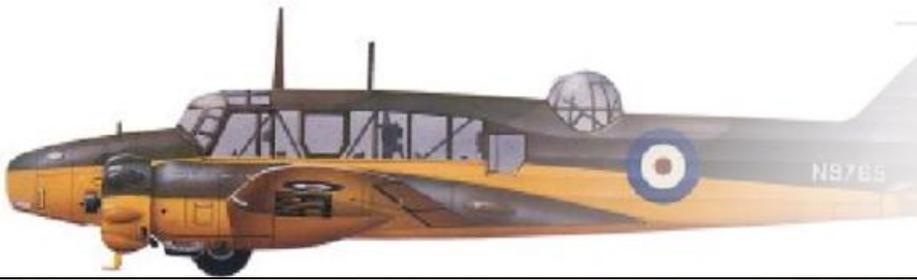
The Point Cook RAAF Museum replied to letter from David McMillan re the crash site and memorial. The letter is courtesy the Point Cook RAAF Museum and David McMillan.

**1994**

Lloyd Foster, Steve Nicholls and Jim Davey searched for and eventually located the crash site in 1994. They took imagery and investigated the site.

**2003**

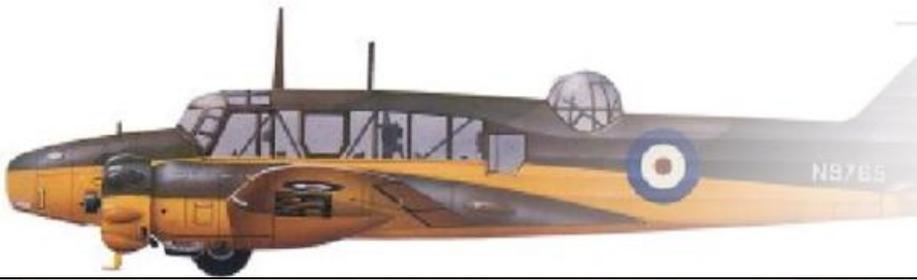
A fire through the area caused significant damage to the bush, and most of the tall timbers (mountain ash) were scorched and subsequently died.



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## TIMELINE OF EVENTS

- 2011** A large mountain ash tree fell and came to rest of the Cairn, obscuring part of the plaque.
- January 2012** Artworkz organised a trip to locate and photograph the crash site and cairn. The site was located thanks to Lloyd Foster, though still only after much work, as the trip was hampered by severe undergrowth that had all but hidden the original track and the crash site. Attempts to push the fallen tree off the cairn failed due to the weight of the tree.
- January 2012** Artworkz began work on a factsheet for the site, crash and aircraft, as well as a hidden memorial page for the eSplash eMagazine, which was published soon after.
- 1 June 2013** The Avro Anson Memorial and the overgrown access track was located by Anthony Dykes, Pat Mills and Ryan Lane.
- June 2013** Anthony Dykes wrote to numerous organisations regarding his desire to the see Avro Anson crash site and memorial re-opened to the public.
- 8 July 2013** Anthony Dykes wrote to Shire of Murrindindi Chief Executive Officer Margaret Abbey asking her for help in restoring the track into the Avro Anson crash site. Margaret informed him she was unable to render any assistance and passed Anthony on to Parks Victoria. Margaret failed to pass him on to any local History Group and never contacted Artworkz, Heritage, even though we were the active heritage group for such matters. By then we had already published material on the Avro Anson crash site numerous times, was in the Artworkz Educational Platform, and had already been used in local schools.
- September 2013** Anthony Dykes made first contact with Chris Daniel, nephew of Pilot Anthony Daniel who died in the crash on Mount Torbreck.
- September 2013** Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) District Manager Lucas Russell and Senior Forest Ranger James Cowell approved a proposal by Anthony Dykes to restore the memorial area and the access track into the memorial.
- 21 September 2013** Anthony Dykes conducted a reconnaissance trip to accurately map out



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## TIMELINE OF EVENTS

the access track from where it leaves Barnewall Plains Road to the Memorial. Six men were in attendance (Anthony Dykes, Steve Dykes, Ryan Lane, Pat Mills, Andrew Casey and Jake Casey). The tree that had fallen across the memorial some time prior to 2011, was removed by Anthony Dykes with a handsaw.

**October 2013**

Anthony Dykes and Pat Mills designed and published stickers promoting the restoration of the track on Mount Torbreck.

**25 October 2013**

Senior Forest Ranger James Cowell (based on his knowledge) marked out the "missing link" of track that could not be located by Anthony Dykes and his team on their planned reconnaissance trip.

**26-27 October 2013**

**Anthony Dykes conducted first track clearing trip:** Six men were in attendance (Anthony Dykes, Shane Bayliss, Nick Dykes, Steve Dykes, Ryan Lane and Robert Woolfe). Approximately 400 m of track was initially cleared.

**16-17 November 2013**

**Anthony Dykes conducted his second track clearing trip:** Five men were in attendance (Anthony Dykes, Shane Bayliss, Nathan Earl, Andy Kelly and Pat Mills). Another 400 m of track was cleared as well as a number of large mountain ash trees cleared from the track.

**March 2014**

David Hibbert emailed the Avro Anson factsheet to Anthony Dykes, David McMillan and Chris Daniel (nephew of Anthony Daniel). He received their details via a website sent to David Hibbert by the initial Artworkz Avro Anson contact - former Alexandra local Lloyd Foster.

**3-4 May 2014**

**Anthony Dykes conducted his third track clearing trip (after a prolonged Victorian fire season):**

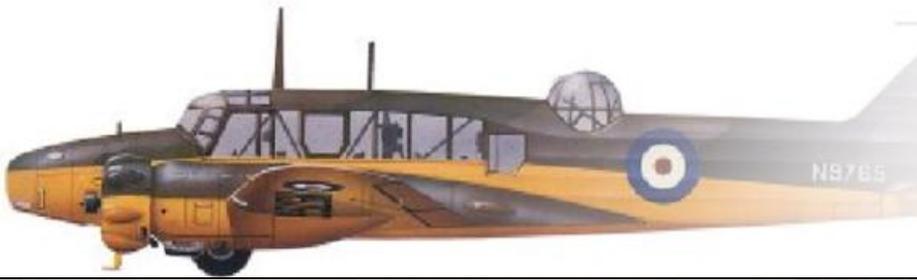
**Day 1:** Six men were in attendance (Anthony Dykes, Nick Dykes, Shane Millard, Andy Kelly, Paul Fletcher, Shane Bayliss).

**Day 2:** Six men were in attendance (Anthony Dykes, Shane Bayliss, Paul Fletcher, Andy Kelly, Ryan Lane, Pat Mills).

The track was cleared to within 40 m of the Memorial Site.

**4 May 2014 @ 11am**

Artworkz arrived and commenced a walk (13 people) to the memorial site to see and photograph the memorial, track work and interview the track clearing team (led by Anthony Dykes). The weather was below



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## TIMELINE OF EVENTS

7°C during the day, though conditions were good overall with only moderate winds and light showers.

During the trip, local Alexandra identity John Norbury fell on the track around 11.15 am, breaking his femur. He was near the half way point to the memorial site at the time of the fall. David Hibbert called the emergency services first at 11.22 am and again at 12.34 pm (after Johns temperature dropped and the rain and wind increased).

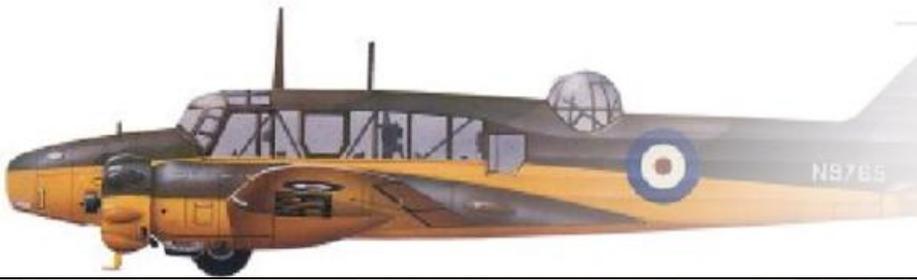
Ambulance Officers Andrew and Rick from Yea were first on scene - arriving at 1.22 pm. Ten SES officers from both the Marysville and Alexandra districts arriving around 4.30 pm to carry him out the 700 m from the site of the incident to the carpark. John was transferred to Maroondah Hospital where he was diagnosed with a broken left femur around 10.30 pm.

At the peak, there were 31 people on the mountain, including track clearers, ambulance officers, SES officers, Police and the Artworkz photographers.

It is believed that John's injury was one of the worst injuries sustained while attending the memorial site since its construction. It was also a time to again recognise the incredible and selfless actions of the Ambulance officers, Police officers, SES staff (both on site and off site) and everyone on the ground who helped make the rescue possible.

The injury occurred as John lifted his leg. His left boot got hooked and as he lifted his leg, his femur broke. He then fell to the ground and rolled onto his back where he stayed. The track at that location was of good condition and had recently been cleared. It serves as a reminder that just one misplaced foot can cause significant injury.

Not to be diminished on the day was that Anthony Dykes and his dedicated team cleared to within 40 m of the Avro Anson memorial site before works were stopped. A feat that is incredible, as it is honourable and respectful to the lost servicemen who lost their lives on the mountain.



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## TIMELINE OF EVENTS

### **Emergency Services personnel in attendance:**

Andrew (Ambulance officer)                      Rick (Ambulance officer)  
Sgt Michael Flower (Police Officer)        Bruce Ashcroft (Local guide)  
10 SES volunteers (*names withheld by SES*)

### **Community members involved in the recovery:**

Anthony Dykes (track clearing team - Coordinator)  
Shane Bayliss (track clearing team - cleared track ahead of SES)  
Andy Kelly (track clearing team)  
Pat Mills (track clearing team - helped SES lift John out)  
Ryan Lane (track clearing team - helped SES lift John out)  
Paul Fletcher (track clearing team)

Maureen Norbury (Artworkz group - John's wife)  
Joshua Hibbert (Artworkz group - helped SES lift John out)  
Mitchell Hibbert (Artworkz group - helped SES lift John out)  
Shannon Carnes (Artworkz group)  
Leisa Lees (Artworkz group)  
Amity Lees (Artworkz group)  
Oscar Lees (Artworkz group)  
Jamie Flynn (Artworkz group)  
Will Nash (Artworkz group)  
Zac Horton (Artworkz group)  
Debbie Hibbert (Artworkz group)  
David Hibbert (Artworkz group)

**Tuesday 13 May**

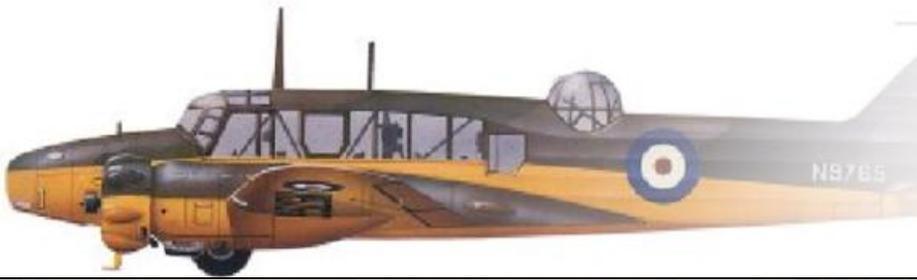
John Norbury was released from hospital after an operation to pin his broken left femur..

**4 May 2014**

Talk was first heard of a possible plan to remove the Avro Anson engine from the crash site to Eildon for display. This was heard by Anthony Dykes during the rescue of John Norbury.

**May 2014**

Chris Daniel supplied Anthony Dykes and Artworkz with three photographs. One of his uncle (Anthony Daniel) and two photographs of an Avro Anson from the same squadron as the crashed Avro Anson (14 Squadron) on the airstrip at Carnavon in Western Australia. All three were added to this factsheet.



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## TIMELINE OF EVENTS

**5-6 July 2014**

**Anthony Dykes conducted his fourth track clearing trip:** Although the weekend was mostly a washout, the team did break through for the first time. This made history as the first successful privately funded track clearing effort to the Avro Anson memorial site. Eleven men were in attendance (Shane Bayliss, Anthony Dykes, Andrew Mason, Jack Mason, Mick Braybon, Tim Slade, Pat Mills, Andy Kelly, Phil Guinta, Steve Considine, Paul Fletcher).

**6 July 2014**

Ron Cooper, Don Campbell, Shane Campbell and David Hibbert attended the memorial site to meet the track clearers, take photographs and confirm the existence of a Geocache hidden in bush near the memorial site. Although it rained the entire time, photographs were taken and the Geocache was found to be intact and active.

**11 August 2014**

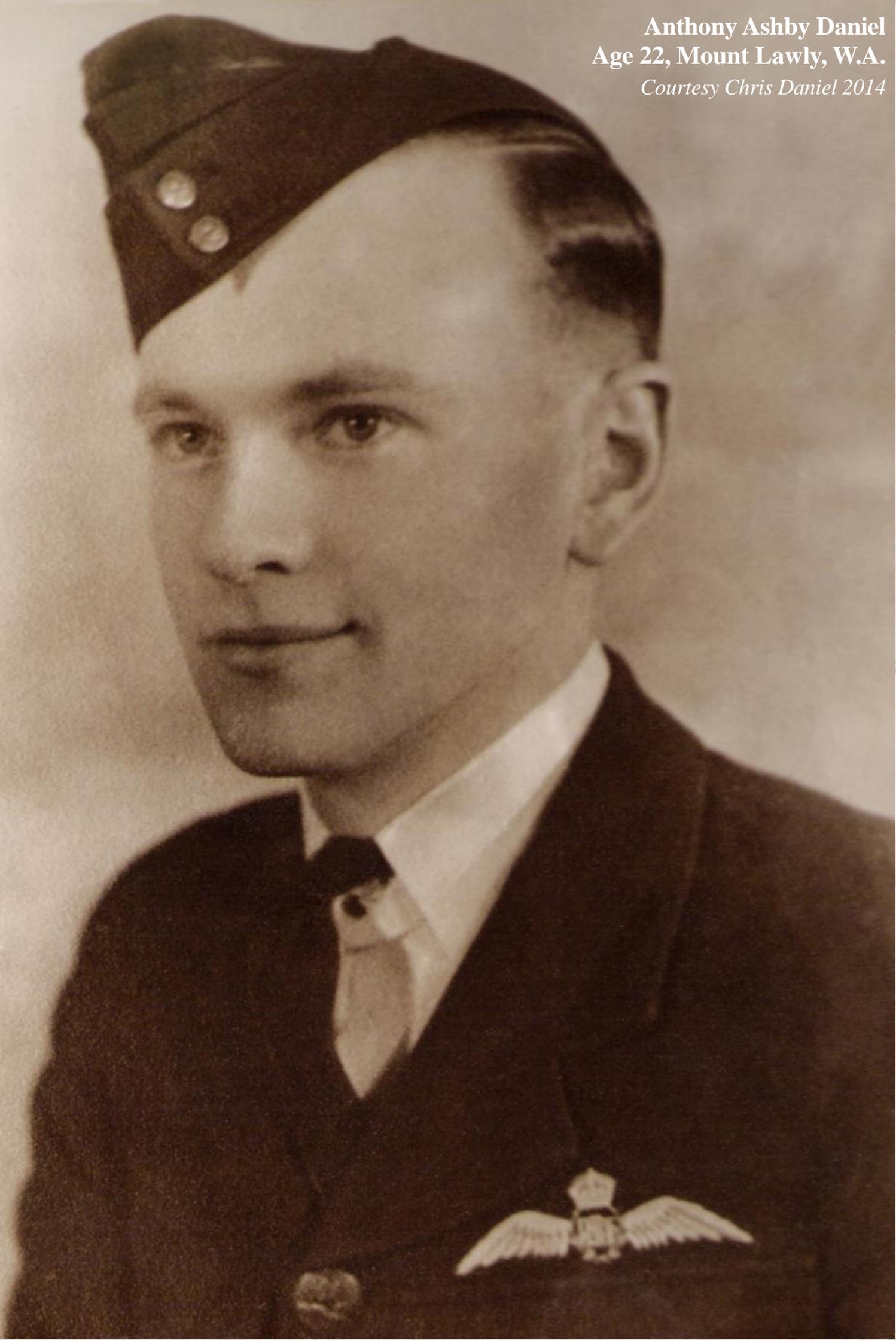
At 3.15 pm on Monday 11 August, Squadron Leader Greg Williams from Air Force Headquarters in Canberra made first contact with Anthony Dykes when he called Anthony and left a message on his answering machine. This was regarding the memorial site reopening.

**23 August 2014 1 pm**

**Anthony Dykes conducted his fifth track clearing trip:** The 2.4 km of walk track was officially cleared by the track clearing team led by Anthony Dykes at 1 pm. An SMS from Anthony at that time read:

*"Our work here is done. Once completed 2.4 km track."*

**Anthony Ashby Daniel**  
**Age 22, Mount Lawly, W.A.**  
*Courtesy Chris Daniel 2014*





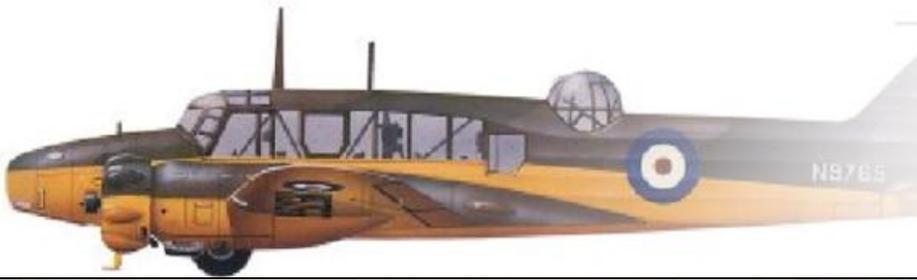
**Two photographs of an Avro Anson from 14 Squadron.**  
*Photographer Anthony Daniel (prior to his death). Courtesy Chris Daniel 2014.*



*June 1975 trip by  
Russell Sturzaker and Lee Faulkner.*

*"The person in the photograph was a personal friend of mine (Lee Faulkner - coincidentally, Lee is now the owner of King Island Airlines). Lee and I both had holiday houses at Lake Eildon, and during this period both also owned trail bikes, and used to explore all the tracks around the area, and it was on one of these trips where we were heading to the summit of Mt Torbreck that we came across a track running off the Barnewall Plains Road.*

*It was a normal practice of mine when exploring the local area on our trail bikes, to always carry Army Survey maps of the area. On this occasion we were following the Thornton 1:50,000 Army Survey Map (compiled in 1965 from the Department of Crown Lands and Survey, Victoria 1:31,680 series maps with field revision in 1967 - printed in 1969). As the track to the crash site was not shown on the map, we decided to explore it, and even though it appeared unused for some time it was rideable by trial bike. So we headed off down the track, and it wasn't long before we had reached the end and came across the Memorial Cairn."*



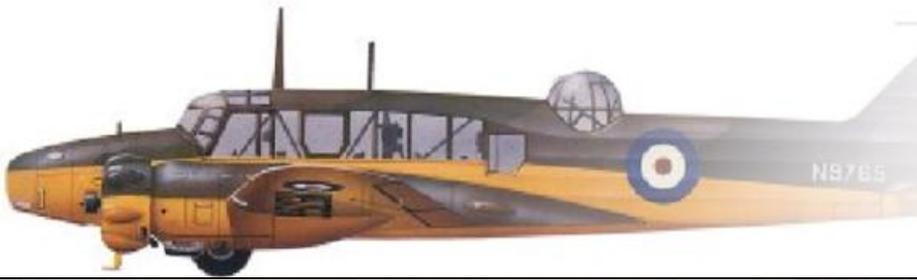
# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## 1975 TRIP



**The Avro Anson crash site memorial June 1975.**

*Photograph © Russell Sturzaker 2014.*



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## 1975 TRIP



**Lee Faulkner holding an engine mount from the Avro Anson June 1975.  
Green camouflage paint is still noticeable on some of the wreckage.**

*Photograph © Russell Sturzaker 2014.*

*1994 trip by Lloyd Foster,  
Steve Nicholls and Jim Davey  
to locate, investigate and  
photograph the site.*

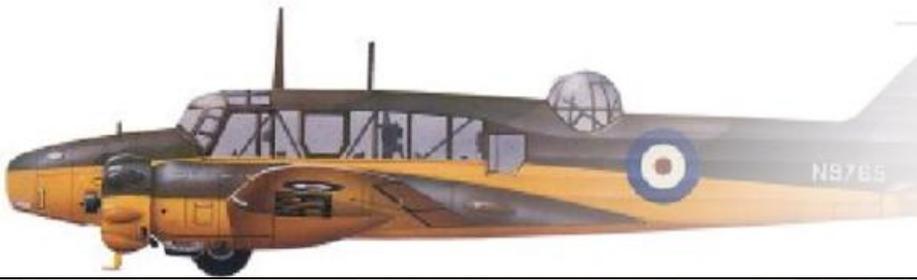
*"My father used to have a piece of aluminium from the site, which was unpainted and had large circular holes cut into it as aircraft frames regularly do. It was in the era of the Apollo missions, and space travel was on everyone's conscious.*

*Seeing as I was about 5 years old at the time, my father told me it was from a crashed space ship and only he knew where it was. His argument that it was from outer space was reinforced by it being bare metal that he told me didn't rust because metal from alien planets were more advanced than ours and didn't rust.*

*As a five year old lad, in Alexandra, I certainly didn't know any better. But I was terrified of this bit of alien aluminium hanging on a nail in the shed. All I knew was that it came from Mt. Torbreck. By the time I found out about the crash site of the Avro Anson I had worked out that there really wasn't a crashed alien space ship that my father knew about. So I had been traumatized by a bit of the Avro Anson.*

*Either way I was keen to learn more of this plane, and spent six years off and on looking for it. After lots of days staggering around the bush at lots of different locations you can imagine how happy I was to finally discover the "road" that leads to the spot and of course right at the end of the road, just like I had been told, was the monument. It was quite a moment."*

*Lloyd Foster.*



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## 1994 TRIP



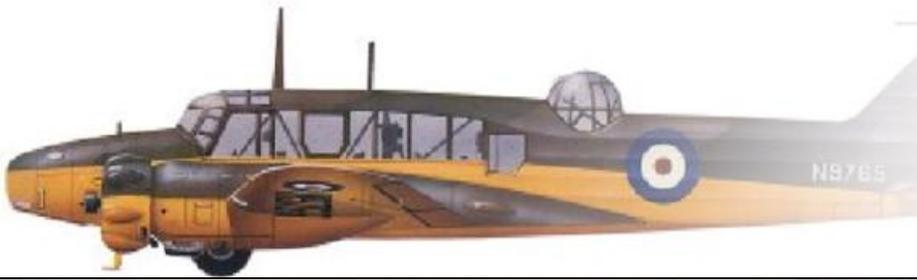
(Top)

**The Cairn erected at the crash site, 200 m below the summit of Mount Torbreck, on the North East face.**

(Left)

**Steve Nicholls looking through an engine mount, located in scrub at the crash site.**

*Photographs © Lloyd Foster 2012.*



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

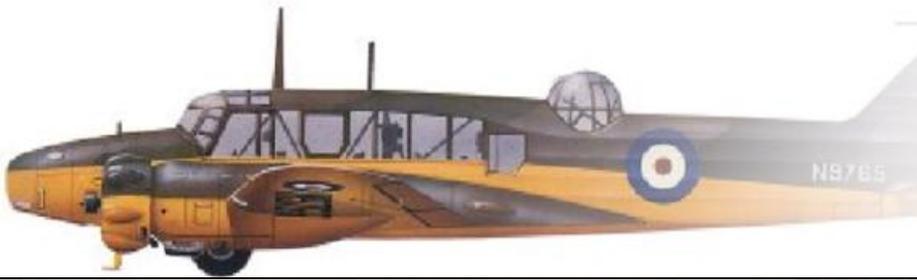
## 1994 TRIP



(Top)  
**The cairn erected at the crash site,  
along with a small piece of the  
wreckage. This piece was still  
present at the 2012 trip.**

(Left)  
**A section of the Avro Anson engine.**

*Photographs © Lloyd Foster 2012.*



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## 1994 TRIP



(Top)  
**Lloyd Foster and Jim Davey look at one of the two engines located beside a tree in a gully - some distance from the main crash site.**

(Left)  
**A possible RAAF serial number on a part of the plane wreck.**

*Photographs © Lloyd Foster 2012.*



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## 1994 TRIP



(Top)

**One of the main landing gear struts  
in the area behind the cairn.**

(Left)

**One of the two engines, located a  
distance from the main crash site.**

*Photographs © Lloyd Foster 2012.*



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## 1994 TRIP



(Top)  
**Dick and Wayne Nicholls and  
Lloyd Foster inspecting the engine.**

(Left)  
**One of the two engines, located a  
distance from the main crash site.**

*Photographs © Lloyd Foster 2012.*

*A trip to the memorial site  
on the 29 March 2009 by local  
Stephen Handbury. This trip was  
conducted just after the Black  
Saturday bushfires burnt the area.*



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

29 MARCH 2009 TRIP



**The memorial site photographed just after the Black Saturday bushfires.**

*Photographs © Stephen Handbury 2014.*



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

29 MARCH 2009 TRIP

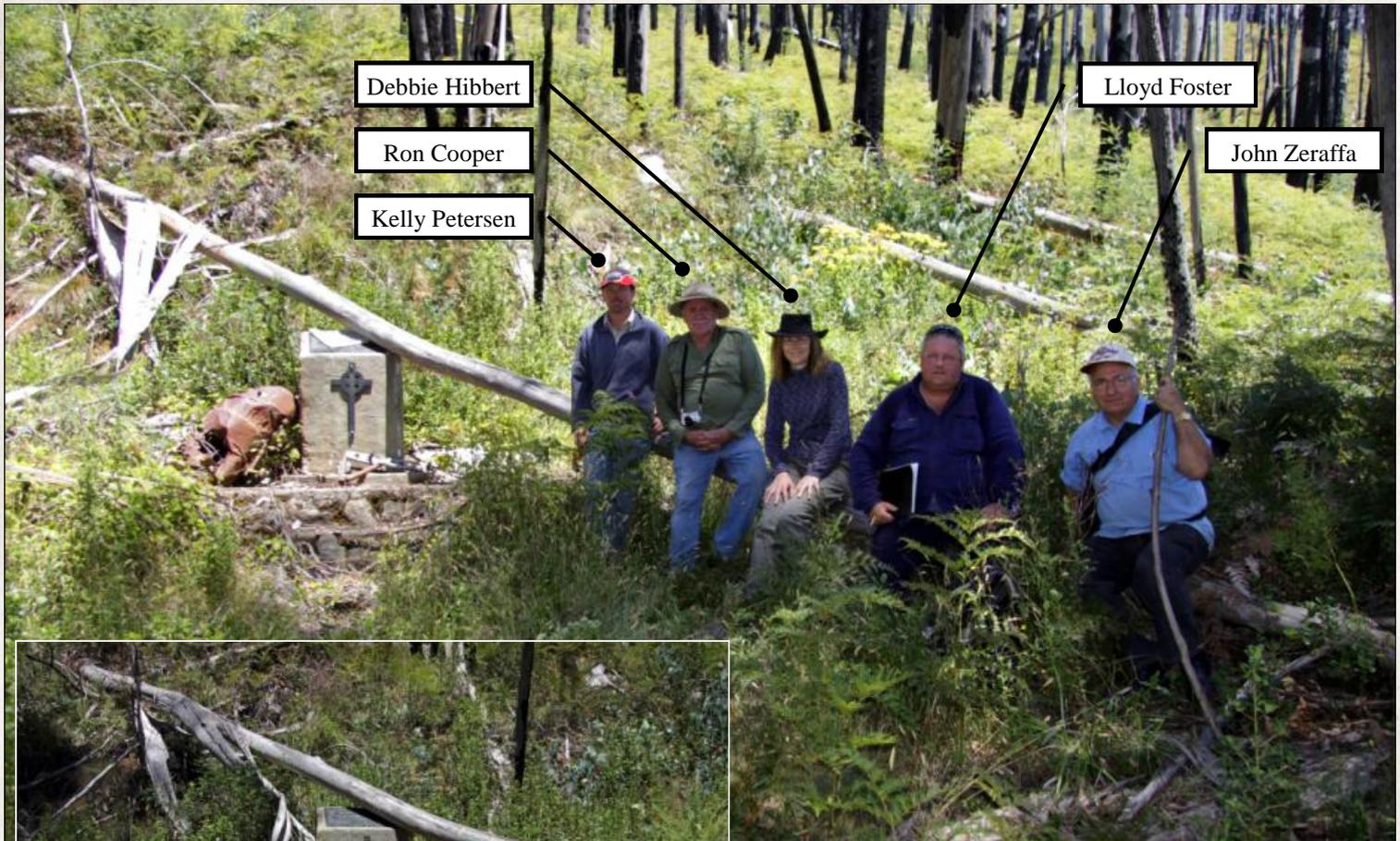


**The seven cylinder British air-cooled Avro Anson  
(Armstrong Siddeley Cheetah) engine, located below the  
memorial site, photographed just after the Black  
Saturday bushfires.**



*Photographs © Stephen Handbury 2014.*

*Artworkz 2012 trip to locate,  
photograph and record the  
crash site, as well as produce a  
factsheet and tourism brochure  
and publish the details of the site  
in the local eSplash eMagazine  
to raise public awareness.*



Debbie Hibbert

Ron Cooper

Kelly Petersen

Lloyd Foster

John Zeraffa



## AVRO ANSON CRASH SITE

Copyright © Ron Cooper  
14th January 2012

On Saturday 14 January 2012 a party of six people (one woman and five men) from Artworkz set off to find the plane crash site on Mt. Torbreck in north east Victoria - near Eildon.

After trekking through very dense forest and over endless fallen trees all well overgrown by the recent rains, we finally reached the crash site of the Avro Anson that crashed at that location on the 16 May 1940. All four airmen were killed in the crash.

The plane had set off from Point Cook in Victoria to the Air Training Base in Camden NSW on a training exercise with two other Avros at the time. After poor weather conditions and zero visibility caused them to change their flight plan mid flight, two of the planes decided to return to Point Cook, while

the third headed for Cootamundra in NSW. One reached Point Cook, another reached Cootamundra, though the third plane (call sign BNA) was never heard from again.

A memorial Plaque has been erected there some time ago by the army, though a dirt road to the site is now totally overgrown, and almost impossible to see.

Little of the plane is left now (as you can see in the photos). It is our hope that in the future the site may be able to be cleaned up so that future visitors can find and pay their respects at the site.

*Artworkz Community  
Reporter Series*



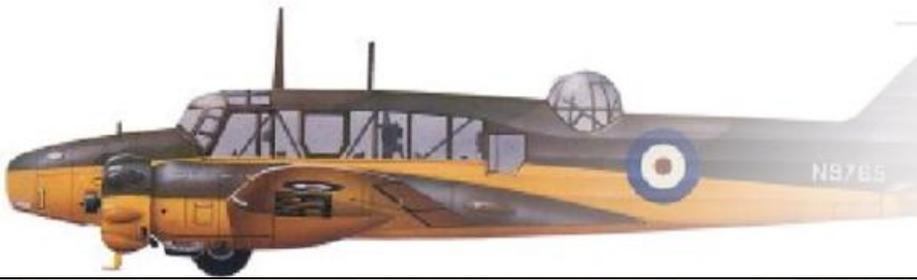
# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## ARTWORKZ JANUARY 2012 TRIP



(Top)  
**The main cairn is partially covered by a fallen tree, and the area was severely overgrown and hard to find in 2012.**

(Left)  
**The cairn partially covered by a tree, that was too heavy to remove without a chain saw in 2012.**



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## ARTWORKZ JANUARY 2012 TRIP



(Top left)

**John Zerafa inspecting the cairn**

(Top right)

**One of the rudimentary targets that  
seemed to point towards the old road,  
that is now totally overgrown.**

(Bottom left)

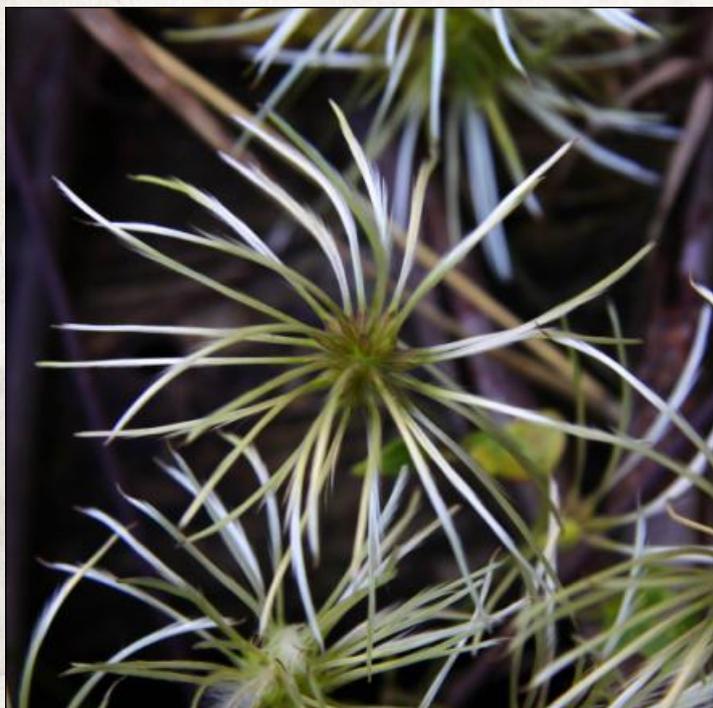
**There were lots of March Flies present.**





# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## ARTWORKZ JANUARY 2012 TRIP



**Some of the native  
wildflowers on the  
day we travelled to  
the crash site.**





# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## ARTWORKZ JANUARY 2012 TRIP



(Top left)  
**A section of an aluminium fuel tank.**

(Top right)  
**A riveted section of an unidentified aluminium sheet.**

(Bottom right)  
**A fuel tank, that was also present during the 1994 field trip.**



*Anthony Dykes 2013 trip  
to locate the crash site as  
well as his long-term task  
of restoring public access  
to the crash site and  
cleaning up the memorial.*





# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

**1 JUNE 2013 - DISCOVERY TRIP**



**Team: Anthony Dykes, Ryan Lane, Pat Mills.**

**(Top left) Pat Mills and Ryan Lane inspecting the memorial.**

**(Top right) The memorial.**

**(Bottom left) Ryan Lane (reading) and Pat Mills looking over the factsheet at the site.**

**(Bottom right) View of the overgrown walking track.**

*Photographs © Anthony Dykes 2014.*



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

21 September 2013 - Reconnaissance



**Team: Anthony Dykes,  
Steve Dykes, Ryan Lane,  
Pat Mills, Andrew Casey  
and Jake Casey.**

**(Top left) The search team  
21 September 2013 spearheaded  
by Anthony Dykes.**

**(Top right) Anthony removing the  
fallen tree from the memorial.**

**(Bottom left) The only remaining  
engine at the site, located in the  
gully below the memorial.**

*Photographs © Anthony Dykes 2014.*



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

**26 October 2013 - Cleanup Phase 1**



**Team: Anthony Dykes, Steve Dykes, Nick Dykes, Ryan Lane,  
Shane Bayliss and Robert Woolfe.**

**(Top left) DEPI Forest Ranger James Cowell marked out the missing link prior to us arriving, which was a great help!**

**(Top right) (L-R) Anthony Dykes, Ryan Lane, Nick Dykes, Robert Woolfe, Shane Bayliss, and Steve Dykes (behind the camera).**

**(Bottom left) Ryan Lane met the task ahead with much enthusiasm.**

**(Bottom right) Anthony Dykes on the brush cutter in action.**

*Photographs © Anthony Dykes 2014.*



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

**16-17 November 2013 - Second Cleanup**



**Team: Anthony Dykes, Pat Mills, Andy Kelly,  
Nathan Earl and Shane Bayliss.**

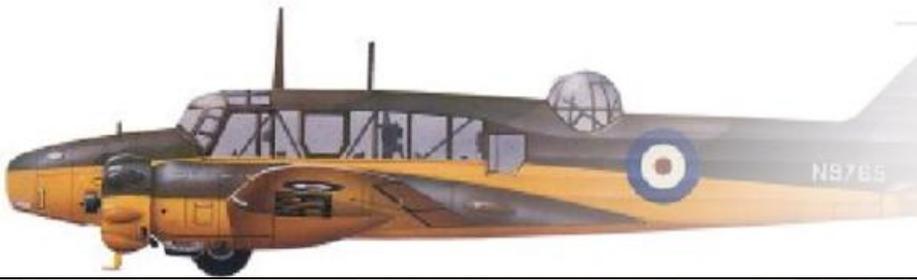
**(Top left) Pat Mills, Shane Bayliss, Nathan Earl, Andy Kelly.**

**(Top right) Andy Kelly starting work on a large fallen tree.**

**(Bottom left) Andy Kelly and Nathan Earl on a section of track that indicates  
the thickness of the scrub.**

**(Bottom right) Andy Kelly tackling the challenge of charcoal on the timber,  
as it constantly blunted the chain saw blades.**

*Photographs © Anthony Dykes 2014.*



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

**3-4 May 2014 - Third Cleanup**



**Day 1 team: Anthony Dykes, Nick Dykes, Shane Millard, Andy Kelly, Paul Fletcher, Shane Bayliss.**

**Day 2 team: Anthony Dykes, Shane Bayliss, Paul Fletcher, Andy Kelly, Ryan Lane, Pat Mills.**

(Top left) **Sunday team.**

(Top right) **Two very skilful guys!**

(Bottom left) **Andy Kelly and Paul Fletcher.**

(Bottom right) **The smaller saws go ok too.**

*Photographs © Anthony Dykes 2014.*



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

5-6 July 2014 - Fourth Cleanup



**(L-R) Shane Bayliss, Anthony Dykes, Andrew Mason, Jack Mason, Mick Braybon, Tim Slade, Pat Mills, Andy Kelly, Phil Guinta, Steve Considine and Paul Fletcher.**

Track clearers pictured at camp.

Although the weekend was mostly a washout, the team broke through to the memorial site for the first time. This effort has made history as the first privately funded track clearing to the Avro Anson memorial site.

*Photograph © Anthony Dykes 2014.*



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## NEWSPAPERS

### AIR FORCE PLANE MISSING

CANBERRA, May 17.

The Minister for Air (Mr Fairbairn) announced in the House of Representatives today that an R.A.A.F. Avro Anson plane had been missing since yesterday morning. He said three Avro Ansons had left Point Cook at 11.30 a.m. to fly to Campden. Striking adverse weather conditions they split formation. One returned to Cootamundra and another to Point Cook.

Wireless communication with the third broke off at 1.15 p.m. and the plane had not been located. Bad weather conditions impeded the search today.

#### BELIEVED TO HAVE CRASHED.

The crew were: Pilot *Flying-Officer* A. A. Daniels, Western Australia; Corporal H. Stowder, wireless operator; Corporal F. Hyland and Corporal H. F. Sann.

The machine is believed to have crashed in rough country somewhere north and east of Melbourne. It could not have remained in the air later than 5.30 on Tuesday evening.

Queensland Morning Star  
Saturday 18th May 1940  
Courtesy National Library Australia

### AVRO ANSON MISSING

#### Search Impeded.

#### By Weather Conditions.

CANBERRA, May 17.

The Minister for Air (Mr. J. V. Fairbairn) announced in the House of Representatives to-day that an R.A.A.F. Avro-Anson machine had been missing since yesterday morning.

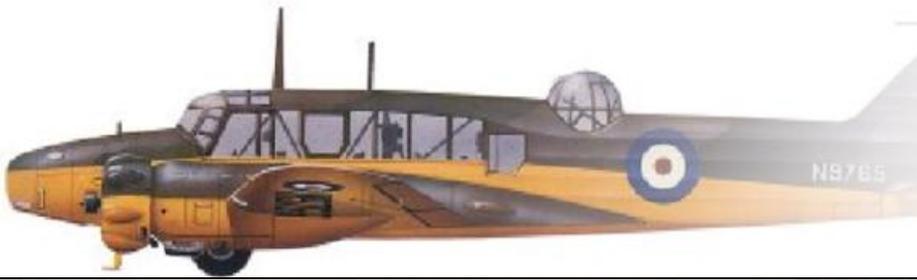
He said three Avro-Ansons had left Point Cook at 11.30 a.m. to fly to Camden. They struck icy weather conditions and split formation. One returned to Cootamundra and another to Point Cook. The third lost wireless communication at 1.15 p.m. and had not been located.

Bad weather conditions impeded the search to-day.

The crew were: Pilot *Flying-Officer* A. A. Daniel, of West Australia, Corporal I. L. Stowder (wireless operator), Corporal F. E. Hyland, and Corporal H. F. Sann.

The machine is believed to have crashed in rough country somewhere North and East of Melbourne. It could not have remained in the air longer than 5.30 o'clock Tuesday evening.

Townsville Daily Mirror  
Saturday 15th May 1940  
Courtesy National Library Australia



## NEWSPAPERS

### PLANE SEARCH GOES ON No Traces Found

Extensive aerial searches by 15 R.A.A.F. planes over a wide area of eastern highland country failed yesterday to find the Anson bomber and crew of four which disappeared last Thursday.

To-day search will be intensified. More planes will be used over courses mapped from hundreds of reports supplied by police, postal officials, and ground parties. The search area to-day will be principally in N.S.W.

Search yesterday included country west of Albury to Mt. Kosciusko, and southwest to Mt. Hotham. Ten Avro Ansons flew low in lines two miles apart over this area. They landed at Albury to refuel, and left early again in afternoon.

Two other Ansons traversed another area south from Mt. Bogong in Mitta Mitta valley, while two Lockheed Hudsons searched Barry Mountains. All higher peaks along the route believed taken by the missing plane were scoured by a Douglas DC3.

The Melbourne Argus  
Tuesday 21st May 1940  
Courtesy National Library Australia

### MISSING ANSON.

#### Fruitless Search By 20 Planes.

MELBOURNE, May 21.—Operating over a wide area in Victoria and New South Wales, 20 Royal Australian Air Force planes today continued the search for the missing Avro Anson and its crew of four.

Since the plane disappeared on Thursday, thousands of square miles over all kinds of country have been covered by aerial and ground search parties. Today 18 planes left Point Cook and Laverton to search, and two Lockheed Hudsons were given a roving commission over the Alps. Two other Lockheeds from Richmond, New South Wales, are investigating country to the south of Canberra.

A number of machines remained at Albury tonight and will continue the search tomorrow.

The West Australian  
Wednesday 20th May 1940  
Courtesy National Library Australia

### HOPES FADING FOR MISSING PLANE

Six R.A.A.F. planes continued the search yesterday for the Air Force Avro Anson which disappeared with its crew of four last Thursday. Hopes that the men will be found alive have faded.

Flying conditions yesterday were again bad, and the machines returned to their bases to report that their efforts had failed. Since last Friday morning planes and ground parties have covered exhaustively the areas from which reports about the missing plane have been sent. The search will be continued.

The Melbourne Argus  
Thursday 23rd May 1940  
Courtesy National Library Australia



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## NEWSPAPERS

### MISSING AIR FORCE PLANE

#### Air Search Abandoned

MELBOURNE, Friday. — Experts have advised the Air Board that the best chance of finding the Avro Anson plane, which has been missing with its crew of four since Thursday week, is by ground search in the heavy country near Mt. Terrible or Mt. Torbeck.

It is expected the board will authorise the formation of an official land party, including local personnel, to scour this district over the week end.

Air Force machines have abandoned the search as a daily routine, and from now on aircraft will be sent out only in response to definite reports.

Burnie Advocate

Saturday 25th May 1940

Courtesy National Library Australia

### MISSING R.A.A.F. PLANE

#### Mother Offers Reward

MELBOURNE, May 31.

The Police Department announced yesterday that Mrs C. W. Hyland had offered a reward of £100 for information leading to the discovery of her son, Corporal F. E. Hyland, who with three other R.A.A.F. men, was lost in an Avro Anson bomber on May 4. Relatives of another member of the crew from Perth have already offered £50 for the discovery of the plane.

Rockhampton Bulletin

Saturday 1st June 1940

Courtesy National Library Australia

### AVRO ANSON MISSING

#### Futile Search By R.A.A.F.

#### CREW OF FOUR

MELBOURNE, May 17.

An R.A.A.F. Avro Anson bomber and its crew of four are missing, probably in an area bounded by Yea, Cootamundra, Canberra, and Mansfield.

The crew is: Flying Officer A. A. Daniel, of Mt. Lawley (W.A.), pilot; Cpls. I. L. Stowdor, F. E. Hyland, and H. F. Sass.

An Air Board statement tonight said that the bomber was over Yea about 12.20 p.m. yesterday, and was heard transmitting from an indefinite position at 1.15 p.m. It was possible for the aircraft to be in the air until 5.30 p.m. yesterday.

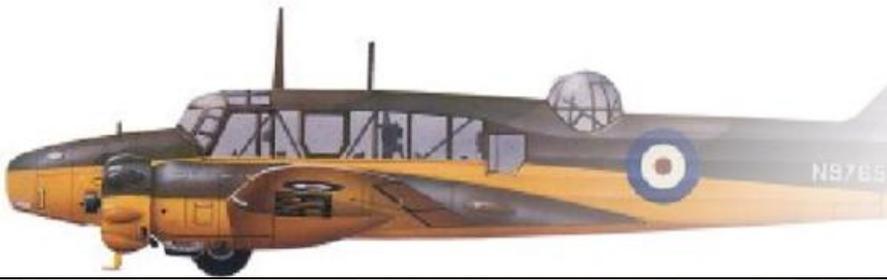
The Avro Anson was flying from West Australia to Camden (N.S.W.), and had landed at Pt. Cook to refuel. It left again at 11.45 p.m. with two other machines. Bad weather conditions forced the flight to break formation, and the missing bomber was last seen by the accompanying machines near Yea.

At dawn today 12 R.A.A.F. aircraft from Pt. Cook began a search over a wide area, but returned after two hours of flying because of bad weather and poor visibility. At 1 p.m. the search was resumed, but visibility again was poor, and late tonight there had been no sign of the missing fliers. The search will be continued tomorrow.

The Hobart Mercury

Saturday 18th May 1940

Courtesy National Library Australia



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## NEWSPAPERS

### Missing Bomber Found.

Messrs. Stan. Sawers and J. Fry discovered the wreckage of an Army bomber, together with four bodies, near the top of Mount Torbreck on Wednesday evening. It is thought to be the 'plane that was reported missing in May last.

At daylight this morning a party will endeavor to bring the bodies to Alexandra. Torbreck is 5,001 feet above sea level.

Alexandra & Yea Standard

Friday 24th January 1941

Courtesy National Library Australia

### WRECKED PLANE INSPECTED

#### Arduous Journey

After a difficult climb through thick bush country up the side of Mt. Torbreck, in the Alexandra district, a salvage party yesterday reached the wreckage of the R.A.A.F. Avro Anson bomber which disappeared in May last year.

The bodies of the four members of the crew, which lay alongside the plane, were brought to Melbourne last night.

The 15 members of the party which made the hazardous trip left Alexandra about 4 a.m. They travelled 21 miles by car to the base of the mountain, where they were joined by Messrs. S. Sawyer and J. Fry, the two men who found the wreckage on Wednesday evening.

With the two men acting as guides, they forced their way about three miles through the bush by car. Logs and trees had to be moved and chopped down to enable the car to progress.

About seven miles from where the plane lay they were forced to leave the cars. As soon as they began their long climb on foot heavy rain drenched them. Clouds descended over the slopes of the mountain and it became bitterly cold.

The men had to light fires to warm themselves. In the slippery ground they were continually falling over, and axes had to be brought into use many times to clear a path for the pack horse which they took.

The bush was so dense that the guides had difficulty in again locating the plane. The party found the wreckage spread out over 100 yards. The plane had cut the top off several trees as it had crashed into the mountain, apparently flying south.

Air Force men salvaged log books and a few minor parts of the plane. Salvage of the engine will be almost impossible because of the nature of the country.

Crew of the plane comprised Flying-Officer A. A. Daniel, Corporal I. L. Stowder, Corporal E. E. Hyland, and Corporal H. F. Sass.

The Argus

Saturday 25 January 1941

Courtesy National Library Australia



## NEWSPAPERS

# BROTHER CAMPED 200 YDS. FROM DEAD FLIER

**MELBOURNE, Thursday.**—While looking for the bomber which disappeared on May 17, the brother of one of the crew camped with six other men during the Christmas holidays 200 yards from where the plane was found late yesterday.

**MEDICAL** and salvage parties left the R.A.A.F. station, Point Cook, early today by car to inspect the wreckage of the large aircraft which, with four bodies reported to be in air force flying kit, was found in rough country on Mount Torbreck, near Eildon Weir.

Because of the almost impassable nature of the area, the last stage of the journey will be made by packhorses, and it is considered unlikely the parties will reach the wreckage before tomorrow.

The Department of Air said today that, while no positive proof had yet been received, it was presumed the aircraft was the Avro Anson bomber which disappeared during a formation flight from Point Cook on May 17.

With two other machines, the bomber took off in formation from Point Cook on the final stage of a trans-continental flight from Western Australia to Cootamundra in clear weather, but a violent storm over Yea forced the machines to break formation.

## FLEW BLIND FOR HOURS

One returned to Point Cook, the other continued to Cootamundra, but the third became lost while flying blind. Messages were received from the plane for several hours before it became silent.

The occupants were:—Flying-Officer A. A. Daniel, pilot; Cpl. I. L. Stowder, wireless operator; Cols. E. E. Hyland and F. H. Sax, fitters.

During the Christmas holidays Flight-Sgt. C. R. Hyland, a brother of Cpl. Hyland, with six other friends, was camped not 200 yards from the spot on Mount Torbreck, where the plane was found.

Flight-Sgt. Hyland spent the holidays searching for the missing plane and crew.

Ever since it was reported missing, Flight-Lieut. C. W. Hyland, the father, and Flight-Sgt. Hyland have been searching for the plane. They have followed up hundreds of reports at great expense.

"We are all very glad that the boy has been found, because we have suffered immeasurably with the feeling that the poor chap might have been alive and lost in the bush," said Flight-Lieut. Hyland today.

Adelaide News

Thursday 23 January 1941

Courtesy National Library Australia



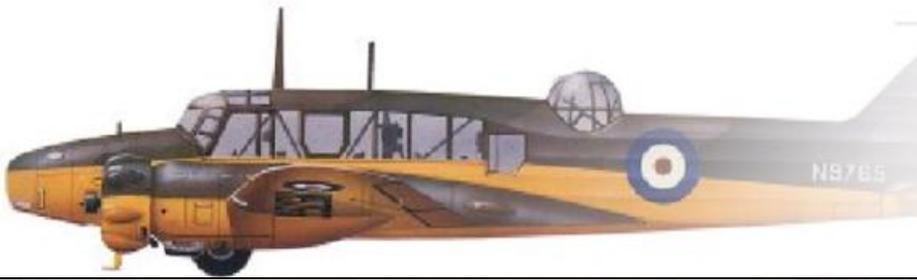
# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## NEWSPAPERS



**Site of the Avro Anson crash being pointed out.**

*Adelaide Chronicle, Thursday 6 February 1941. Courtesy National Library Australia.*



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

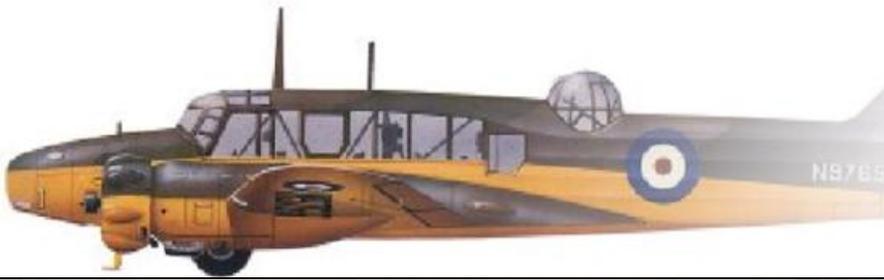
## NEWSPAPERS



### **Bringing back the Bodies.**

**A packhorse party traversing the scrub to bring the bodies of the victims of the Mt. Torbreck crash back to civilisation. One of the victims, Corporal I/L/ Stowder was a South Australian.**

*Adelaide Chronicle  
Thursday 6 February 1941.  
Courtesy National Library Australia..*



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## NEWSPAPERS

### Bodies Recovered.

Before daylight on Friday last a salvage party left Alexandra to recover the bodies of four members of the Air Force who were killed last May when an Avro Anson bomber crashed into the big trees near the top of Mount Torbreck.

The weather was cold and a certain amount of rain fell. The party got within about six miles of the scene of the scene of the accident before they had to leave the cars. The remaining portion of the journey was covered on foot. Messrs. Stan Sawers and J. Fry, who found the wreckage on the previous Wednesday, acting as guides. The ground was particularly rough and slippery.

The bodies of the men were found in the immediate vicinity of the wrecked plane. They had not been disturbed in any way since the accident.

Air Force men salvaged log books and certain parts of the plane. The plane itself was a complete wreck.

The bodies of the victims of the accident were taken on to Melbourne on Friday evening. The crew of the plane comprised Flying-Officer A. A. Daniel, Corporal I. L. Stowder, Corporal E. E. Hyland, and Corporal H. F. Sass.

Squadron-Leader Knight was in charge of the Air Force members of the party. He was accompanied by Flight-Lt. Sanson, together with two medical orderlies and four aircraftsmen. The Air Accident Investigation Committee was represented by Flight-Lt. Kearney. The police in attendance were Senior constable Field (Alexandra), Mounted constable Owens (Yea), and a police photographer and driver from Melbourne.

Messrs. Stan Sawers, J. Fry, V. Sawers, V. Newman, and Sawers jun. were the local members of the party.

Constable Owens accompanied the bodies to Melbourne.

The party, which left Alexandra at 3.15 a.m., returned at 4 p.m. On the journey to the mount, they got about four miles past the old Sawers' homestead, and had to walk the remaining 5½ miles. Heavy rain on the way up drenched them, and fires had to be made to thaw out.

Alexandra & Yea Standard  
Friday 31st January 1941  
Courtesy National Library Australia

### ENTRIES IN LOG SCRIBBLED

### Air Crash Inquest

Entries on the last page of his log that were "more of a scribble and quite unlike the methodical entries on previous pages," suggested that the wireless operator of an R.A.A.F. Anson bomber, which crashed at Mt. Torbreck last May, was in difficulty, a witness said yesterday at the inquest.

He was Flight-Lieutenant Stanley Francis Kearney, officer commanding the aircraft servicing squadron at Point Cook, who was in charge of the party that left Point Cook on January 23 last to inspect the wreckage of the Anson.

Flight-Lieutenant Kearney told Mr. Tingate, coroner, that a formation of three Ansons took off from Point Cook about 11.45 a.m. on May 16 last year. According to arrangements, they broke formation when they encountered thick cloud at 12.45. At 1.15 p.m. Essendon air radio station picked up a message from a plane stating that it was returning to Point Cook and wanted a bearing.

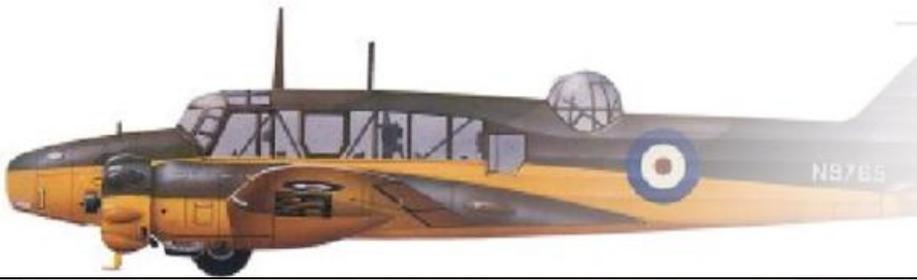
Before the bearing could be given there was interference from land wireless stations. At 1.19 p.m. Essendon was ready to give the bearing and asked the plane to send dashes, but there was further interference. At 1.20 Holbrook air radio heard the plane asking Essendon whether Essendon had a message. This was not heard by Essendon. The message at 1.20 was the last recognisable one from the plane heard by any station.

The Anson, said Flight-Lieutenant Kearney, carried a supply of petrol which normally would have allowed the aircraft to remain in flight until between 5 and 6 p.m. The last entry on the wireless operator's log bearing a time was 1.10 p.m.

Mr. Tingate found that the crew of four died when the plane was accidentally flown into the mountain. He was satisfied that the crash had been the subject of an exhaustive expert inquiry with the object of lessening the possibility of a similar occurrence. The matter of giving prompt bearings, he added, should be given every consideration, if that had not already been done.

The crew comprised:—Flying-Officer Anthony Ashley Daniel, 23, pilot; Corporal Ivan Lapen Stowder, 26, wireless operator; Corporal Herman Fredrick Sass, 24, fitter; and Corporal Francis Etienne Hyland, 27, fitter.

The Argus  
Friday 21 March 1941  
Courtesy National Library Australia



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## NEWSPAPERS



THIS memorial to four airmen who crashed at this spot on Mt. Torbreck 26 years ago has been restored by RAAF engineers.

# RAAF REMEMBERS

The RAAF has rebuilt a memorial high in the Southern Alps to four airmen who were killed in a crash there 26 years ago.



AVRO ANSON in flight — aircrew called them "Aggies".

13-4-66

The airmen, Pilot Officer A. Daniels and Corporals F. Hyland, F. Sass and I. Stowder died when their Anson trainer crashed 200ft. below the summit of 5000ft. Mt. Torbreck.

Their plane was one of three Ansons which left Point Cook for Cootamundra on a training flight on May 16, 1940.

The three planes became separated as bad weather and fog closed in. One returned to Point Cook, one went on to Cootamundra and Pilot Officer Daniels' was posted missing. Their bodies were not found until 12 months later, when a bushwalker stumbled over the Anson's wreckage.

### MEMORIAL

Cpl. Hyland's father paid for the building of a memorial at the crash site. Metal salvaged from the Anson was used to make an inscribed plaque.

But two years ago, a dead tree crashed on to the memorial and wrecked it.

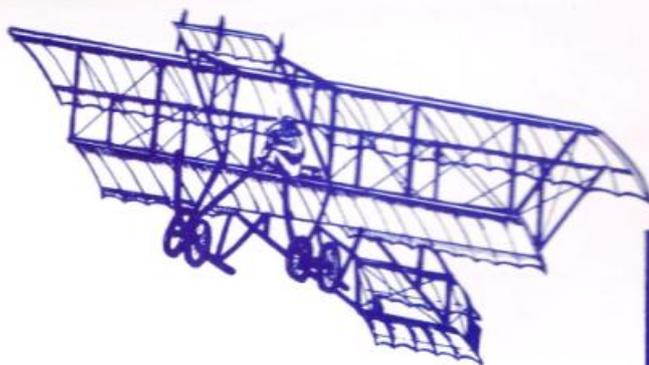
A Forests Commission officer, Mr Don Fry, recovered the damaged plaque, which was sent back to the RAAF.

The No. 1 Aircraft Depot at Laverton restored it and three men were sent to Mt. Torbreck for a week to rebuild the memorial and reset the plaque.

Melbourne Herald  
Wednesday 13 April 1966  
Courtesy National Library Australia

# RAAF Museum

RAAF BASE, POINT COOK. VIC. 3029



May 1985

BS 9/1/8/Air(113)

Mr D. McMillan  
73 High Street  
LANCEFIELD VIC 3435

Dear Mr McMillan,

Thank you for your letter dated 18 March 1985. Enclosed is a copy of the story on the aircraft which crashed. It is believed that the parents of Corporal Hyland erected the memorial that you discovered. Museum staff will inspect the memorial in the near future perhaps with intentions of making the memorial known to the public.

Thank you for your interest in the RAAF Museum.

Yours faithfully,

I.J. McGARRY  
Warrant Officer  
for Officer Commanding

*Courtesy RAAF Museum  
Point Cook  
and David McMillan*



**OFFICER IN CHARGE**

**TELEPHONE ..368-1373.....**

**CURATOR**

**TELEPHONE ..368-1443.....**

## MINUTE PAPER.

(This side only to be written on.)

RAAF HISTORICAL SECTION  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE  
AIR FORCE OFFICE  
A-LG-02  
RUSSELL OFFICES  
CANBERRA A.C.T. 2600

C.11814/39.

SUBJECT: MISSING ANSON A4/4.

April 1985.

Assistant Secretary.  
DEPARTMENT OF AIR.

Courtesy RAAF Museum  
Point Cook  
and David McMillan

1. I have ascertained the following facts from the Airadio Station, ESSENDON:-

- 1145 3 Ansons left POINT COOK, apparently in formation. Call signs were 8 BNE, 8 BNF and 8 BNA.
- 1223 Ansons parted company.
- 1241 8 BNE gave its position as MERTON. 8 BNF signalled that it was returning to POINT COOK.
- 1315 8 BNA signalled that it was returning to POINT COOK and requested a D/F bearing. This bearing could not be given as the signals from 8 BNA were jammed by the other Ansons which were on the same wave length.
- 1317 8 BNA was called by Airadio, ESSENDON, but nothing further was heard.

2. It is presumed that the Anson with Call Sign 8 BNE was the one which eventually reached COOTAMUNDRA, and that the Anson with the Call Sign 8 BNF was the one which returned safely to POINT COOK, and that the Anson with Call Sign 8 BNA was A4/4 which is now missing.

3. The Anson which gave its position as MERTON at 1241 shows that its ground speed from departure at POINT COOK was approximately 85 m.p.h. Assuming that the ground speed of A4/4 (Call Sign 8 BNA) was also 85 m.p.h and that its course was unchanged until 1315 when it signalled it was returning to POINT COOK, and that its crash or forced landing occurred very shortly after 1315, its position would be on a line through WINTON (just beyond BENALLA) Mt. BUFFALO.

4. The crew of the missing aircraft is as follows:-

Pilot:	Flying Officer A.A. DANIEL.		
Crew:	2474 Cpl. STOWDOR, I.L.	W/T Elec. Mec. No. 14SQDN.	
	3515 Cpl. HYLAND, F.E.	Fitter 11.E.	No. 14 SQDN.
	2560 Cpl. SASS, H.F.	Fitter 11.E.	No. 14 SQDN.

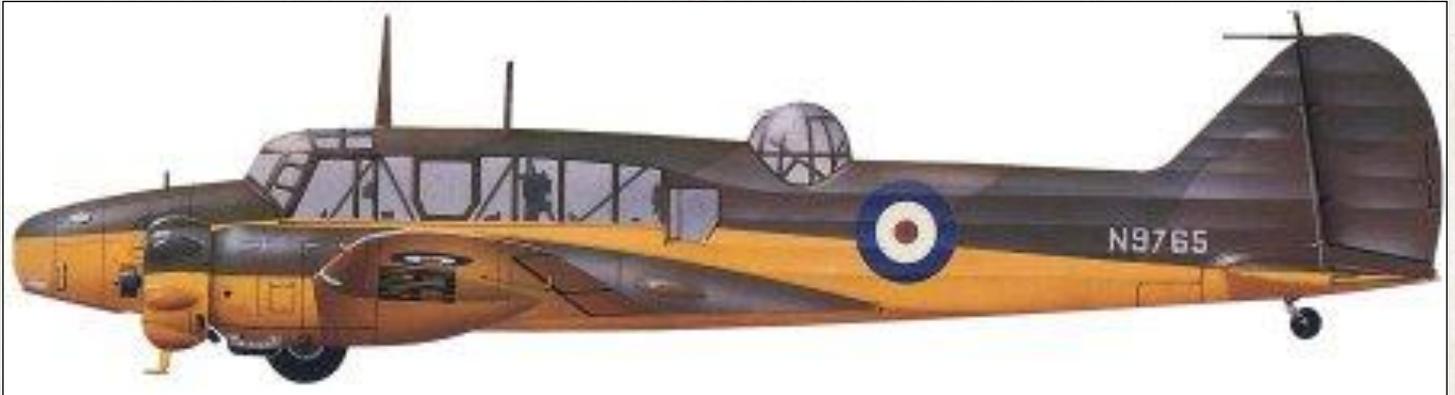
5. The authority for the flight was signal No. A. 75 from Southern Area Headquarters to No. 1 S.F.T.S. which reads as follows:-

" Consequent on transfer of C.F.S. to CAMDEN, N.S.W. Anson aircraft in transit from PEARCE Station are to be delivered to C.F.S., CAMDEN and not POINT COOK. After delivery of aircraft at CAMDEN, personnel to proceed to A.D."



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## AVRO ANSON



The Avro Anson was built in 1935 and later that same year Australia purchased a number of the planes as part of their air combat modernisation program. The Avro pictured above is a military version of the Avro 652, which had a seating capacity of four. By World War II the Avro was considered obsolete, and was primarily used as a coastal reconnaissance aircraft, escort, light bomber and for pilot and crew training.

The Avro had a turret located amidship on the top of the fuselage, and could be fitted further with Vickers guns that fired sideways from the extensive "Greenhouse". It was the first Australian owned bomber with a retractable undercarriage and enclosed gun turret. The Avro Anson was used by around 20 Air Forces world wide, including Australia, Ireland and Greece.

### AVRO ANSON SPECIFICATIONS:

<b>Entered Service:</b>	1936
<b>CREW:</b>	Maximum of 4 men
<b>WINGSPAN:</b>	56 Feet 6 Inches
<b>LENGTH:</b>	12.88 m (42 ft, 3 in)
<b>HEIGHT:</b>	3.99 m (13 ft, 1 in)
<b>CEILING:</b>	19,500 feet
<b>RANGE:</b>	787 Miles
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	<b>Empty</b> - 2,438 kg (5,361 lbs) <b>Maximum Takeoff</b> 3,629 kg (7,984 lbs)
<b>ENGINES:</b>	Two Armstrong Siddeley Cheetah IX 350 h.p. engines
<b>MAXIMUM SPEED:</b>	303 kmh (188 MPH) AT 7,000 feet
<b>BOMB CAPACITY:</b>	163 kg (360 lbs)





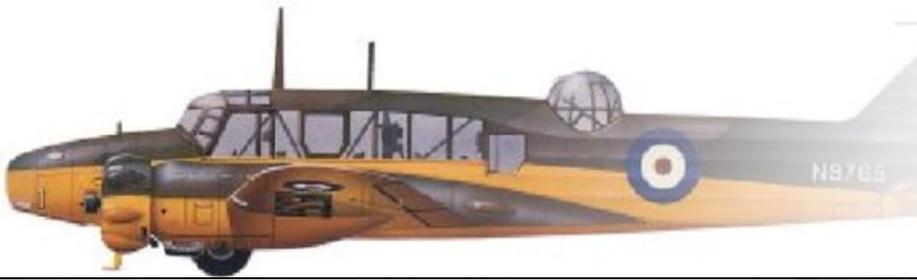
# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## AVRO ANSON PLANE CRASH



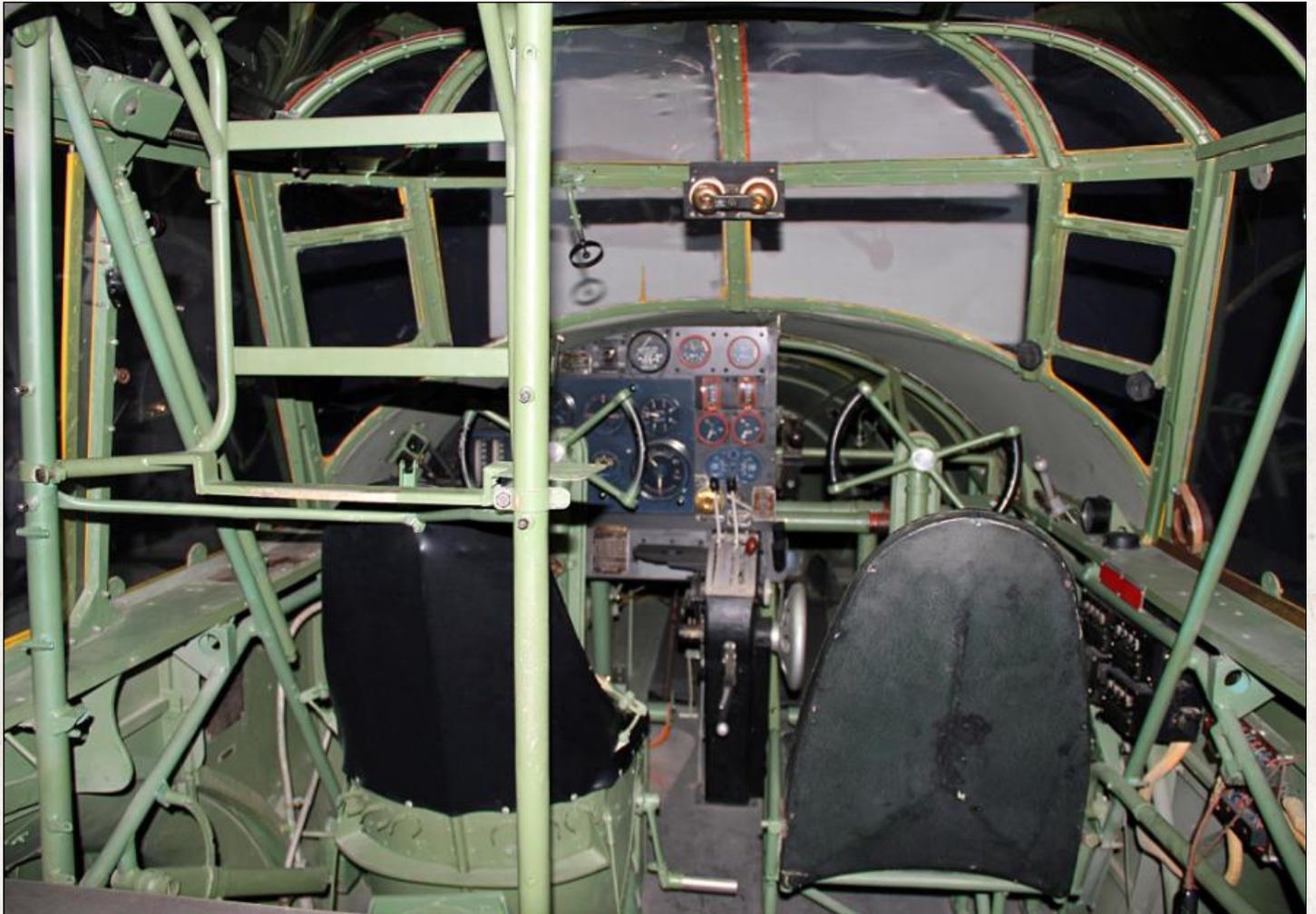
**Avro Anson cockpit set up at the Canberra War Memorial February 2014.**

*Photograph © Anthony Dykes 2014.*



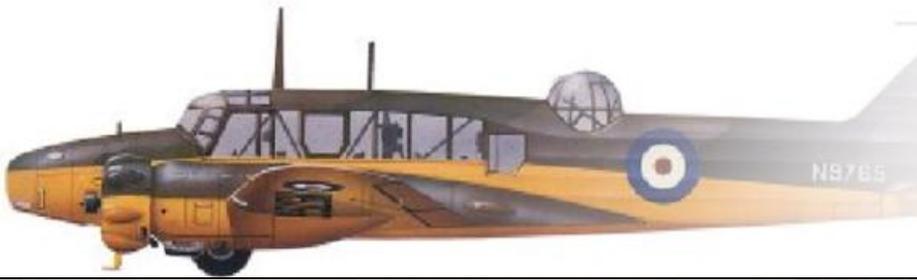
# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## AVRO ANSON PLANE CRASH



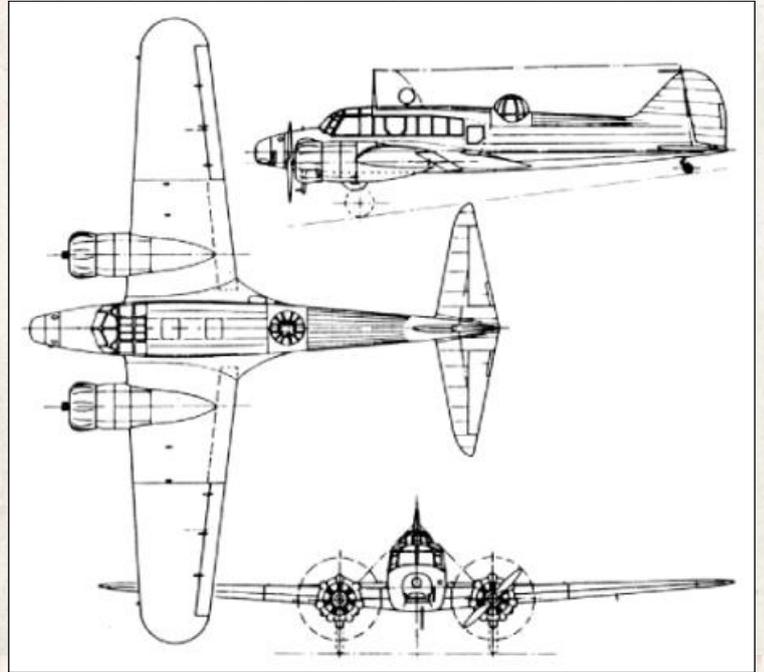
**Avro Anson cockpit set up at the Canberra War Memorial February 2014**

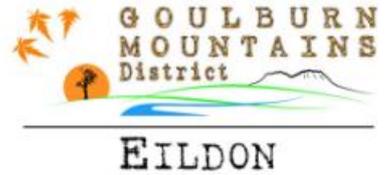
*Photograph © Anthony Dykes 2014.*



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## AVRO ANSON PLANE CRASH





On 16 May 1940, a military Avro Anson aircraft with the call sign BNA, crashed into the north east face of Mount Torbreck, just 200 m below the summit. Mount Torbreck is located in central Victoria, not far from the townships of Eildon and Snobs Creek. All four men on board were killed.

The aircraft was one of three Avro Anson training aircraft that had flown from Pierce Air Force Base in Western Australia, and were on route to the Central Flying School at Camden in NSW. They had all successfully refuelled at Point Cook in Victoria, and had then taken back to the skies at 11.45 am.

Poor weather conditions caused their plans to be altered. After flying over Yea and making a transmission, two of the planes decided to return to Point Cook in Victoria, with the third successfully plotting a path to Cootamundra in NSW. One of the planes bound for Point Cook disappeared!



On 23 January 1941, eight months after the aircraft disappeared, two local men (Messrs Stan Sawers and J. Fry) discovered the lost military plane approximately 200 m below the summit of Mount Torbreck on the north east face. At 3.15 am the next day (Friday 24 January) a recovery party left for the crash site in order to bring the bodies of the four men back to Alexandra.

**CASUALTIES**

**Anthony Ashby Daniel** (Age 22)  
Pilot

**Ivan Lapen Stowdor** (Age 25)  
Corporal Wireless operator

**Corporal Francis Ettiene Hyland** (Age 27)

**Corporal Herman Fred Sass** (Age 23)

*The trip to the memorial is very hard and dangerous as a result of the steep terrain and loose rocks. Dead trees burnt during the 2005 bushfires are also prone to falling. Be aware of snakes, and ensure you have correct footwear, clothing and safety equipment. Conditions on the mountain can change quickly. Always let someone know of your travel plans. There is Telstra mobile phone service on most of this side of the mountain, so carrying a phone with a charged battery is recommended.*

**GOULBURN MOUNTAINS DISTRICT TOURISM**

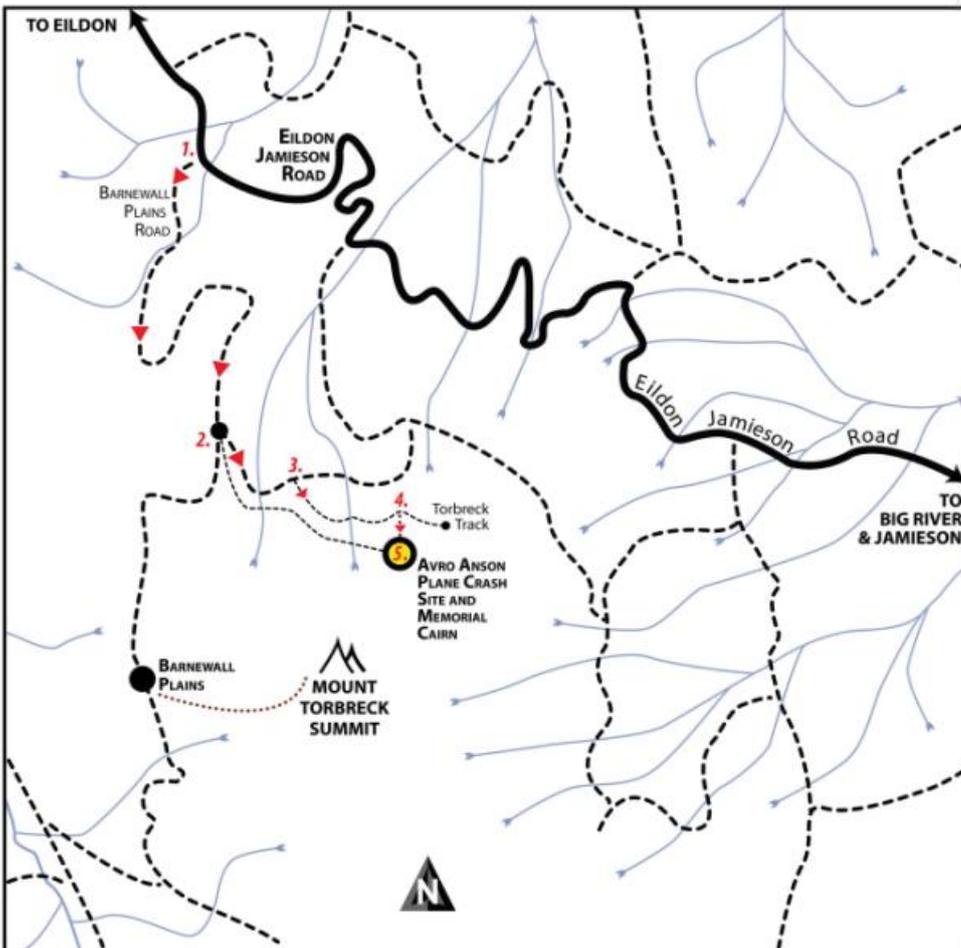
More information available at the  
**Eildon Information Centre**  
 Main Street, Eildon, VIC, 3713  
 5774 2909  
 eildoninfo@virtual.net.au

Disclaimer: The author has taken care to ensure this publication is correct, though please be aware that errors & omissions can occur.  
 Publication, Images, Map & Logos © Copyright 2009 David Hibbert  
 Last Updated: 6 April 2014 Brochure 159

**AVRO ANSON  
CRASH SITE  
MEMORIAL**



*Shadowed by over 30 mountains,  
and near Lake Eildon and the Goulburn River,  
why not come and visit our playground?*



**MOUNT TORBRECK  
AVRO ANSON PLANE CRASH SITE MAP**

MAP © COPYRIGHT 2010 DAVID HIBBERT  
MAP NOT TO SCALE  
EILDON VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE 5774 2909

**FROM EILDON**

1. Travel 2.9 km from Eildon to the intersection of Eildon Jamieson Rd & Goulburn Valley Rd.
2. Travel 10.7 km to the intersection to Eildon Jamieson Rd and Barnewall Plains Road.
3. Travel 4km to the intersection of Barnewall Plains Rd and Torbreck Track. Park your vehicle here.
4. Walk along Torbreck Track 500 m to the small track leading off to the right.
5. Walk along the smaller track to the right for 500 m. (This is below the area where the crash happened. You may see an engine in a gully to the right here).
6. Walk up the ridge for 300 m to the cairn.

*The map is not to scale, and is only meant for basic guidance. The directions and GPS coordinates are correct to the best of our knowledge, though are not meant to be precise indicators and should not be solely relied upon. Always carry professional detailed maps when walking in this area. It is recommended that you take someone who knows the area with you*

- |    |                             |
|----|-----------------------------|
| 1. | GPS: S37.344266 E145.931386 |
| 2. | GPS: S37.351379 E145.939572 |
| 3. | GPS: S37.347603 E145.938094 |
| 4. | GPS: S37.348861 E145.939754 |
| 5. | GPS: S37.351379 E145.939572 |



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## THE SUMMIT ROCK CAIRN 2010



**These rocks were erected at the summit of Mount Torbreck as a part of the Geodetic Survey conducted 1858 - 1872 (Trig Survey: 126) and is listed in the Register of the National Estate. It is a drystone conical shape cairn erected 1866-67 and measured 3.2 metres. Today the top quarter has been removed.**

# OUR HIDDEN MEMORIALS



## THE 1940 AVRO ANSON CRASH SITE

Located 200 m from the Summit of Mount Torbreck, on the north east face, is a cairn memorialising the death of four military officers, who died when their plane crashed in bad weather 16 May 1940. The crash site was not located until 23 January 1941. In 1966, at the instigation of Flight-Lieutenant Hyland, the father of one of the crew, a memorial was re-erected at a more accessible location after the initial memorial was damaged by a falling tree.



***“IN MEMORY OF  
Pilot Officer A. Daniels  
Corporals F.E. Hyland  
F. Sass, I. Stowder  
Royal Australian Air Force  
Who Died Here Doing Their Duty  
16 May 1940  
The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away.  
Blessed be the name of the Lord”***



GPS: S37.351379 E145.939572



**DEDICATED TO THE MEN WHO LOST THEIR LIVES SERVING OUR GREAT COUNTRY.**

*Thanks to all involved for helping compile this free community factsheet.*



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

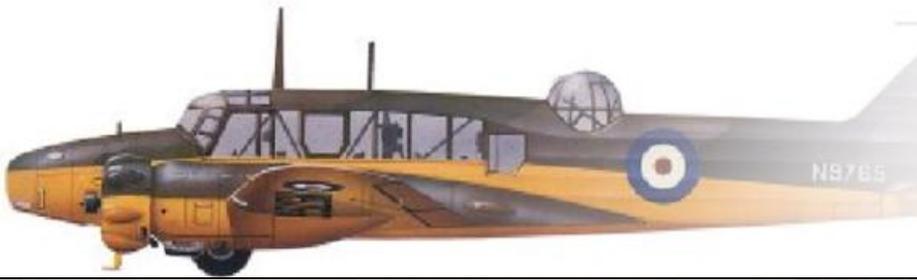
**PROMOTIONAL STICKERS 2013**

**Avro Anson  
RAAF 14 Squadron 8BNA**



**Monument Track Restoration  
Mount Torbreck  
Rubicon, Victoria**

**Stickers designed and published by Anthony Dykes and Pat Mills in October 2013  
to promote the Monument Track Restoration on Mount Torbreck.**



# HERITAGE FACTSHEET

## NOISE

*"I well remember the Avro Anson flying down to the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation from the direction of St Kilda. I can see it now in my memory.*

*Two planes we always new were coming by their engine noise... the Mustang and the Avro Anson. Special noise from each."*

*Trevor Hibbert 2014*