

**Where and When 35 Squadron was Formed
As I Remember
By
Alfred Boyd N° 45542, RAAF, 1941 to 1948.**

Early Days of 35 Squadron

35 Squadron was formed at Pearce RAAF Station on the 27th February 1942. Pearce is approximately 36 kilometres north east of Perth and still an RAAF base today and home for 77 and 79 Squadrons.

On the 6th April 1942 35 Squadron moved to Maylands Aerodrome. The reason for the shift to Maylands was, I believe, because there was not being enough room for the Squadron at Pearce. Maylands Aerodrome was located on the Swan River about 7 kilometers from the city of Perth. It was Perth's main civilian aerodrome until the development of Perth Airport at Guildford in the early post war years.

Facilities for the Squadron at Maylands were fairly limited. The house pictured here was used for staff quarters – officer and enlisted men. The front room was the office.



**Maylands, 1942
(Photographer unknown)**

I also recall that we took over the Aero Club facilities at Maylands.

Naturally the Squadron soon out grew the house in terms of the need for staff quarters. This was rectified by the construction of a number of prefabricated buildings.

The foundation members of 35 Squadron were; Pilot Officer Robert Giles, Commanding Officer, Leading Aircraftman Alfred Boyd (later Corporal) and Leading Aircraftman Eric Brennan.

I recall one day Eric Brennan and I were told to report to Bob Giles. We located him in one of the hangers at Pearce and he told us that we three were now 35 Squadron.

Bob Giles was a good leader because he always had time for all ranks. He also had a good sense of humour.

The Squadron grew in number, however, I do not remember the total number of personnel involved in those early years in Perth. The photograph below gives an idea of the people involved. The photograph was taken in July 1942, by which time Squadron Leader Burdue was in charge of 35 Squadron.



35 Squadron, Maylands, July 1942 (Photographer unknown)

The names of the personnel I recall in the back row from left to right are: Muncher Milton, (not known), John Vick, Ron Rennich, Alf Faulds, Reg Pass, (not known), Eric Brennan, Alf Sturt, Alf Boyd.

In the front row from left to right is: Cobber (Frank?) Cain, (first name?) Smith, Pilot Officer Bob Giles, Squadron Leader Burdue, R. West and Ron Bassett.

Over time I have forgotten some names. In some instances I don't think I knew first names as we tended to use nick names or just surnames.

At the time of the Squadron's foundation the only aircraft we had had was a *Fox Moth* which was an ex Flying Doctor Ambulance aeroplane.

Later the Squadron was allocated an assortment of aircraft including a *Fairy Battle*, a *DH 84 (Dragon)*, and a *Tiger Moth*. These are the aircraft I remember but there were others.

The photograph below is of our *Dragon* at Albany where the Squadron was supporting work associated with calibrating radio equipment.



Albany, 1942 (Photographer unknown)

From memory only four people in the photograph were in 35 Squadron and the rest were from other units and groups based at Albany. The 35 Squadron members in the photograph are: Flight Sergeant Fred (Freed) Dyke (back row first from right with officers cap, Cobber Cain (I am not sure where he is in the photograph) and Alf Boyd. I am in the front row first from the right. The fourth person's name I cannot recall but he was in charge of the technical work associated with the radio calibration.

In August 1943 after sixteen months at Maylands, involved in a range of general activities, 35 Squadron was shifted back to Pearce.

On August 6th 1943 I was posted back to Pearce with the 35 Squadron and stayed with them until early the following year.

Alf Boyd – 1944 to 1948

On the 22nd February 1944, I was posted to Adelaide on route to Darwin and 457 Squadron. On the 1st February 1945 and following the defence of Darwin, I was posted to Morotai with 457 Squadron. In April 1945 I was posted to 10 Replenishing. While with 10 Replenishing I was part of an advanced party on involved in the landing of and battle for Labuan.

This was a combined operation of Australian forces and one of the last battles in which Australians fought in World War 2. I came ashore at Labuan on 12 June 1945.

While were not supposed to keep diaries, I did for some parts of my war time experience. Attached for your interest is a transcript of my diary entries at Labuan. My diary covers some of 1944 and 1945 and, therefore, my time at Morotia.

For most of my time with the RAAF I worked in supplies.

I returned home from overseas on the 10th October 1945. Two weeks later, on the 24th October I married Beryl Hutchings, who I had first met some years before the outbreak of the war. This year, 2007, we celebrated our 62nd wedding anniversary. *2008 WE WILL CELEBRATE OUR 63rd.*

Beryl also worked at Maylands Aerodrome, for Mac Robertson Miller Airlines (MMA), from 1942 to 1946. MMA did a lot of contract work for the Department of Aircraft Production (DAP)... Much of Beryl's work was in stores and sometimes in the "dope shop" where fabric was fitted to airframes. The dope being the very strong smelling agent applied to the fabric to stretch and strengthen it over the airframe.

I remained in the RAAF after the war serving in New Guinea from 1946 to 1947. My work in New Guinea was with the disposal of equipment associated with the war effort. On returning from New Guinea I took leave and was discharged on 14th January 1948.

Alf Boyd – before the War

I was born in Kalgoorlie, WA on 15 April, 1917. The family left Kalgoorlie and move to Cowaramup in the south west of the state when I was in my early years at primary school. Mum and Dad took up a "group settlement" block at Cowaramup. I finished my education at Cowaramup State School and worked on the farm after leaving school. Like many dairy farmers in the south west, we struggled during the depression years and eventually gave up the farm....

After leaving the farm my parents brought a block of land in White Gum Valley, a suburb of Fremantle, on which they built a house. Mum stayed in White Gum Valley while Dad, my brother Steve and I returned to the Goldfields as prospectors. When the war broke out I was working as a miner on the (name of mine). → *NEW MARGALONG*.

I completed the three months training with the Militia, 44th Battalion, at number three camp Melville, WA. I volunteered early to avoid being manpowered as a miner.

I enlisted in the RAAF as a 24 year old, at Beaconsfield, WA on 11 August 1941. I completed my training at RAAF Base Pearce, Western Australia. After 4 weeks "on the square" I was to have various postings, including Pearce and Maylands before I was posted to 457 Squadron, Darwin on 3 April, 1944 as an Equipment Assistant.

A transcript of Alf Boyd's diary entries at Labuan, June 10 to July 7 1945

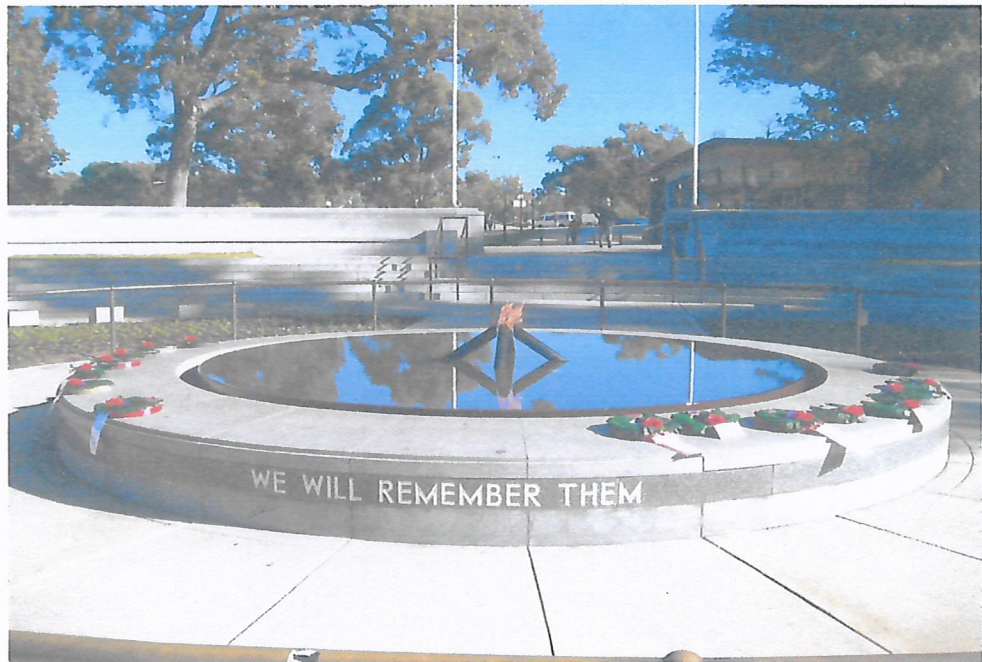
YEAR 1945 RECORDED MEMORIES			
JUNE 10 Sunday	L.S.T. (Landing Ship Tank) 1035 <i>At sea, A quiet day at Sea rolling a little.</i>	11 Monday	L.S.T. 1035 <i>At sea. Going by small Islands during the day. Arrived at Bruini Bay. Approx 1200 hrs, navy still firing onto the Island</i>
12 Tuesday	LABUAN <i>Unloaded L.S.T. (Landing Ship Tank 1035), worked from 0800hrs until 1200hrs. Went for a swim, late afternoon. Army still fighting on the Island. Heavy guns firing day and night. Air raid alert, 2130. All clear 2200hrs.</i>	13 Wednesday	LABUAN <i>Unpacking for most of the day. Air raid at approx. 2000 hrs one plane flew over, dropped two bombs ack ack kept silent. Another enemy plane over at 2245 hrs dropping live bombs it was shot down by ack ack</i>
14 Thursday	LABUAN <i>Unpacking for most of the day. Air raid at approx. 2000 hrs one plane flew over, dropped two bombs ack ack kept silent. Another enemy plane over at 2245 hrs dropping live bombs it was shot down by ack ack</i>	15 Friday	LABUAN <i>Weather very hot. A quiet day. Japs all driven into one pocket. Guns firing all night.</i>
16 Saturday	LABUAN <i>On guard from 0200 hrs until 0600 hrs. Went to work at 1030 hrs off duty 1700 hrs. On guard from 2200 hrs.</i>	17 Sunday	LABUAN <i>Off guard at 0200 hrs. Spent most of the day washing Japs bombed from their positions.</i>
18 Monday	LABUAN <i>On duty all day. 6 Mitchells over in the morning bombing the Nips out of their position, Heavy artillery firing at them all day. Weather very hot. 2200 hrs retiring</i>	19 Tuesday	LABUAN <i>A busy day. Heavy firing on Jap positions all day. Weather very hot.</i>
20 Wednesday	LABUAN <i>Air raid alert 0100 hrs. All clear 0120 hrs. Awakened at 0230 hrs by machine gun fire with [in] the camp area. Firing continued until 0800 hrs approx. Japs broken through lines. One Jap officer and a few men killed close to camp. Approx. 80 Japs killed within the area. We lost six men. AIF patrols out all day. Snipers reported to be close to camp. Went to bed at 2230 hrs. A busy night for guards.</i>	21 Thursday	LABUAN <i>Machine gun and rifle fire woke the camp in the early hours of the morning. Japs around the camp again. A few killed. Snipers active all day. Darkness found us again under fire. Japs make a desperate effort to reach camp. No sleep.</i>
22 Friday	LABUAN <i>Rain set in at about 0200 hrs. Rifle and machine gun during the early hours a few more Nips wiped out snipers still within range of the camp. Machine guns set up all around the camp. Guards has (sic) a busy night. Retired at 2230 hrs. Uneasy sleep.</i>	23 Saturday	LABUAN <i>More Japs reported to be within the area, snipers causing trouble a few wiped out, two of our men killed. Air raid alert at 1830 hrs. All clear 1950 hrs. Another night under fire.</i>
24 Sunday	LABUAN <i>Off duty, resting for most of the day. Guard duty from 1930 hrs.</i>	25 Monday	LABUAN <i>Off guard duty at 0700 hrs. Went to bed for a few hours sleep. Weather hot. 58 Nips wiped out, position improving. Guard duty 1930 hrs.</i>
26 Tuesday	LABUAN <i>Off guard at 0700 hrs. Went to bed until lunch time. A quiet afternoon. No mail.</i>	27 Wednesday	LABUAN <i>All day spent at the store. Weather hot during the morning. Rain late in the afternoon. 1 Jap killed within the camp area.</i>

YEAR 1945 ⁰ RECORDED MEMORIES			
28 Thursday	LABUAN 15 months of tropical service completed. The normal day at the store. Guard duty from 1930 hrs. A quiet night.	29 Friday	LABUAN <i>Off guard 0700 hrs. Slept most of the day. On guard from 19.30 hrs. A little activity during the night, nothing of importance, but kept on the alert.</i>
30 Saturday	LABUAN <i>Off guard 0700 hrs. Wrote to Beryl.</i>	JULY 1 Sunday	LABUAN <i>Day off, wrote home.</i>
2 Monday	LABUAN <i>A quiet day at the store. Weather, fine all day, rain late in the evening. No mail.</i>	3 Tuesday	LABUAN <i>Just another day in the tropics. Japs almost wiped out.</i>
4 Wednesday	LABUAN <i>No mail. Weather hot. The usual work all day. Wrote to Beryl after tea.</i>	5 Thursday	LABUAN <i>First ?NF orders: full Anti-Malarial dress to be worn at all times; Weather very hot.</i>
6 Friday	LABUAN <i>The usual day.</i>	7 Saturday	LABUAN <i>A new camp site being prepared.</i>



Photograph of Alfred and Beryl Boyd.

**Remembrance service for the
Landing of Australian forces at Labuan, Borneo on 10 June, 1945.
Service held in King's Park, Western Australia, Sunday 11th June, 2006.**



Flame of Remembrance, King's Park, WA with wreathes from the service.

29-May 44
J. H. H.
11-6-08

Dear John, I am writing this note on
behalf of Alf. He hopes you will
get a little interest in the farming
of 35 sq. & his war time years.
Is a little of his early life & post war
years.

Alf has had his 91st birthday
in April but with son Don
& grandson Tristans help was able
to be in the Anzac day march
in Perth.

We now wish you & yours
RTFV-35 Sqn all the best.

Regards Alf.
& Beyl.