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Warrant Officer David Coles compiles a daily 2020 Diary item featuring ADF Aircraft. These entries will be included for the remainder of this year. Warrant Officer Coles is happy to take submissions at david.coles1@defence.gov.au

12 Mar 42 - First 460SQN raid over Germany



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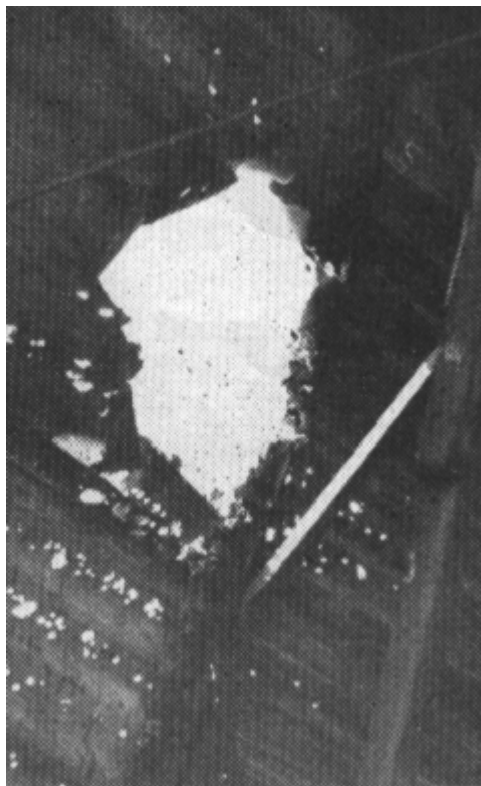
Undated photo of 460SQN

Wellington Mk IV

No 460 Squadron was formed from C Flight of No 458 Squadron at Molesworth in the United Kingdom on 15 November 1941. It was an "Article XV Squadron", formed in accordance with agreements that implemented the Empire Air Training Scheme. The squadron became part of the Royal Air Force's Bomber Command and joined the strategic bombing campaign against Germany. Equipped with Vickers Wellington bombers, it mounted its first raid -- against the German city of Emden -- on this day. Five crews participated in the attack, which was not particularly successful (RAF Bomber Command War diaries record that the aircraft missed the primary target by 5 miles) because of bad weather conditions, but all aircraft returned safely. This modest introduction to operations was followed by a series of attacks on U-boat installations along the French coast which were completed with one loss.

460SQN WW II history is here: <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/U59445>

12 Mar 66 - RAAF Caribou unit mortared at Vung Tau





RTFV hangar, Vung Tau, September 1964

Roof

damage

On the night of this day, about 60 mortar rounds were fired on the US airfield at Vung Tau, South Vietnam, from the direction of mud islands situated in the river estuary to the north-east. Two rounds impacted in the standing area used by the RAAF Transport Flight Vietnam (RTFV), while another two landed close by. The Flight's hangar had a hole torn in its roof from one explosion, and two of the unit's DHC-4 Caribou Mk 1 transports inside the building were peppered by shrapnel fragments — one being holed in 18 places, the other in three. Despite having a third of its aircraft temporarily out of commission, the Flight carried on with its operational schedule without disruption. After the airstrip and hangars were cleared of debris in the early hours following the attack, a RAAF Caribou took off at first light.

History of the RTFV, excerpted from WINGS Autumn 2012, is

here: <http://www.rtfv-35sqn.org/PDF%20Files/Caribou%20in%20Vietnam.pdf>

12 Mar 90 - Fatal crash spelt end of Nomad





On this day, an Australian-designed N24A Nomad utility transport aircraft (A18-401) on a training flight from the Aircraft Research and Development Unit (ARDU) at RAAF Base Edinburgh, South Australia, crashed at Mallala with the death of its Air Force pilot. The cause of the accident was found to be cracking, which resulted in the tailplane structure falling off. After the production line at the Government Aircraft Factory closed in 1984, the RAAF had been given four Nomads for which commercial buyers could not find, while the Army received nine to add to the 12 it already operated. After the crash of A18-401, a second Nomad operated by ARDU was not flown again and was withdrawn from RAAF service in November 1991. Control problems caused the two N24As used by No 75 Squadron at Tindal, NT, to stop flying in September 1991. All ADF Nomads were permanently grounded in 1995.

More (sobering) background on the crash is

here: https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/publications/taledpapers/217/upload_pdf/HPP042016000335.pdf;fileType=application%2Fpdf#search=%22publicati ons/taledpapers/217%22

and

here: <https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id:%22c hamber/hansards/1996-05-06/0071%22>

12 Mar 12 - New passenger record set



A39-005, Perth

Airport, Mar 15

On this day, KC-30A A39-004 of No 33 Squadron took off from Canberra Airport with 220 passengers on board – a new record for the number of passengers carried on an Air Force aircraft. The passengers on the two-hour flight were officer cadets and midshipmen from

the Australian Defence Force Academy. The purpose of the flight was to give the 14 members of the squadron crew practice in handling the large numbers of passengers that will regularly be carried in the KC-30A on future exercises and deployments; the aircraft has capacity for up to 270 passengers. The flight was part of the work being done to achieve Initial Operating Capability of the KC-30A project later in the year. The previous record was held by a No 36 Squadron C-130A which in 1974 carried 179 passengers on a flight evacuating residents from Darwin following the devastation of Cyclone Tracy (see 28 December).

An Air Force News item (p2) is

here: <http://www.defence.gov.au/Publications/NewsPapers/Raaf/editions/5406/5406.pdf>

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