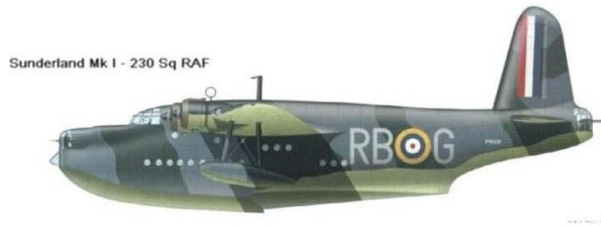


*R.A.A.F Association – Victorian Division*  
Sunderland Branch



**Sunderland P9602 RB-G 10 Squadron RAAF** A.C.N. 004250 248  
Incorporating 10 Squadron RAAF, the first RAAF Squadron in action in W.W.II;  
461 Squadron RAAF, The Anzac Squadron; and 13 RAF Squadrons

16 November 2025

## AUTUMN 2025

Sunderlanders and friends.

It has been some time since my last Newsletter and I apologise as I have been away.

I know that several of our Sunderland's fathers served with 40 Squadron RAAF towards the end of WWII so in this Newsletter I have provided an article about the squadron.

A family friend, now deceased served with 200 Flight RAAF during WWII. This was a Special Duties Unit which has a connection with Sunderlanders and 10 Squadron in particular. There is also some information about this unit below.

As we approach the festive season, I wish all Sunderlanders and their families Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year.



My next Newsletter is planned for February 2026.

### COMING EVENTS

The 2025 Dudley Marrows Memorial Trophy Dinner will be held on Thursday 27 November in the Air Force Room at the Navy, Military and Air Force Club, Hutt Street, Adelaide.

More details will be provided closer to the event. If you wish to attend or require any further information, contact Peter Dowling on 0418 281 775.

## 40 SQUADRON RAAF – (1944 – 1946)

40 Squadron was an RAAF Transport Squadron formed towards the end of WWII operating flying boats between Australia and New Guinea.



The Squadron was formed at Townsville, Queensland on 31 March 1944. It was initially equipped with six Short Sunderland flying boats which had been ferried from the United Kingdom to Australia between January and March of that year. These ferry flights were made by experienced crews drawn from the RAAF's two Sunderland squadrons in the United Kingdom, No. 10 and No. 461 Squadrons.

The Squadron's main role was to fly regular transport services between Australia and New Guinea. The Sunderlands were modified to operate as transport aircraft, and the first aircraft to be fully converted was delivered to No. 40 Squadron on 1 July. Most of the squadron's pilots were veterans of operations in the Battle of the Atlantic with 10 and 461 Squadrons. On 22 July the unit moved to Port Moresby in New Guinea, with detachments at Darwin and Townsville. 40 Squadron's main destinations were Cairns, Milne Bay, Madang and Townsville.<sup>1</sup>

A 40 Squadron Sunderland was involved in the first attempted hijacking of an RAAF aircraft on 14 September 1944. The aircraft had been tasked with flying prisoners, including US Military prisoners, from Cooktown to Port Moresby. One of the American prisoners being transported to the aircraft on board a launch seized a gun from one of his guards then disarmed the other guards. When the boat reached the Sunderland, he tried to persuade the prisoners embarked on the plane to assist him, but they were unwilling. The boat then proceeded to a jetty in Cooktown Harbour where the man was persuaded to surrender.

40 Squadron suffered its only loss on 28 November when a Sunderland struck a post and sank after landing at Townsville; there were no fatalities. I know that 418945 FLG OFF Ernie Harris, Pam Gobson's father was on that trip.

The squadron occasionally performed other tasks in addition to its regular transport flights. On 9 March 1945 one of its Sunderlands landed on a small lake in an isolated area of New Guinea to relieve an Army garrison force. No. 40 Squadron also undertook air sea rescue duties on several occasions. On 20 March 1945 a Sunderland located the survivors of a crashed C-47 and dropped them a dinghy. The Sunderland rediscovered the survivors the next day after contact was lost with them overnight, and maintained position over the dinghy until Allied naval vessels reached it.

The Squadron's regular routes were altered in 1945. The service from Townsville to Port Moresby ended on 17 February and a new service between Port Moresby, Darwin, Karumba and Cairns was established. A daily (except for Sunday) service from Port Moresby to Cairns began the next day and bi-weekly flights to the Treasury Islands commenced on 26 February.

In July the squadron was issued with four Martin Mariner flying boats which were based at Cairns and also operated in the transport role.



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Sunderland Mk I - 230 Sq RAF



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Martin Mariner Flying Boat

Following the Japanese surrender the squadron flew ex-prisoners of war and other soldiers back to Australia.<sup>[8]</sup> It was allocated Catalina aircraft in January 1946, but none were ever delivered. 40 Squadron moved to RAAF Base Rathmines on 6 March and was disbanded there on 19 June. By this time, it had flown 1782 sorties and carried 5,870,275 kilograms (12,941,741 lb) of cargo and 43,385 passengers.

To my knowledge FLTLT Dudley Marrows and WGCDR Vic Hodgkinson DFC and FLGOFF Ernie Harris served with 40 Squadron. Apologies to any descendants of a 40 Sqn member I have missed. I would be keen to identify other ex 10 and 461 Squadron members who served with 40 Sqn.

## 200 FLIGHT RAAF (1944 – 1945)

No. 200 Flight RAAF was a Special Duties flight formed in February 1944 to support Allied Intelligence Bureau (AIB) special operations over Borneo and the Netherlands East Indies in the South Pacific Area of Operations,

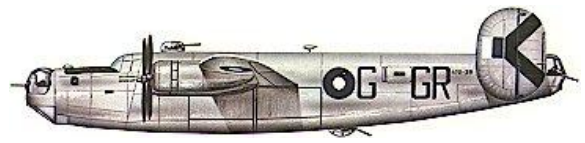


**Australia Commando Association  
Flt 200 Badge**

From late 1943 B-24 Liberators of the United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) 380th Bombardment Group were used on occasion to support Allied special operations units in the South West Pacific Area. In July two No. 24 Squadron RAAF B-24s were also modified to drop special operations personnel and conducted operations from Hollandia in this role during August.

In June 1944 it was proposed that a specialised RAAF unit be formed to provide air transport for the AIB's Z Special Unit. This proposal was supported, and No. 200 Flight was formed at Leyburn, Queensland on 20 February 1945. Many of the flight's air and ground crew were transferred to it from No. 99 Squadron. The flight was controlled by the AIB and was tasked with the insertion and supply of intelligence gathering parties behind Japanese lines. Due to the secrecy of these tasks personnel from the flight were forbidden to speak about their duties at any time.

No. 200 Flight's six B-24 Liberators had been modified for the unit's specialised role. The main changes were the removal of the mid-upper and ball turrets and all armour plate, the replacement of the normal radar with a Rebecca radio set and the installation of a slide at the rear of the aircraft to drop personnel and supplies.



B24 - Liberator

No. 200 Flight began training operations with Z Special Unit immediately upon formation. Despite the priority accorded to the unit, it experienced shortages of equipment and its accommodation and maintenance facilities at Leyburn were basic. By mid-March No. 200 Flight had a strength of nine eleven-man aircrews, 450 ground crew and six B-24s.

The flight began its first operations on 15 March 1945. On that day three B-24s (A72-191, A72-159 and A72-192) departed Leyburn for McGuire Field in Mindoro, where they arrived on 18 March, via Darwin and Morotai. After unsuccessful attempts on 21 and 22 March, two B-24s (A72-191 and A72-159) dropped a party of eight Z Special Unit personnel and equipment near Bario in Borneo on 25 March but the aircraft (A72-191) flown by No. 200 Flight's commanding officer, Squadron Leader Harold Graham Pockley, disappeared on its way back to base with the loss of the 11 man crew and a British SOE officer, Major Henry. E. Ellis, who was attached to Z Special Unit.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

SQN LDR Graham Pockley DFC

Sunderlanders will be aware that Squadron Leader Pockley DFC and Bar had previously served with 10 Squadron in the UK.

The two remaining Australian Liberators and United States Navy aircraft searched for this B-24 for two days, but did not locate its wreckage and returned to Leyburn on 30 March.<sup>[4]</sup> No. 200 Flight continued to support Z Special Unit's operations (designated 'Semut 1') around Bario for the next few months, and eventually flew in 30 of the 42 personnel involved. Wing Commander E. V. Read succeeded Pockley on 15 April.

No. 200 Flight continued supporting AIB operations until the end of the war. On the night of 15/16 April three of its aircraft dropped personnel assigned to the Semut 2 operation in Borneo. It subsequently flew over 30 operations to drop AIB personnel and supplies in Borneo, Ambon, Lombok, Sumatra and Timor. These operations were successful, though the flight was hampered by the difficulty of locating its drop zones and inadequate support from the Australian First Tactical Air Force at Morotai, its main forward operational base.<sup>[8]</sup> No. 200 Flight lost a further two B-24s in these operations; one was possibly shot down over Timor on 17 May and the other crashed either in or off the coast of north Borneo on or about 21 May. At least 46 men, including Z Special Unit operatives, were killed in the three aircraft which were lost, and this represented the highest loss rate of any of the RAAF's B-24 equipped units.<sup>[10]</sup>

No. 200 Flight continued flying after the end of the war on 15 August 1945. It continued dropping AIB operatives and supplies until mid-October whereupon it was used to fly AIB personnel from Bougainville Island and Finschafen in New Guinea to Australia as well as to conduct courier flights.<sup>[8]</sup> Mechanical problems were increasingly encountered in this period as a result of experienced personnel being discharged. No. 200 Flight's last sorties were made to drop leaflets and the unit was disbanded on 15 December 1945.

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**BOOKS**

**Call Sign N for Nuts**  
“Against Overwhelming Odds”

by George Edmunds

Read about how a lone Sunderland flying boat of EJ134, “N for Nuts” of 461 Squadron RAAF, of Coastal Command, on anti-submarine patrol over the Bay of Biscay in June 1943, survived an attack by eight fighter bombers of the Luftwaffe; incredibly, 5, maybe 6 of them, never made it home.

The full and complete story. A blow-by-blow account of the battle. See how they (just) made it home, ditching on a beach in Cornwall, with over 400 bullet and cannon holes, both pilots injured, one crew killed, one engine down, most of the crew suffered injuries.



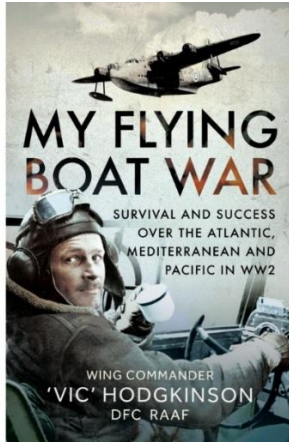
Available from the publishers; [Merlinuspublishers.co.uk](http://Merlinuspublishers.co.uk)

Or signed copies from the author: [george.edmunds01@gmail.com](mailto:george.edmunds01@gmail.com)

Cost per book; £22.99, P&P £4.60 UK only. (1<sup>st</sup> Class).

**Editor's Note –**

It is interesting to note that Sunderlanders, Peter Dowling's uncle, Wilbur (Bill) Dowling, Roger and Mick Amis' father Jim Amis and Rick Hattam's father Ricky Hattam all flew in Sunderland EJ134, N for Nuts.



## My Flying Boat War Survival and Success 10 Squadron RAAF

\$34.00

My Flying Boat War Survival and Success over the Atlantic, Mediterranean and Pacific in WW2 by Wing Commander Vic Hodgkinson DFC



<https://booksonwaraustralia.com>

Wing Commander Vic Hodgkinson DFC served as a pilot in the Royal Australian Air Force throughout WWII. Starting in 1939, he was a founding member of **10 Squadron RAAF**, operating Short Sunderland flying boats. Loaned to the RAF in early 1940, the squadron played a crucial role in the Battle of the Atlantic, conducting air-sea rescues and attacks on German submarines.

During this time, Vic participated in numerous air-sea rescues, including saving twenty-one survivors of a U-boat attack. He also conducted depth charge attacks on German submarines. Vic's resilience was tested when his Sunderland crashed into the Irish Sea near Bardsey Island in fog, resulting in the loss of six of his eleven crew members and a gruelling twelve-hour wait for rescue.

Later, he flew missions in the Mediterranean, enduring heavy enemy fire to support Allied troops in Crete. Returning to the Atlantic, his crew successfully engaged a Focke-Wulf FW 200 Condor.

In 1942, Vic returned to Australia, serving with **20 and 40 Squadrons RAAF**, flying various aircraft including the Catalina and Dornier Do 24. His missions ranged from supply drops and minelaying to bombing and reconnaissance. This is Vic's remarkable story, told in his own words for the first time.

### ELECTRONIC REFERENCES AND CONTACTS

#### RAAF Museum – Point Cook, Victoria

The museum is open on Thursdays and Sundays, 1000 to 1500. Bookings to attend are essential. You need to book via the website – <https://airforce.gov.au>

#### Pembroke Dock Heritage Centre – Pembroke Dock, Wales, UK

Pembroke Dock has an internationally significant heritage and is celebrated in the Pembroke Dock Heritage Centre, housed in the former Royal Dockyard Chapel, in the heart of Pembrokeshire.

Displays tell the story of the town from its origins as Wales' only Royal Dockyard where over 260 vessels were built, including five Royal Yachts. Later in the town's history, the Royal Air Force and Royal Australian Air Force, 10 and 461 Squadrons of flying-boats were based in the natural harbour of the Cleddau Estuary and the town became the world's largest military flying boat station, playing a vital role in the Second World War Battle of the Atlantic.

Website - <http://www.pdht.org>

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**Short Sunderland/Hythe, Sandringham & Seaforth/Solent. Face Book Group**

Facebook group that might be of interest to some Sunderlanders – Short Sunderland/Hythe, Sandringham & Seaforth/Solent. It is a Private Group, but often has Sunderland, RAAF 10 and 461 Sqn content. Worth following.

Websites –

[www.pooleflyingboats.com](http://www.pooleflyingboats.com)

[www.ayemaam.com](http://www.ayemaam.com)

**Aviation Heritage Museum - Bull Creek, Western Australia**

This is great Museum. In the past it had some Sunderland Squadrons displays. There is also a Facebook page for the Museum.

<https://aviationmuseumwa.org.au>

**RAF Coastal Command 1936-1969 Facebook site**

This Facebook group is dedicated to RAF Coastal Command. As 10 and 461 Sqn's served in Coastal Command there are often articles about our Sunderland Squadrons. Worth having a look at the site.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/MHTCommunity/>

**Short Sunderland “Flying Porcupine” - Facebook site.**

This Facebook group is dedicated to the Short Sunderland. This site has recently posted a number of 10 Sqn photos from the album, of Bill Sykes, 10 Sqn RAAF. Also worth following.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1416154278706348/>

**1 WAGS (No. 1 Wireless Air Gunnery School) - Ballarat**

The 1 W.A.G.S. Memorial website is primarily about People - RAAF recruits who came from all over Australia, from all different walks of life to train as Wireless Operators, Air Gunners, and Navigators at the purpose-built Ballarat air base.

The site recognises the courage displayed and sacrifice made by these airmen while serving their country during WW2.

[www.1wags.org.au/information](http://www.1wags.org.au/information)

## MOTAT Museum of Transport and Technology and Auckland New Zealand

MOTAT is New Zealand's largest transport and technology museum and offers a fun and exciting learning experience for all ages. The aviation hall contains a fully restored ex RNZAF Sunderland (Q Queenie) and a Teal Airways Solent Flying Boat (civilian version of the Sunderland). Well worth a visit.



Sunderland Q – Queenie on Display



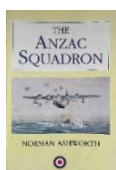
Sunderland in Flight when in Service

[www.motat.nz/exhibitions/aviation-hall](http://www.motat.nz/exhibitions/aviation-hall)

[www.motat.nz/collections-and-stories/stories/MOTAT's-Sunderland-is-a-rare-example/](http://www.motat.nz/collections-and-stories/stories/MOTAT's-Sunderland-is-a-rare-example/)

## SHOPPING SECTION

### “ANZAC SQUADRON”



This book contains a wealth of information about Squadron members and relates the story of 461 Squadron the “ANZAC SQUADRON” by Norman Ashworth. Copies are available from the Secretary at a cost of \$55.00 per copy, postage, and handling.

### “MARITIME is NUMBER 10” Book – Currently out of stock

**Sunderland Lapel Badges** – “Sunderland” lapel badges are available from the Secretary at \$10.00 ea. packaging and postage paid.

### 10 and 461 Squadron Plaques

We now have both 10 and 461 Squadron Plaques in stock. The cost is \$70.00 including GST, postage, and packaging.



10 Squadron RB-S, Possibly W3894