

AVRO ANSON



PLANE CRASH



HISTORY SERIES

AVRO ANSON PLANE CRASH ON MT TORBRECK

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

C O N T E N T S

INTRODUCTION

TIMELINE

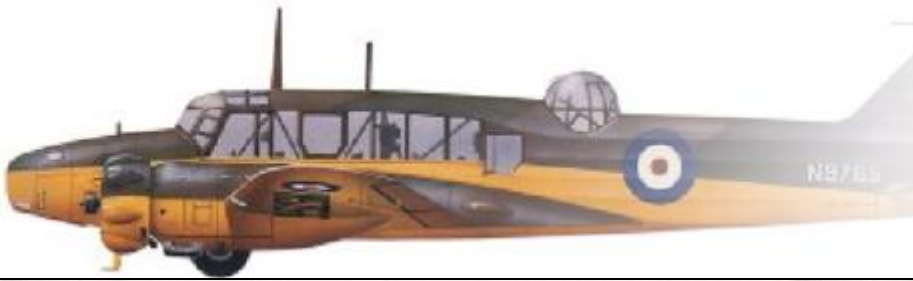
COMMUNITY TRIPS

TRACK CLEARING

NEWSPAPERS

OTHER

B A C K T O T H E S T A R T



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 19412016-41

An Avro Anson military plane, carrying one pilot and three corporals crashed into Mount Torbreck 16 May 1940 during extremely poor weather. All military personnel on board the plane perished.



On 16 May 1940, a military Avro Anson aircraft with the call sign BNA, crashed into the north-east face of Mount Torbreck, 300 m (1,000 ft) 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, with the crash site not located until eight months later.

The aircraft was one of three Avro Anson training aircraft that had flown out of Pearce Air Force Base in Western Australia 14 May heading to the Central Flying School at Camden, NSW. The flight was known as 'B' flight (hence the call signs). The three successfully reached Parafield where they refuelled and stayed the night. They departed for Point Cook the next morning (15 May) arriving later in the day, refuelling and again staying the night. They departed for Camden the next morning (11.45 am 16 May).



HERITAGE FACTSHEET

AVRO ANSON PLANE CRASH

Poor weather conditions altered plans 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. 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 (A4-38)	14 Squadron (<i>Lead aircraft</i>)	Landed at Cootamundra, NSW.
BNF (A4-25)	14 Squadron	Returned to Point Cook airbase
BNA (A4--4)	14 Squadron	Disappeared with four men on board

The crew members of the lost Avro Anson Aircraft were:

Pilot	Anthony Ashby Daniel , Age 22 of Mount Lawly, W.A. - Cremated - Panel 3 (<i>cremated Springvale Crematorium</i>)
Corporal	Ivan Lapen Stowdor , Age 25 of N.S.W. - Cremated - Panel 7 - <i>Sydney Memorial</i>
Corporal	Francis Ettiene Hyland , Age 27 of Balwyn, Victoria - <i>Buried Fawkner Memorial Park</i>
Corporal Wireless Operator	Herman Fred Sass , Age 23 of South Perth, W.A. - Cremated at <i>Perth (Karrakatta) Crematorium</i>



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.

At one point, ten Avro Anson aircraft were flying low combing a grid over the High



HERITAGE FACTSHEET

AVRO ANSON PLANE CRASH

Country, flying two miles apart. They did not find anything. A DC3 was used to search the higher peaks, whilst two Lockheed Hudsons 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 lost airman F. E. Hyland 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 300 m below the summit of Mount Torbreck on the north-east face. They camped at Jerusalem Creek that night while waiting for Authorities to arrive.

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 the body of one man 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 injuries and broken bones. If true, it is likely he did not survive long. The weather



HERITAGE FACTSHEET

AVRO ANSON PLANE CRASH

conditions at the time of the accident were cold and would have worked against survival.

It was stated in the Court of Enquiry that the plane was travelling at 120 mph at the time of impact and that the impact occurred 1,000 ft below the Mt Torbreck summit (not the 200 ft as mentioned in newspaper reports at that time). The Court of Enquiry was able to determine the impact speed with certainty because of the jammed Air Speed Gauge.

In the late 1930s the Australian Government purchased 48 Avro Anson's from the British Government and gave them a serial number between A4-1 and A4-48. At the height of the war the RAAF had over one thousand Avro Anson's. The 14 Squadron was formed in Western Australia on 6 February 1939 and was equipped with two of the Avro Anson's. 14 Squadron was officially disbanded 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 December 1941, the 14 Squadron increased their reconnaissance and anti submarine missions around the vulnerable Australian coastline.

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

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.



The original Avro Anson Crash Site Memorial Mount Torbreck, Victoria, Australia



Courtesy Richard Hyland

On 16 May 1940 a military Avro Anson military aircraft (serial number A4-4) crashed into the north-east face of Mount Torbreck, 300 m below the summit. All four airmen on board were killed. This photograph is from Richard Hyland, a family member of lost airman Francis Ettiene Hyland. Richard saw the Channel Seven segment on Sunday 26 July with Nick McCullam and made contact with track clearer Anthony Dykes. The photo is the only one we have seen of the original memorial before the current memorial cairn was built to replace it. The plaque and cross seen here were used on the current rock memorial cairn.

TIMELINE
OF
EVENTS



HERITAGE FACTSHEET

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

16 May 1940

One of three Avro Anson training aircraft travelling from Pearce 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 F. E. 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 John Fry) discovered the lost military plane some 300 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.

1947c

Local boy John Kilpatrick rode to the crash site on at least one occasion on draft horses from the No. 6 Mill at Snobs Creek. Numerous pieces of the aircraft were kept, though are no longer in the family - believed to have been thrown out during a house move.

1950-1960s

A memorial cairn was established at the crash site by men from RAAF No 1 Aircraft Depot, Laverton. It was funded by Corporal Francis Hyland's father (Flight Lieutenant C W Hyland).

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.



HERITAGE FACTSHEET

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

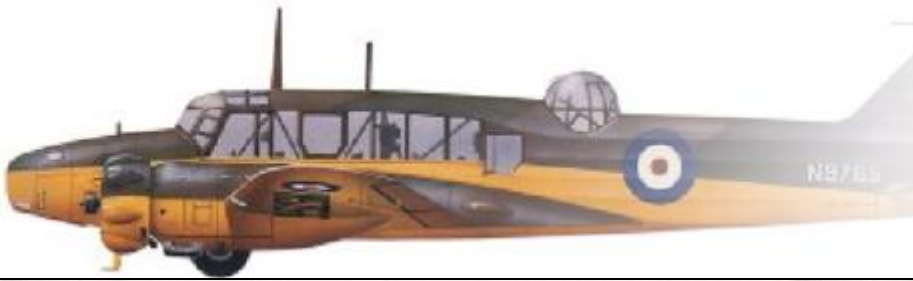
- 1994** Lloyd Foster, Steve Nicholls and Jim Davey searched for and eventually located the crash site in 1994. They took imagery and investigated the site.
- 2003** A fire through the area caused significant damage to the bush, and most of the tall timbers (mountain ash) were scorched and subsequently died.
- 29 March 2009** Stephen Handbury visited and photographed the memorial site.
- 2011** A large mountain ash tree fell and came to rest on 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 see the 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.



HERITAGE FACTSHEET

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

- 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 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 and his team 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 and his team 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 and his team conducted his third track clearing**



HERITAGE FACTSHEET

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

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

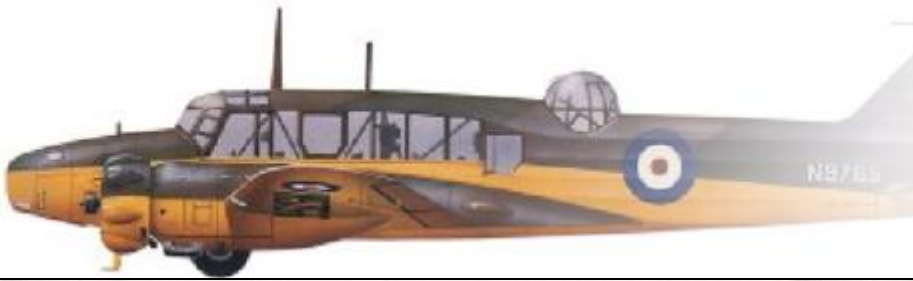
During the trip, local Alexandra identity John Norbury fell on the track around 11.15 am, breaking his femur. He was near the half way point to the memorial site at the time of the fall. David Hibbert called the emergency services first at 11.22 am and again at 12.34 pm (after John's temperature dropped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



HERITAGE FACTSHEET

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

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.

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..



HERITAGE FACTSHEET

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

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 Carnarvon in Western Australia. All three were added to this factsheet.

5-6 July 2014

Anthony Dykes and his team 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

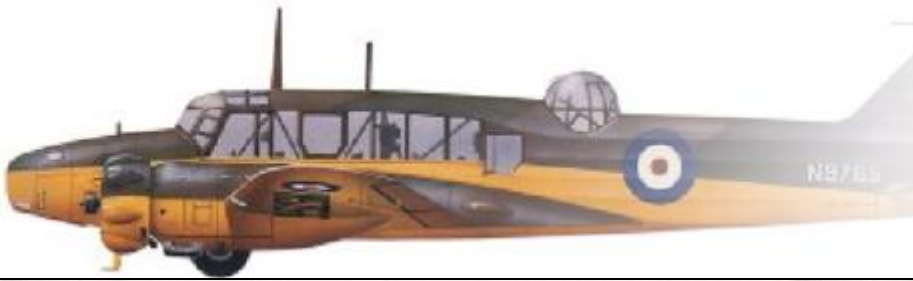
At 3.15 pm on Monday 11 August, Squadron Leader Greg Williams from Air Force Headquarters in Canberra made first contact with Anthony Dykes when he called Anthony and left a message on his answering machine. This was regarding the memorial site reopening.

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. One completed 2.4 km track."

Track clearers present on the final weekend were: Jack Mason, Andrew Mason, Tim Slade, Paul Fletcher, Shane Bayliss, Mick Braybon (standing behind memorial), Andy Kelly, Anthony Dykes and Brenton Luke.



HERITAGE FACTSHEET

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

- 15-16 November 2014** **Anthony Dykes and his team conducted his sixth track clearing trip:** This cleanup included the establishment of a sign at the start of the track using a large piece of trunk from a fallen mountain ash and the placement of a high quality laminated factsheet with the website of a digital copy for visitors wishing to know more.
Track clearers present were: Paul Fletcher, Tim Slade, Kevin Desira, Brenton Luke, Mitch Luke, Andy Kelly, Pat Mills.
- 6 May 2015** Anthony Dykes submitted an official request to the Defence Department for Ceremonial Support for the 75th Anniversary event scheduled for to be held at the Mt Torbreck crash site 23 January 2016 from 12 noon to 2 pm.
- 16-17 May 2015** **Anthony Dykes and his team conducted his seventh track clearing trip as well as holding a ceremony commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the crash. A minutes silence was also held.** During this trip he had use of a **T140 Bobcat** for the first time, lent to the team by Stephen Handbury of Anvil Angus Pty Ltd, of Acheron.

Track clearers present were: Daniel Millard (Lying) Paul Fletcher, Mick Braybon, Andrew Mason, Anthony Dykes, Zach Mason, Andy Kelly, Tim Slade, Shane Millard, Kevin Desira, Evan Desira, Ryan Desira. During the cleanup Artworkz team members Mitchell Hibbert and David Hibbert attended the site to take photographs and attend the ceremony held 1320.
- 24-25 July 2015** **Anthony Dykes and his team conducted his eighth track clearing trip during which the remaining Avro Anson engine was mounted on an Armstrong Siddeley Cheetah IX Engine mount gifted by the B24 Liberator Memorial Restoration Fund in Werribee.**
- 6-8 November 2015** **Anthony Dykes and his team conducted his ninth track clearing trip during which track barrier was erected at the carpark area and the track and memorial area were cleared up.**

Track clearers present were: Anthony Dykes, Andy Kelly, Ash Kelly Lucas Kelly, Paul Fletcher and Brenton Luke.
- 14 December 2015** Anthony Dykes received word that a PC-9 Pilatus will be conducting a flyover of the Memorial Site during the ceremony as well as there



HERITAGE FACTSHEET

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

being an official RAAF representative at the Ceremony on behalf of the RAAF.

23 January 2016

At 1 pm Anthony Dykes commenced the re-opening ceremony for the Avro Anson Memorial and track and the unveiling of interpretive signage was held. Over ninety five people attended, including relatives of the lost airmen who travelled from Perth in Western Australia and Wales in the United Kingdom. The RAAF sent Squadron Leader Glen Coy to officiate as the Master of Ceremonies as well as sending an RAAF PC-9 Pilatus trainer from Sale Central Flight School - piloted by Flight Lieutenant Tim Dresser - to perform a double fly-over. Nick McCallum from Channel Seven was in attendance as were three Artworkz Photographers (Allan Layton, John Norbury and David Hibbert) for local media coverage. Shire of Murrindindi Chief Executive Officer Margaret Abbey joined the Artworkz team in walking to the Memorial site for the Ceremony. The day was a huge success with high praise directed to Anthony Dykes and his 23 person strong track clearing team, who organised and ran the ceremony. Interpretive signage was unveiled at the carpark and Memorial, which was a huge success.

25 January 2016

Channel Seven reporter Nick McCallum ran a piece on the Avro Anson Memorial Ceremony during the Seven News.

27 January 2016

Artworkz published eSpalsh141 - dedicated entirely to the Avro Anson Memorial and Track re-opening. This issue makes history as our first eSplash to be dedicated to one event and carry no advertising.

20-22 May 2017

Anthony Dykes and his team conducted his tenth track clearing trip. The Monday also included a trip to a local mine with a hut and mining relics laying across the site.

COMMUNITY TRIPS

Circa 1947 trip by John Kilpatrick.

My name is John Kilpatrick and I lived at Ru oak new No 6 Mill on the Snobs Creek from 1940 until August/September 1947.

My father was the Blacksmith and Farrier and also held a Boiler Attendant and Engine Driver's Certificate. This Mill was built following the 1939 bushfire to cut salvaged timber from the bushfires.

Ruoak No.6 Mill was connected to the outlet tramway by a short single inclined track. A steam winch next to the blacksmith shop was used to haul the timber up from the Mill to access the outlet tramway, which transported timber towards a haulage and eventually down into the small settlement of Tin Hut on the Rubicon side of the range. My father operated the incline winch as well as working in the blacksmith shop.

The reason for the tramway being above the Mill was to provide the best grade, as it serviced another mill further up Snobs Creek and accessed a suitable site to cross over the range. The Snobs Creek road reached the Mill, however timber was still going out on the tramway.

Sometimes a draft horse would be available at the Mill on weekends and with a chaff bag on its back, we would go for rides (with the teamster's permission). We rode from No 6 Mill through the bush to the Avro Anson crash site on at least one occasion.

I remember being overawed by the size of the aircraft parts and many years were to pass before I was to actually see a complete aircraft.

I used to cut around aircraft pictures in the papers when they came and there

Continued...

were a lot of pictures during and after WWII. I cannot remember any cairn or monument at the site but I remember being touched by the fact that people had perished there.

People we knew were often injured and even killed working in the bush. Memories of their friends who died during the 1939 bush fires were referred to fairly often by my father and mother, so even when young I took on board that those who died were reverently referred to during conversation.

I am not sure when the parts from the crash site were collected or by whom, but we had some control cables and pulleys at our home at the No. 6 Mill.

We also had a clock which I believe was from the aircraft, that was housed in a specially built wooden case. The case was cut out to reveal the luminous dial.

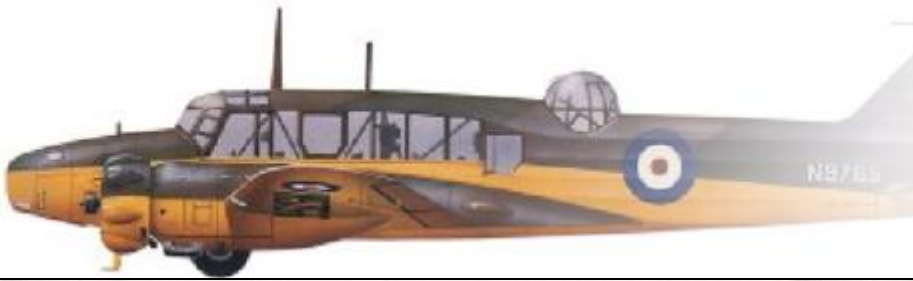
I do not know if it functioned. The clock came into our home in Bon Street Alexandra when we moved into Alexandra. Some of the control cable pulleys were also stored in an old Gelignite box in the back shed in Bon Street, but I believe it all went to the tip when the house was sold.

John Kilpatrick
27 September 2015

June 1975 trip by Russell Sturzaker and Leigh Faulkner

"The person in the photograph was a personal friend of mine (Leigh Faulkner - coincidentally, Leigh is now the owner of King Island Airlines). Leigh 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 trail 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."



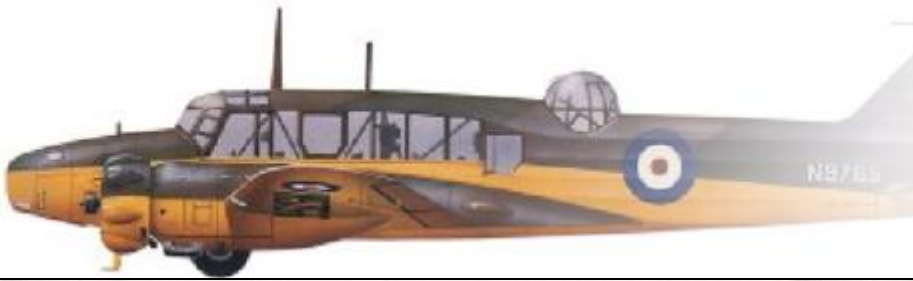
HERITAGE FACTSHEET

1975 TRIP



The Avro Anson crash site memorial June 1975.

Photograph © Russell Sturzaker 2014.



HERITAGE FACTSHEET

1975 TRIP



**Leigh Faulkner holding the gun turret mounting ring 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.

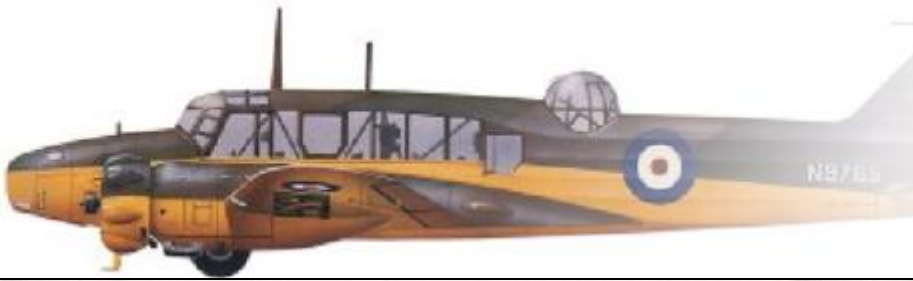
"My father used to have a piece of aluminium from the site, which was unpainted and had large circular holes cut into it as aircraft frames regularly do. It was in the era of the Apollo missions, and space travel was on everyone's conscious.

Seeing as I was about five 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.

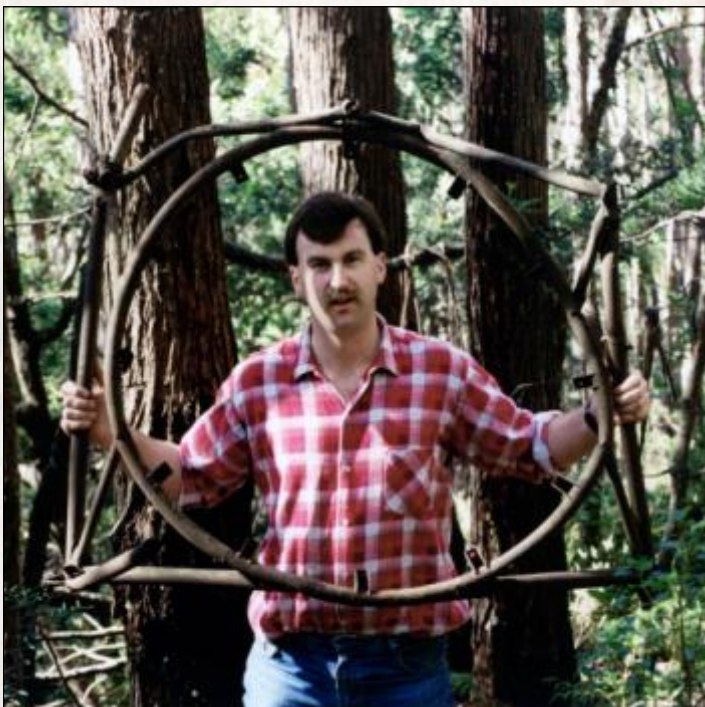
Either way I was keen to learn more of this plane, and spent six years off and on looking for it. After lots of days staggering around the bush at lots of different locations you can imagine how happy I was to finally discover the "road" that leads to the spot and of course right at the end of the road,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

Lloyd Foster.



HERITAGE FACTSHEET

1994 TRIP



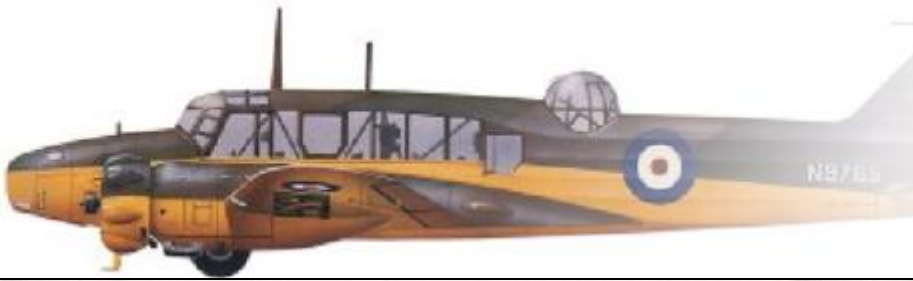
(Top)

The Cairn erected at the crash site, 300 m below the summit of Mount Torbreck, on the north-east face.

(Left)

Steve Nicholls looking through the gun turret mounting ring located in scrub at the crash site.

Photographs © Lloyd Foster 2012.



HERITAGE FACTSHEET

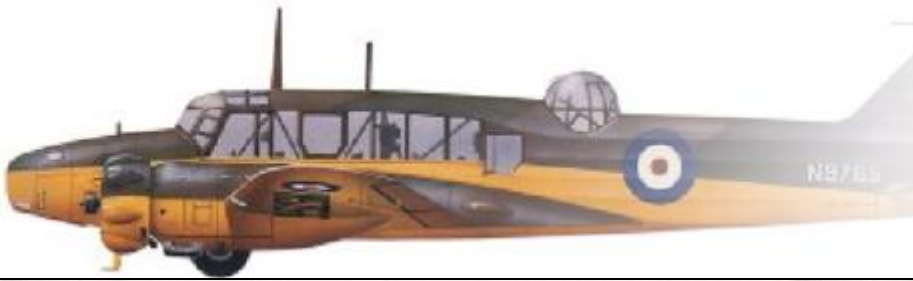
1994 TRIP



(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



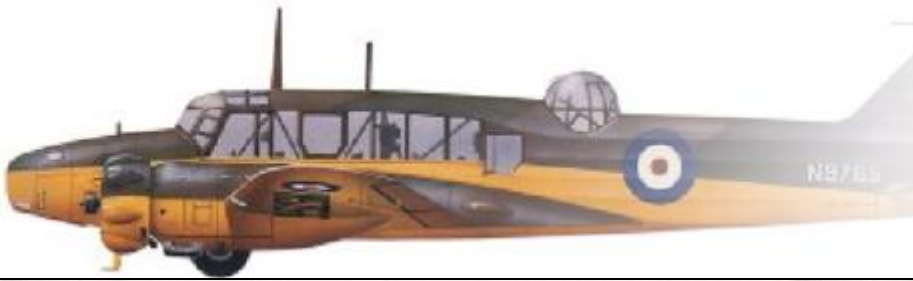
(Top)

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



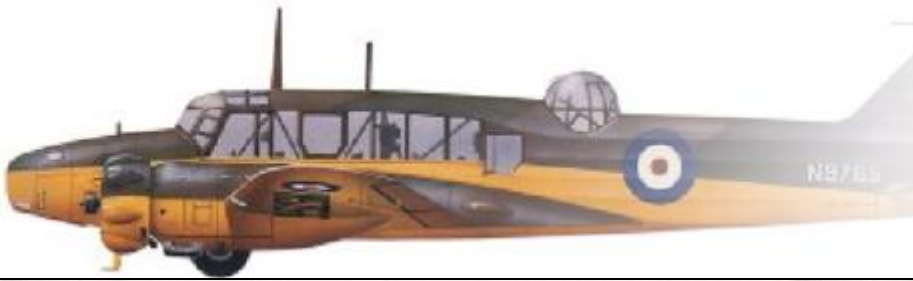
(Top)

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



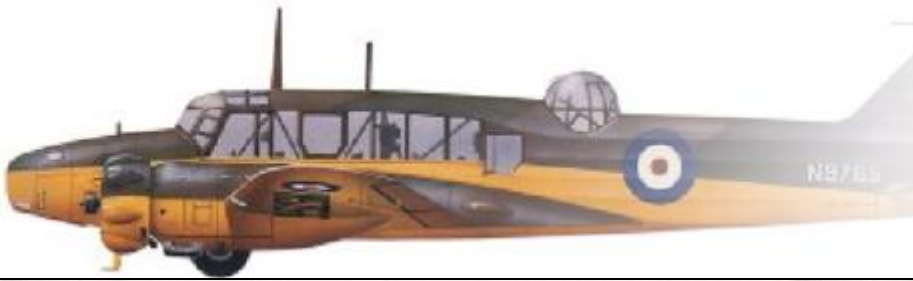
HERITAGE FACTSHEET

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.



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.

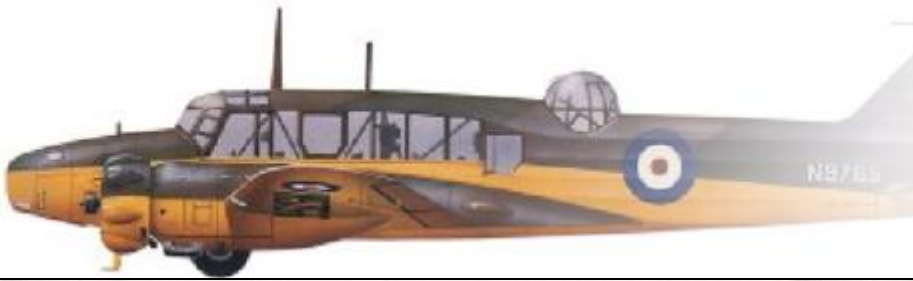
After trekking through very dense forest and over endless fallen trees all well overgrown by the recent rains, we finally reached the crash site of the Avro Anson that crashed at that location on 16 May 1940. All four airmen were killed in the crash.

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 men of the RAAF No 1 AD Laverton (funded by (Flight Lieutenant C W Hyland - father of one of the airmen lost), 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.



HERITAGE FACTSHEET

ARTWORKZ JANUARY 2012 TRIP

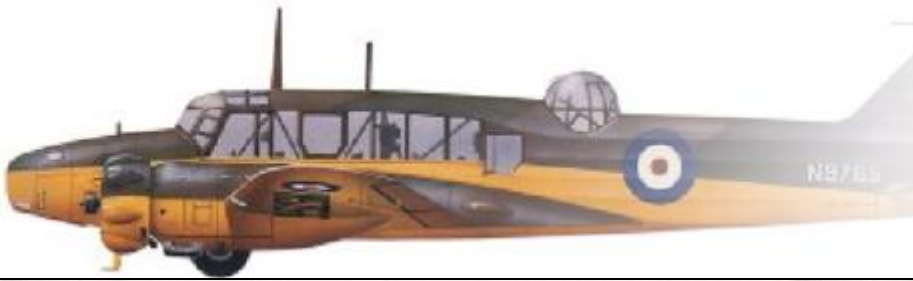


(Top)

The main cairn is partially covered by a fallen tree. 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 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.





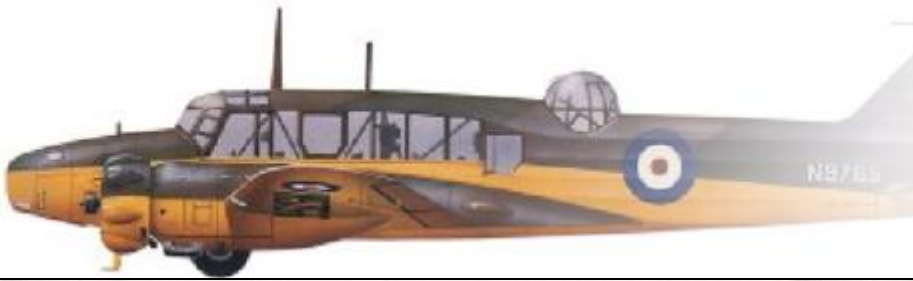
HERITAGE FACTSHEET

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.



TRACK
CLEARING
TEAM

AVRO ANSON TRACK CLEARING

DISCOVERY TRIP, 1 JUNE 2013

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.

AVRO ANSON TRACK CLEARING

RECONNAISSANCE TRIP, 21 SEPTEMBER 2013

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

23-24 AUGUST 2014 - FINAL CLEANUP



(L-R) Jack Mason, Andrew Mason, Tim Slade, Paul Fletcher, Shane Bayliss, Mick Braybon (standing behind memorial), Andy Kelly, Anthony Dykes, Brenton Luke.

Track clearers on their fifth and final track clearing weekend to Mount Torbreck. The track clearing work was completed by 1 pm Saturday 23 August, marking the end of an amazing journey by a team of men who achieved a ground breaking historic outcome by working together.

To our knowledge, this is the first time an overgrown track to a military plane crash in the Australian bush has been reopened by a group of community volunteers. In this instance, it was achieved in partnership with the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI).

AVRO ANSON MEMORIAL

TRACK CLEARING COMPLETED



An amazing feat by a group of amazing men.

The Avro Anson track clearers have completed their ambitious task. After five trips conducted under some of our bush's harshest conditions, they have completed the task of clearing the 2.4 km track to the Avro Anson Memorial site at 1 pm 23 August 2014.

TRACK OFFICIALLY CLEARED AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE



The Avro Anson Memorial track clearers have completed their massive 2.4 km clearing task.

The track to the site is now available to the general public, ensuring that everyone can access the memorial site without risk of injury. The team, led by Anthony Dykes, have also restored the memorial site to its past glory, and in doing so, ensured the site again honours the memory of the Australian Servicemen who lost their lives on the mountain. Well done to everyone involved.



Brenton, Mick, Andy, Tim, Anthony, Jack, Andrew & Paul.
Photograph © Brenton Luke.



Brenton Luke on a chainsaw.
Photograph © Anthony Dykes.



Anthony Dykes clearing the track.
Photograph © Brenton Luke.



Paul (lying) Brenton, Andy and Tim.
Photograph © Anthony Dykes.

Official Track Clearing Report

Anthony Dykes 2014

"Hi All,

The weekend just gone, 23 and 24 August saw us complete Round 5 of the track clearing project at Mt Torbreck.

Our work began at 10.30 Saturday morning at the large up-rooted tree that we were expecting to be a challenge. On this trip we had a new member in Brenton Luke who is ex DSE and along with Andy and Paul's chainsaw experience and Tim's forethought to bring a hand winch, the four of them made light work of it and it was gone in no time.

Once at the memorial it was the first time that any work had been carried out at the memorial site since I removed a log off the memorial with a handsaw last September. We all contributed from chainsaw work, to brush cutting and to general ground debris removal, after roughly 30 minutes we had the site looking like it did when it was built in the early 60s. After five trips totalling eight full days of work and 19 participants across all trips, at 1300 on Saturday August 2014, for the first time in decades, there is a 2.4 km clear uninterrupted track from Barnewall Plains Rd to the memorial site!

After basking in the sunshine and enjoying lunch together as a group on the steps of the memorial cairn, we packed up our gear for the last time and started our trek down the mountain. During the walk down, seeing sections of the track meander its way along the side of the mountain was a very rewarding experience that filled me with a great sense of pride in what we had achieved.

I can't even begin to express my gratitude to all the 19 guys that have participated in some way or another. We've been met with all types of challenges such as monstrous mountain ash trees completely sealing off the track and everything

around it, dense regrowth that seemed like it would never end and working in all types of weather including snow! Not once was there anyone who thought it was too hard or that it couldn't be done, we all just rolled up our sleeves and got the job done! I have no doubt that I have established some life long friendships out of these experiences in our endeavour to have a part of our history restored. Below is a list of all 19 participants:

Pat Mills - Ryan Lane - Steve Dykes - Nick Dykes - Rob Woolfe - Shane Bayliss - Andrew Casey - Jake Casey - Andy Kelly - Paul Fletcher - Nathan Earl - Shane Millard - Tim Slade - Steve Considine - Phil Guinta - Mick Braybon - Brenton Luke - Andrew Mason - Jack Mason

A big thank you has to go out to the DEPI for allowing this project to happen, in particular Lucas Russell and Senior Forest Ranger James Cowell. Right from the start they have both been very helpful, approachable and enthusiastic about the project and without them it would have made it much harder if not impossible to get it off the ground. Now it's time to hand the track and memorial site back to them in the best condition it's been in decades.

I would also like to thank David Hibbert and his Artworkz team for doing such a wonderful job in publicising the area with their tourism brochures, factsheets and their online eSplash publications. Through them it is creating the awareness that the site needs to ensure its longevity. We saw this first hand on Saturday afternoon when a German tourist arrived to walk up to the memorial after been given a brochure at the Alexandra Information Centre!

Whilst the track clearing side of the project is over from our group's perspective, there is still a couple of things that we would like to do up there in the not too distant future for which I'll keep you all informed of the progress.

Thank you all for your support.

Cheers
Anthony"

AVRO ANSON TRACK CLEARING

CLEANUP TRIP FIVE, 23-24 AUGUST 2014



Tim (foreground) & Andy
Photograph © Anthony Dykes.



Anthony Dykes (left), Paul (back) & Time (carrying log).
Photograph © Brenton Luke.



THE TEAM

(L-R) Jack Mason, Andrew Mason, Tim Slade, Paul Fletcher, Shane Bayliss, Mick Braybon (standing behind memorial), Andy Kelly, Anthony Dykes, Brenton Luke. Photograph © Brenton Luke.



Anthony Dykes brush cutting.
Photograph © Brenton Luke.



The cleared memorial site.
Photograph © Brenton Luke.

On behalf of Artworkz and the local community, I would like to extend the greatest thanks and appreciation to all involved in the clearing of this track and in the cleaning up of the memorial site. This includes those who attended the site, as well as their families who supported their efforts. What you have all done is substantial, honourable, and reflects the greatest of respect to those that fell in the service of protecting our great nation. Everyone involved has established their names into our history, and in doing so, ensured that all those wishing to visit the memorial can now do so in the most splendid manner along this amazing and beautiful track.

We also acknowledge the efforts of the Department of Environment and Primary Industries, and especially the work of Senior Park Ranger James Cowell who has supported the team from day one.

"We were at our vehicles at the bottom of the track celebrating our achievement with well earned beer when a little Subaru arrives. A young fella gets out and introduces himself as a German tourist who has come to walk the track to the memorial. He had been travelling Oz for 18 months. I asked him how he knew about it and he said that the lady at the Alexandra Information Centre told him about it."

AVRO ANSON

MOUNT TORBRECK



A clearer beginning.

The track to the Avro Anson Memorial has been restored thanks to the hard work of a group of men from Melbourne under the guidance of coordinator Anthony Dykes. It even has a new sign, guiding visitors.



Track Clearers

Paul Fletcher, Tim Slade, Kevin Desira, Brenton Luke, Mitch Luke, Andy Kelly, Pat Mills.

As we witnessed earlier this year, even a cleared maintained track to the Avro Anson Memorial site was dangerous enough to cause a significant injury that required a full emergency evacuation from the mountain.

I walked through bush to the site in 2012 and can report that missing the then overgrown track definitely placed our team in far greater danger. One team member struggled seriously with his health during the trek. Just this month we heard of another couple who missed the start of the track and had to struggle through seriously dangerous terrain to reach the memorial site to appreciate this hugely important heritage memorial. The risk should not be underestimated when climbing this mountain.





It is our understanding that the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) have no plans to maintain the track or memorial site - due to budget constraints. Sadly this endangers the many visitors this site now attracts each year. It is hoped that DEPI may soon redirect funds to help keep this area risk free, until then please take considerable care.

Today Artworkz can report that a sign has been crafted by track clearer Anthony Dykes at the start of the track at the carpark indicating to visitors the safest way to the site. Well done Anthony and your team!

As well as clearing the track and getting a sign in place, Anthony and his team also replaced the outdated decaying book at the site with a brand new copy. Each page is laminated with a high quality thick laminate, and references the digital copy of the factsheet for anyone who wants more. You can even download from the digital factsheet at the site thanks to good mobile phone reception.

AVRO ANSON TRACK CLEARING

CLEANUP TRIP SIX, 15-16 NOVEMBER 2014



We would love to talk with whoever compiled the original black booklet and left it at the memorial. Please contact us if you have further information.

The old ruined black booklet and the new laminated factsheet.



The memorial site after the huge clean-up.

TRIP
7

AVRO ANSON TRACK CLEARING

CLEANUP TRIP SEVEN, 16-17 MAY 2015

AVRO ANSON

THE BOBCAT TRIP - COURTESY ANVIL ANGUS P/L, ACHERON



The first use of the T140 bobcat, courtesy Stephen Handbury and Anvil Angus Pty Ltd.



(L-R) Daniel Millard (Lying) Paul Fletcher, Mick Braybon, Andrew Mason, Anthony Dykes, Zach Mason, Andy Kelly, Tim Slade, Shane Millard, Kevin Desira, Evan Desira, Ryan Desira.

The twelve track clearers taking a well earned break at the memorial site, after a hard morning's work of track clearing. This was the team's seventh track clearing weekend and they are pictured here just after having their lunch and just before the 1320 service held at the Memorial site. The ceremony (officiated by Anthony Dykes) and one minute's silence was held at the memorial site to pay respects to the airmen who lost their lives 75 years before (to the day and time).

This was the first time the team had use of a bobcat at the site. The team were lent a T140 Bobcat for the entire weekend by Acheron Local Stephen Handbury of Anvil Angus Pty Ltd. The bobcat was invaluable in clearing the track to a higher standard than was previously possible with hand tools. By the end of the weekend, the track was in a much safer condition.

AVRO ANSON TRACK CLEARING

CLEANUP TRIP SEVEN, 16-17 MAY 2015



The memorial furnished with a flag for each airman lost at the site.

CLEANUP TRIP SEVEN, 16-17 MAY 2015



Anthony Dykes is pictured here conducting a moving ceremony at the memorial site - held on the 75th Anniversary of the crash. A minute's silence after the ceremony coincided with the time the Avro Anson plane is believed to have crashed into Mount Torbreck

Fourteen people were present for the memorial service, which honoured the four airmen who died defending our country in a time of war. The ceremony was fitting, very well presented and held in perfect weather conditions.

After the ceremony the men went straight back to work, to ensure the best use of the bobcat. With every trip the track clearing volunteers do to the site, the condition of the memorial and the access to it improves substantially.



The team of track clearers stopped (left) at a huge obstacle over the track. This fallen tree restricted access for the bobcat, so chainsaws were used with great precision to cut through the blockage. All care had to be taken to ensure the upper section of tree did not slide down onto the workers.

These men are highly accomplished in their skill and it was amazing to see them work.



(Top left)

A section of track that was successfully cleared last year, has grown back quickly in just six months. This highlights one of the problems faced in our bush. Mother Nature is quick to reclaim what is hers, if not well managed.

(Top right)

A similar section of track that was cleared by bobcat operator Daniel Millard who was operating the T140 bobcat lent to the team by Anvil Angus P/L of Acheron.

(Bottom left)

A large worm poking his head out of his hole, located along the track.



A large worm investigates why his hole has become much more airy!



The carpark area is now more accessible and clean. The new Memorial Track sign is currently the only indication that this is the start of the Avro Anson Memorial Track and that a Memorial site is located on the mountain 2.4 km away. The sign (carved by the team) is well placed and very helpful to those who are not familiar with this type of Australian bush. Without a sign, the start of the track is less evident and this could lead to people getting lost.

GRANT FOR SIGNAGE AT THE AVRO ANSON MEMORIAL SITE

© *Anthony Dykes 2015*

The VicForests Community Support Program has been designed by VicForests to assist regional community groups and services who are working to positively contribute to their local area. The VicForests Community Support Program assists organisations that contribute to the wellbeing of local communities by providing grants of up to \$2000 to organisations such as charity groups, sporting groups, educational and community groups located across the Central Highlands, Gippsland and East Gippsland regions.



How easy it was to apply?

The application was a simple process that required filling out an online form outlining the type of community work that we have conducted at Mount Torbreck and what a VicForests donation would be contributed towards. The Artworkz 'Avro Anson Memorial Factsheet' was utilised in the application.

What the money is earmarked for?

The \$1000 that we received from VicForests has been earmarked for information boards - one at the beginning of the track outlining what's ahead, i.e. the track distance, return trip time and what to expect. The other at the memorial site with historical information as to why the memorial is there.

Info on the January opening?

Saturday 23 January has been earmarked as the official track re-opening. That particular date is a significant date for the site as it will be the 75th Anniversary that the wreck of Avro Anson A4-4 and the bodies of Flying Officer Anthony Daniel and Corporals Herman Sass, Francis Hyland & Ivan Stowdor were found by local men from Thornton. There will be a service to mark that occasion with proposed RAAF attendance, family members of some of the crew (one travelling from the U.K), various local dignitaries and various media outlets. Also on this day there will be a public unveiling of the information boards as well as an historically significant piece of wreckage from Anson A4-4.

Thank you to VicForests for their help?

During the numerous trips over the last two years, all of the work conducted at the memorial site and access track has been carried out by volunteers in their own time, utilising their own equipment and consumables. This very generous donation could not have happened at a better time as we are building towards the re-opening. On behalf of the group I would like to sincerely thank VicForests for their contribution towards this very special project

© Anthony Dykes 2015.



The current signage.

AVRO ANSON MEMORIAL

ENGINE MOUNTING & CHANNEL 7 INTERVIEW - 25 JULY 2015



Photograph © Anthony Dykes 2015

Engine Mounting Trip

I led our team of track clearers on their eighth trip to the memorial site last weekend for the mounting of the Avro Anson engine. The memorial site is now ready for the official opening to be held Saturday 23 January 2016. Nick McCallum and his Channel Seven film crew attended the site on Saturday afternoon and filmed us for a TV New's segment.

AVRO ANSON MEMORIAL

ENGINE MOUNT HANDOVER AT THE B24 LIBERATOR
MEMORIAL RESTORATION FUND IN WERRIBEE - 23 OCTOBER 2014



L-R Tony Muller of the B24 Liberator Memorial Restoration Fund. Paul Fletcher, Anthony Dykes from the Mt Torbreck track clearing group and his son Jack. Consolidated B24 Liberator A72-176 in the background.



On 23 October 2014 an [Armstrong Siddeley Cheetah IX Engine](#) mount was gifted to Anthony Dykes, coordinator of the Avro Anson Track clearing team.

The mount, capable of holding an Avro engine, was gifted by the B24 Liberator Memorial Restoration Fund in Werribee.

Anthony then meticulously restored the mount and prepared it for the engine mounting at the site last Saturday.



Photograph © Anthony Dykes 2015

During our track clearing trips, the team stay at the Barnewall Plains Camping Area, located a further 10 minute drive past the Avro Anson Memorial Track car park. Barnewall Plains is at an elevation of approximately 1100 m and the road to the site is closed seasonally during the winter months. Thankfully our team has been granted special permission to camp there during the seasonal closure period by the Department of Environment, Lands, Water and Planning (DELWP).

There are no facilities at the site other than a picnic table. For camping requirements you need to be 100 percent self sufficient. Our camping styles vary from swags, tents, rooftop tents and camper trailers depending on the individual.

On Saturday morning we woke up to approximately 2 cm of snow that had claimed two awnings due to the weight of the snow that accumulated on them. After breakfast and numerous cups of tea and coffee, we departed camp and headed back to the Memorial Track car park, arriving around 9 am. We then loaded the eight bags of rapid set concrete, the rest of the auger attachment, chainsaws and various



Photograph © Anthony Dykes 2015

Loading up the Anvil Angus bobcat.



With the predicted forecast and all the gear we needed to transport in, we decided to do a run to the memorial on Friday afternoon. We transported the engine mount frame, fuel tank, 40 litres of water and the auger attachment in the bucket of the bobcat. The engine mount was strapped to the roof. The trip was done in steady rain and was approximately a two hours return trip.



AVRO ANSON TRACK CLEARING

CLEANUP TRIP SEVEN, 24-25 JULY 2015



Photograph © Anthony Dykes 2015

The bobcat drilling post holes for the engine mount.



Photograph © Anthony Dykes 2015

Saturday morning we transported eight bags of rapid set concrete, the rest of the auger attachment, chainsaws and various hand tools in the bucket of the bobcat. Once we reached the snow covered memorial site, what was left of the original Anson mount was removed from the engine, to make way for the new mount.

It was a surreal experience undoing the first bolt, as it was most likely the first time since 1940 that a spanner was turned on that engine. Remarkably after 75 years exposed to the elements 14 of the 15 bolts undid with little effort. One had to be cut with a cordless angle grinder. We then discussed where the best place for the engine would be and it was decided that it be mounted on the right (from front) of the memorial and slightly angled towards the site entrance.

The auger attachment was fitted to the bobcat and we began the process of boring 800 mm holes for the legs of the frame to go into. Once at that depth the frame was lowered in, levelled and each hole filled with four bags of concrete. The bobcat was utilised as a crane to lift the engine onto the frame, with very little effort. A log prop was placed under the engine whilst the concrete cures and will be removed upon our return next trip.



Photograph © Anthony Dykes 2015

Andrew Mason (left) and Anthony Dykes preparing the engine for mounting.

Shane Millard using a grinder to cut off the one stubborn stud that needed to be removed. This was done so that what was left of the original engine mount could be removed.



Photograph © Anthony Dykes 2015

Removing the only seized bolt out of the 15 bolts that needed to be removed for mounting.

AVRO ANSON TRACK CLEARING

CLEANUP TRIP SEVEN, 24-25 JULY 2015



Photograph © Anthony Dykes 2015

One of the few remaining pieces of wreckage was securely mounted to a wooden post.

AVRO ANSON TRACK CLEARING

CLEANUP TRIP SEVEN, 24-25 JULY 2015



Photograph © Anthony Dykes 2015

The engine mount locked into position to allow for the concrete to set.



Photograph © Anthony Dykes 2015

Prior to this trip, a previous visitor to the site Ralph Sinclair, contacted me via Artworkz and mentioned that he had a previous connection with Ch7 news reporter Nick McCallum and suggested that the history behind the memorial had similarities to a story that Nick had reported on previously and said he'd be more than happy to contact Nick on our behalf. It wasn't long until Nick was on the phone asking if he and his film crew could attend the next working bee. The segment was to also include an interview with the niece of pilot Tony Daniel, Diana Davidson whom resides in WA. Diana provided some amazing memorabilia of Tony's flying days - not all of it went to air but nonetheless they will find their way into the public domain at a later date. Nick and his Ch7 cameraman Pete arrived at the memorial early Saturday afternoon and proceeded to film the engine mounting and general track maintenance.

© Anthony Dykes 2015 .



A special thanks to Nick McCallum and Channel Seven for this amazing coverage.



Track Clearing Team (L-R)

Kevin Desira, Mick Large, Shane Millard, Anthony Dykes, Andrew Mason, Andy Kelly, Paul Fletcher.

Special thanks to:

Tony Muller and his team at the B24 Restoration Fund in Werribee for the donation of the Armstrong Cheetah IX engine mount.

Stephen Handbury from Anvil Angus in Acheron for once again generously providing his bobcat without the slightest bit of hesitation to people he barely knows.

Nick McCallum from Channel Seven for making the effort to walk the track on the coldest day of the year and covering a story that deserves to be told.

AVRO ANSON MEMORIAL

TRACK CLEARING & BARRIER ERECTION - 6 - 8 NOVEMBER 2015



Photograph © Anthony Dykes 2015



Barrier erection and cleanup trip

Recently it became known that trail bikes had been using the Avro Anson Memorial Track. Whilst it was disappointing to hear this, it was always going to be a risk once we opened the track back up. So to prevent this, we built some log barriers at the entrance to the walking track.



Track Clearers this trip:

Anthony Dykes, Andy Kelly, Ash Kelly
Lucas Kelly, Paul Fletcher, Brenton Luke



The barrier has been built so that only a walker can fit through, or at worst perhaps a mountain bike rider. However their impact would be minimal anyway. These barriers not only are a form of prevention they also act as a marker to new visitors looking for the track. Also during this visit we did some general clearing on the track and at the memorial site. We were very pleased to see the engine still perched up on the mount adding a whole new dimension to the site.



AVRO ANSON TRACK CLEARING

CLEANUP TRIP NINE, 6-8 NOVEMBER 2015



TRACK CLEARERS

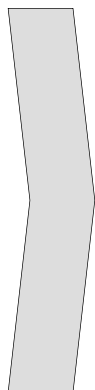
Anthony Dykes (Coordinator)

Shane Bayliss
Mick Braybon
Steve Considine
Evan Desira
Kevin Desira
Ryan Desira
Nick Dykes
Steve Dykes
Nathan Earl
Paul Fletcher
Angus & Kate Fletcher
Andy Kelly
Michael Large
Brenton Luke
Mitch Luke
Andrew Mason
Jack Mason
Zach Mason
Shane Millard
Pat Mills
Tim Slade

A huge thanks to the families of all track clearers.

FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH OF FRANCIS HYLAND

GIFT TO DAUGHTER LORRAINE HANSEN



A Special Gift



On the 16th of May 1940 Corporal Francis Hyland was tragically killed whilst on board Avro Anson A4-4 when it crashed into the north east face of Mt Torbreck. A restored example of a 1938 photograph of Francis Hyland in his RAAF Dress Uniform was gifted to his daughter Lorraine Hansen by Anthony Dykes and Paul Fletcher on behalf of the Mount Torbreck A4-4 Avro Anson Memorial Restoration Team.

Years ago Lorraine paid an exorbitant fee to have the original image restored and unfortunately it was to a very poor standard. Upon seeing the image Paul was very disappointed that someone could produce such a poor product and charge



FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH OF FRANCIS HYLAND

GIFT TO DAUGHTER LORRAINE HANSEN

money for it. With Paul's photo editing experience, he set about meticulously restoring the image for which he explains the process below.

"The secret when restoring old, damaged photos is to limit the changes to a minimum, especially in areas the viewer is likely to focus on such as the face.

This original print we started with was faded, badly cracked and had some small tears. It was mounted in a timber frame without glass and was curled away from the original backing.

Given the value of the original to the subject's daughter, I was unwilling to risk removing it from the frame in order to load it on a flat bed scanner and chose instead to use a thin piece of spring steel to hold the curled paper flat. I then took a number of photos at close range using various light environments and selected the best as the starting point for the restoration using Photoshop Software. The spring was cloned out of the selected image at an early point in the restoration.

Cloning was used to copy suitable textured samples to the tears and major cracks. The numerous small blemishes were removed using a combination of Photoshop tools including a spot repair tool, cloning, cut and paste etc.

Each individual blemish had to be individually selected and repaired as any global tools perform unwanted changes on critical areas.

Once the repairs were completed, a series of global and local changes were applied to increase contrast, sharpen key areas and to darken the badly faded areas such as the uniform.

A close examination of the restored digital version of the image still reveals numerous small cracks etc. however these do not stand out on the printed image."

The resorted image was presented to Lorraine on the 8th of August 2016 that was mounted on a sawn redgum frame which was meticulously hand crafted by Paul. As with all their hard work at the A4-4 Memorial, she was once again extremely grateful to the Mt Torbreck A4-4 Avro Anson Memorial Team's generosity in honouring the legacy of her father Corporal Francis Hyland.

© Anthony Dykes and Paul Fletcher 2016.

NEWSPAPER
ARTICLES



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. Sass.

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



HERITAGE FACTSHEET

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 south-west 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



HERITAGE FACTSHEET

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/ Stowdor 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.

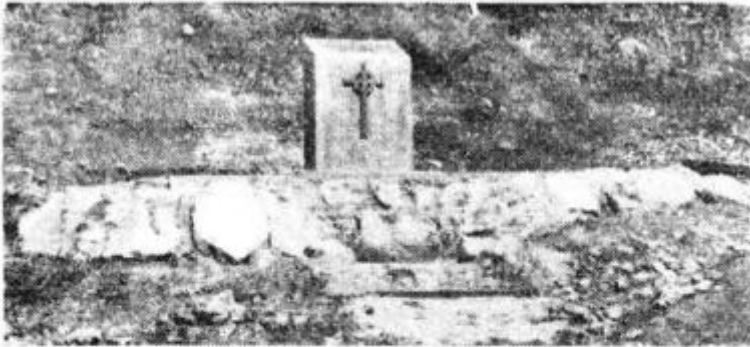
The crew comprised:—Flying-Officer Anthony Ashley Daniel, 23, pilot; Corporal Ivan Lapen Stowder, 26, wireless operator; Corporal Herman Fredrick Sass, 24, fitter; and Corporal Francis Etienne Hyland, 27, fitter.

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.

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.



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

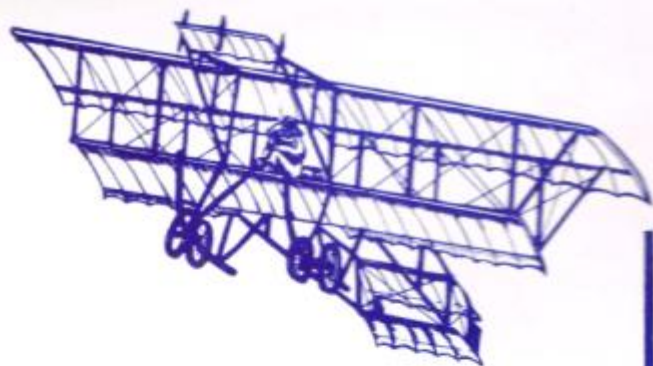
13-4-66

Melbourne Herald
Wednesday 13 April 1966
Courtesy National Library Australia

OTHER

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.

C.11814/39.

(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

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
Airradio 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 Airradio, 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.

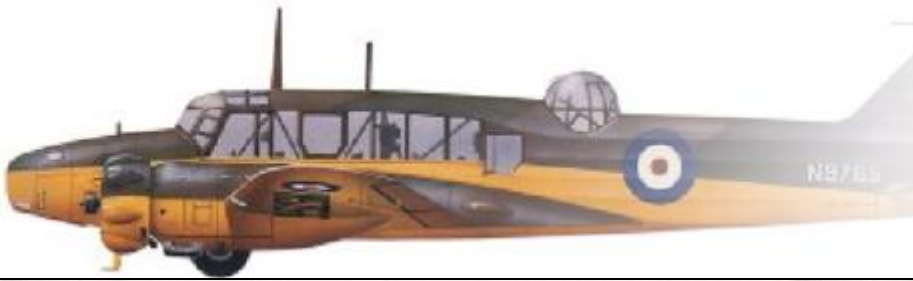
3. The Anson which gave its position as MERTON at 1241
shows that its ground speed from departure at POINT COOK was
approximately 85 m.p.h. Assuming that the ground speed of A4/4
(Call Sign 8 BNA) was also 85 m.p.h and that its course was
unchanged until 1315 when it signalled it was returning to POINT
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:

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





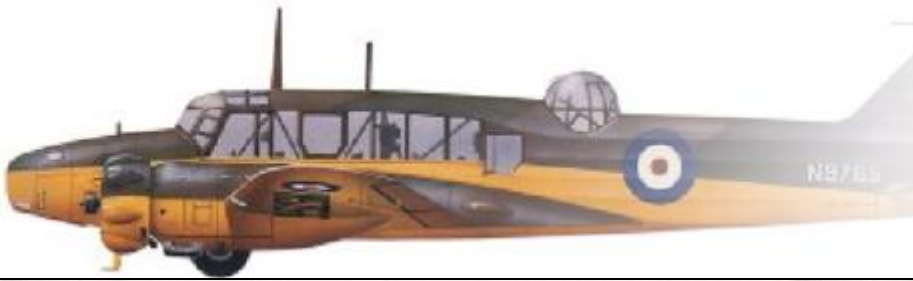
HERITAGE FACTSHEET

AVRO ANSON PLANE CRASH



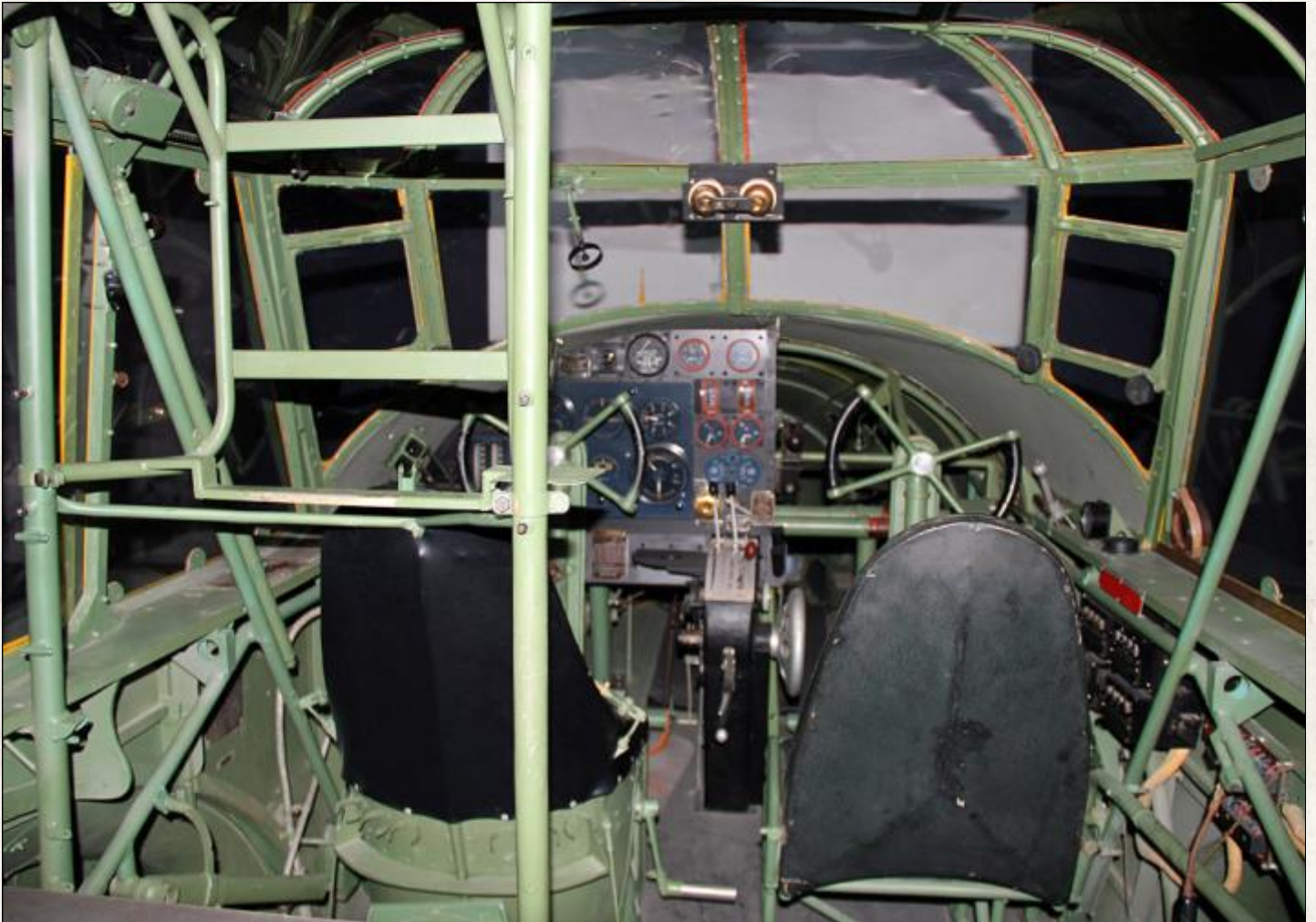
Avro Anson cockpit set up at the Canberra War Memorial February 2014.

Photograph © Anthony Dykes 2014.



HERITAGE FACTSHEET

AVRO ANSON PLANE CRASH



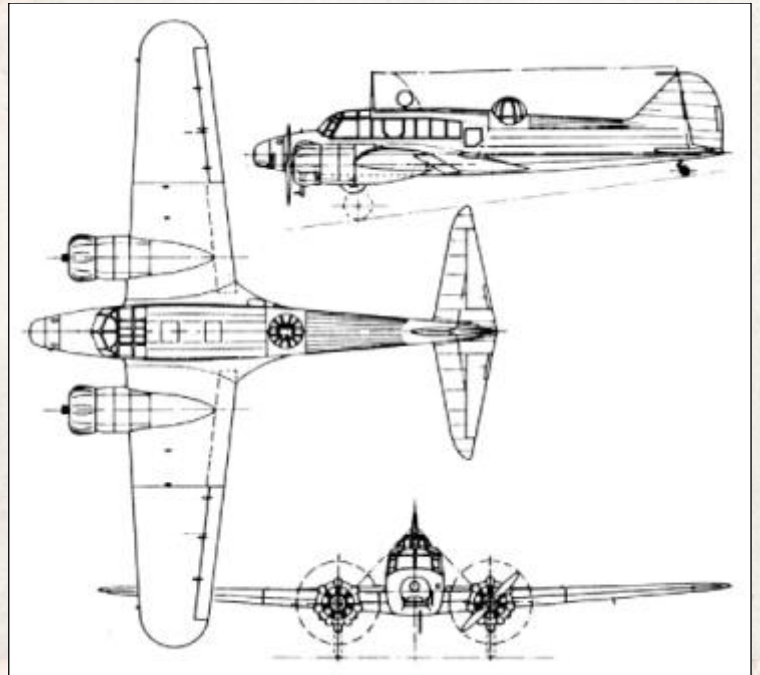
Avro Anson cockpit set up at the Canberra War Memorial February 2014

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, 300 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 Pearce 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 John Fry) discovered the lost military plane approximately 300 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

Corporal Francis Etienne Hyland (Age 27)

Corporal Herman Fred Sass (Age 23)
Corporal Wireless operator

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.

ARTWORKZ TOURISM WEBSITE

www.esplash.me

Visit our website for local Visitor Information Centres.

Brochures have been produced by passionate volunteers to help promote our District.

Disclaimer: The authors have taken care to ensure this publication is correct, though please be aware that errors and omissions do occur.

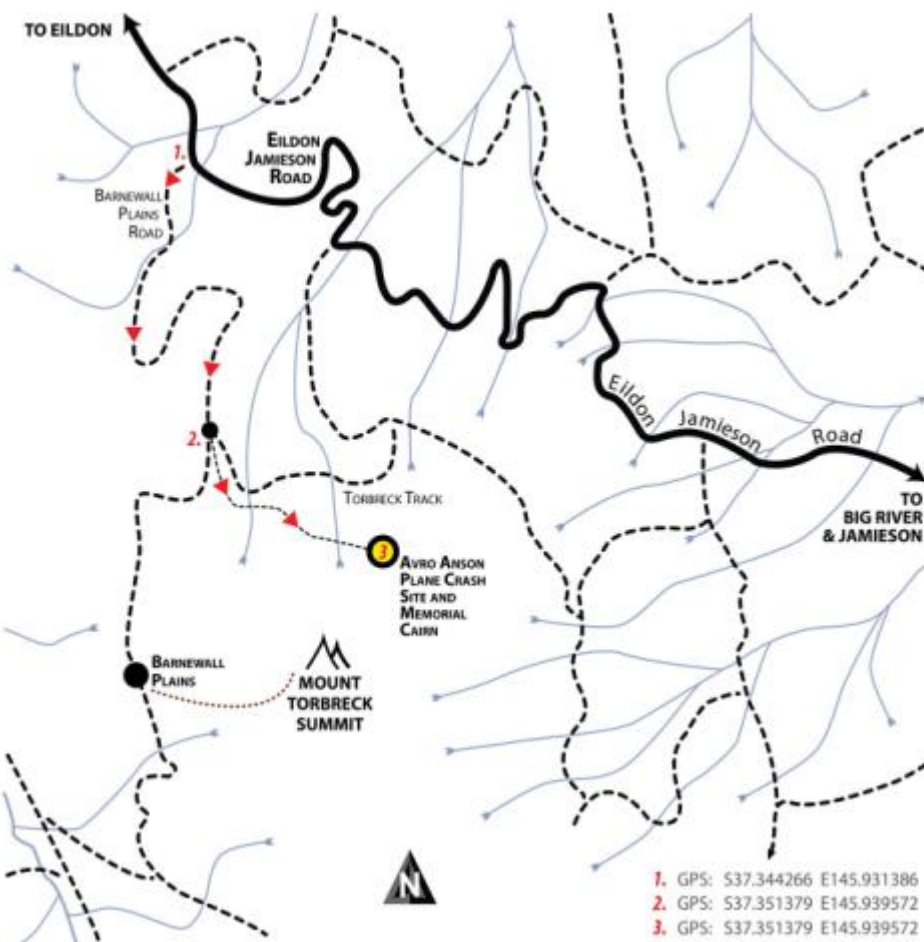
Last Updated: 22 April 2015 Brochure 159

EILDON

AVRO ANSON CRASH SITE MEMORIAL



Shaded by over 30 Mountains and on the banks of the beautiful Goulburn River and Lake Eildon. This is our playground!



1. GPS: S37.344266 E145.931386
2. GPS: S37.351379 E145.939572
3. GPS: S37.351379 E145.939572



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 of Eildon Jamieson Rd and Barnewall Plains Road.
3. Travel 4 km to the intersection of Barnewall Plains Rd and Torbreck Track.
4. Walk along the established walking track for 2.4 km to the memorial site.

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



HERITAGE FACTSHEET

THE SUMMIT ROCK CAIRN 2010



These rocks were erected at the summit of Mount Torbreck as part of the Geodetic Survey conducted 1858 - 1872 (Trig Survey: 126) and is listed in the Register of the National Estate. It was 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 300 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
Flight Officer A. Daniels
Corporals F.E. Hyland
F. Sass, I. Stowdor
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”***

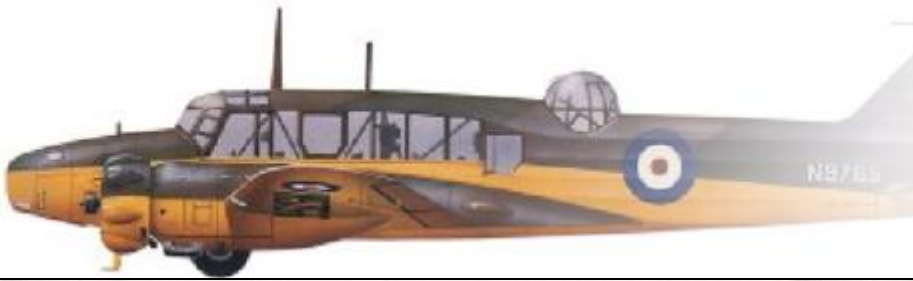


GPS: S37.351379 E145.939572



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 knew were
coming by their engine noise... the
Mustang and the Avro Anson.
Special noise from each."*

Trevor Hibbert 2014



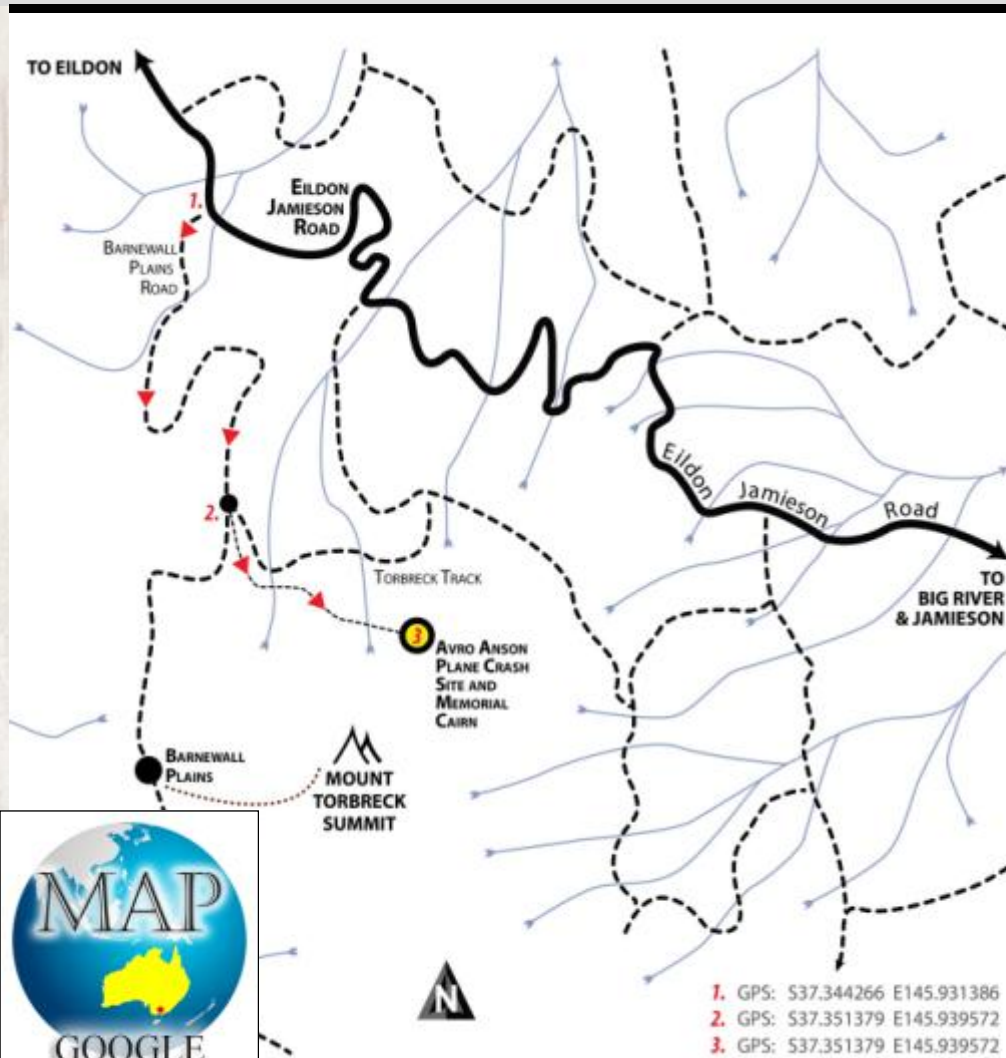
ARVO ANSON

INVITATION

RAAF AVRO ANSON A4-4
75th ANNIVERSARY &
MEMORIAL RE-OPENING
MOUNT TORBRECK
23 January 2016 at 1.00 pm



- You are cordially invited to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the discovery of RAAF Avro Anson A4-4 and her crew; Anthony Daniel, Francis Hyland, Fred Sass and Ivan Stowdor at Mount Torbreck Victoria.
- This special occasion will also coincide with the re-opening and an unveiling of additional infrastructure at the memorial site.
- Family members of the crew, RAAF officials, RSL members and various other government and local dignitaries will be in attendance.
- For directions to the carpark at the beginning of the walking track on Barnewall Plains Rd please see attached map.
- For people with a reasonable level of fitness allow one hour walk (2.4 km) to the memorial site for the 1pm start. For others that aren't quite physically able special transport will be available



FROM EILDON

- Travel 2.9 km from Eildon to the intersection of Eildon Jamieson Rd & Goulburn Valley Rd.
- Travel 10.7 km to the intersection of Eildon Jamieson Rd and Barnewall Plains Road.
- Travel 4 km to the intersection of Barnewall Plains Rd and Torbreck Track. This is the Avro Anson Memorial Site carpark.
- Walk along the established walking track for 2.4 km to the memorial site.

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.

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2. GPS: S37.351379 E145.939572
3. GPS: S37.351379 E145.939572



The official eSplash coverage of the re-opening ceremony



*Published
27 January
2016*

Press cover to read



Artworkz

Serving the Community