

Mudgee lad lies in Scotland

By EDWARD K. DeLONG
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More than 62 years ago a young Mudgee-born aviator, Francis Victor Suttor, set out from RAF Silloth air base in north west England on a training flight in a Wellington bomber.

He never returned, and until a few months ago the exact fate of his plane was one of the many mysteries left in the aftermath of World War II.

Francis, aged 25, was part of a mixed crew of Australian and New Zealand aviators training to fly in Wellington bomber LB137.

Other crewmembers included pilot Jeffrey Duddridge, 26; pilot Harry Dransfield, 21; RAAF Flight Officer Charles Cooper, 25, of Penhurst; RNZAF airman John Waldrop from Otago, NZ; and Francis' mate RAAF airman Reginald Canavan, 22, of Ashfield, NSW.

Today his body rests in a grave in Campbeltown, on the west coast of Scotland, beside other members of his crew.

On December 1, 1943, the crew took off in LB137 from RAF Silloth, located on Solway Firth between Scotland and England. They were on a training mission prior to going 'operational' in the battle against Germany.

The Vickers Wellington was a twin-engine medium bomber which was the main British bomber during the first part of WWII. Flown by a crew of six, it was armed with eight 7.7mm machine guns and could cruise at



A MUDGEE LAD'S GRAVE IN SCOTLAND: Francis Victor Suttor was killed in 1943 when his Wellington bomber crashed during a training flight. He was buried in Campbeltown, Scotland, near the site of the crash.



MYSTERY SOLVED: Geoff Bland of Brisbane examines the site where Wellington bomber LB137 crashed in 1943. The location of the crash site was a mystery for more than six decades. Mr Bland is a friend of crewmember Reginald Canavan, who was killed in the crash along with Mudgee-born Francis Victor Suttor and four other crewmembers.

410kph carrying 2014kg of bombs.

It was retiree Duncan McArthur who uncovered the story of LB137 in the course of trying to track down what happened to a total 22 planes that crashed in the vicinity of Campbeltown.

"She [Wellington LB137] was exercising with naval craft off the north of Ireland when she was reported missing," Mr McArthur wrote. "There were reports she had some sort of radio problems heading to wrong bearings being given. Initially she was thought to

have crashed in the sea.

"The aircraft was, however, spotted by accident by another aircraft from Prestwick. The wreck was about three-quarters of a mile northeast of The Mull of Kintyre lighthouse at 1300 feet.

"RAF teams recovered the bodies and took them to Campbeltown. The RAF removed the parts of the aircraft they needed to salvage, but the local scrap dealer a couple of days or so later dragged the majority of the stuff left back to the road side at a

small car park (very small, five cars).

"The local police were called and he was told to bugger off. However, the wreckage laid at this spot for quite a while 'till it was gradually removed by someone or other.

"The RAF, however, a few months later recorded this site at the carpark as the crash site [because of] seeing all the bits. Thus the [actual] crash site was lost for years," Mr McArthur wrote.

"I must point out that the area of this crash is very inhospitable, being covered by heather about three feet high and having lots of bogs — not the type of place to wander about in."

Mr McArthur said war records reported Francis Suttor was born in Mudgee, the son of Charles Raymond and Eva Suttor, and that by the time he entered the RAAF he was married to Dorothy Joy Suttor, listing his occupation as grazier and his usual place of residence as Coogee.

Mudgee region has a good Royal Easter Show

By DIANE SIMMONDS
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The humble Aussie chick is disappearing from most Australian backyards where only a generation ago it reigned supreme, but it appears you still can't take the chick out of some people, who fondly feed and groom their fine feathered friends to exhibit them in the Sydney Royal Easter Show each year.

Mudgee couple Pat and Dot Birchall have once again led the poultry world with fine exhibits.

Mr and Mrs Birchall won prizes in 77 classes at the Royal Easter, including:

- The David White Memorial for the Most Successful Exhibitor in the Large Fowl and Bantam Soft Feather Classes. This is the 15th year the Birchalls have won this prize.
- Champion Heavy Breed Team and Champion Bantam Breed Team (a male and six female)
- 12 champion sashes
- 31 firsts
- 17 seconds
- 9 thirds

And they are keeping some of this success in the family, with their granddaughter Claire Birchall winning four firsts for her bantams and Langshans and a Champion Bantam Pekin.

Mr Birchall has been fostering his love of chooks with his grandchildren, who, like most Aussie kids, love them and Claire is particularly proud of her Champion Royal ribbon.

Family friend Daryl Bishop of Mudgee also did us proud at the Royal Easter this year, being made the RAS Legend.

Mr Bishop made headline news with the announcement, given for his dedicated service to the Royal Show.

Mr Bishop and James Parlevliet won Reserve Champion Welsh Pony Stallion, winning two out of three stallion classes and two out of four mare classes.

Mr Bishop also won Senior Champion Dairy Goat Doe, Best Dairy Udder Exhibit, and Senior Champion Saanen Doe and Best Dairy Goat in Show as well as the Most Successful Sire Competition.

Cattle also did extremely well in the region, with Pine Creek Angus Stud at Bylong winning a swag of ribbons, including Junior Champion Bull, Senior Champion Bull, Grand Champion Bull, the GT Reid Memorial Perpetual Cup, Fordhouse Perpetual Bowl, The Abington Perpetual Tray Perpetual Trophy, the Andrew Reid Perpetual Trophy and the Peter Duddy Perpetual Trophy.

The Wakeling Family of Mudgee also did well, winning the Reserve Junior Champion Bull and other awards with their Dexter cattle.



Pat Birchall with his grandchildren, Emma and Claire. Mr Birchall is holding his Most Successful Exhibit, black Australian Langshan pullet and Claire her Champion Bantam 'Pekin Furness'.

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Murrumbo Part of Rylstone also had some good wins, including Supreme Beef Championship.

Spokesperson for Kaludabah Limousins, Sally McFarland said the Royal had a spectacular display of 230 Limousin in the show ring.

"Kaludabah's recent purchase of

Kensal Yeppoon won Senior Champion Bull," Ms McFarland said.

"Three of our four Heifers won ribbons in highly contested classes."

Ms McFarland said in the Steer Show on Friday, Limousins won every class with the School's Steer winning the Championship.

CLEARING SALE

SAT 29TH APRIL, 2006

50 Windeyer Road, Grattai (Property Sold)

HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

4 Dining room chairs, Coffee Table, Telephone table, Olivetti Word Processor Computer backed, Portable typewriter, 4 Machined wooden table legs, Large quantity of paint, 3 Burner Gas BBQ, Riobi Whipper snipper, Garden Roller, 1/2 Acre Bug Zapper & hanging frame, Large quantity poly flower pots, Wheeled fertiliser spreader

FARM EQUIPMENT

Slasher, Super spreader, Scarifier, Ripper, Two fence wire spinners, Post driver, Post lifter, Fencing equipment, Fire fighter pump, Large Husqvarna chainsaw, Husqvarna chainsaw, Drench gun, Wool clippers, Meat saw & two cleavers, Quantities of Poly Pipe & fittings

TOOLS

6ft x 4ft Box/Boat trailer, Set of wood drills & brace, Stanley wood plane, Bolt cutters, Disc sander on pedestal, Extension ladder, Two hydraulic jacks, Two car jack stands

PLUS NUMEROUS OTHER ITEMS
PLEASE SEE OFFICE FOR FULL LIST

Outside Vendors Invited

Denis 0428 670 675 Adam 0409 721 703



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Richardson & Wrench
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