

RAAF Townsville September 1945 (75 years on)

08 September 1945 USAAF Mitchell B-25M aircraft 43-4913 (JACKNIC SNR), departed Townsville for Biak via north coast Australia (LNP 19deg 15' S 146deg 46'E) -no further news.

18 September 1945 RAAF 38 Squadron Dakota A65-61 (VH-CUT) failed to arrive Townsville from Biak –no trace found during searches in New Guinea- not likely to have reached Australian mainland.

On 16 October 1968 an American Missionary, Jerry Reeder spotted aircraft wreckage while flying his aircraft at 14,000 ft across the Nassau Range in West Irian Jaya. The wreckage was on the side of Mount Carstens.

Reeder returned in mid 1970 in a Bell Ranger helicopter and identified the crashed aircraft as VH-CUT.

On 03 December 1970 the Australian military implemented Operation “Tropic Snow” to recover the 29 remains of those killed in this tragic crash.

The remains were buried in the Bomana Port Moresby War Cemetery with full military honors on the 26 January 1971. The Pacific Island Regiment together with Pipes and Drums took part in the moving ceremony, attended by service representatives and families of the deceased.

RAAF Personnel lost:

Aircraft Crew

Warrant Officer Arthur Jack Hunter 411069 of Swansea, 38 Squadron

Warrant Officer Albert Clifford Hughes 414566, 24 years of Warialda, 38 Squadron

Warrant Officer Eric Wilkinson 405949, 33 years of Ipswich, Qld, 38 Squadron

Flight Sergeant Keith Robert Wiles 27141, 24 years of Footscray, Vic, 38 Squadron
Medical Staff

Sister Marie Eileen Craig 501399 RAAF Nursing Sister, 33 years of Drummoyne, of
Nr 2 Medical Air Evacuation and Transport Unit

Sergeant Francis Leonard Henry Blackmore 47042, 28 years of Nr 2 Medical Air
Evacuation and Transport Unit

RAAF Passengers

Flying Officer Noel Royce Stibbard 42110, 24 years of Wollongong Nr 2 Medical Air
Evacuation and Transport Unit

Warrant Officer Allan Campbell 412376, 27 years of Manning River 38 Squadron

Leading Aircraftsman William Royce Dunderdale 170241, 19 years of Oxley, Qld, 38
Squadron

Army Passengers lost:

One Officer

One SNCO

17. OR'S

Information sourced from:

Diary of WW2 North Queensland by Peter Nielsen, edit(1)

Peter Dunn <http://www.ozatwar.com/ozcrashes/qld150.htm>

B.M.H

12 September 2020