



**Branch Patron**

Air Commodore Tony Jones

**President**

Trevor Beams  
4 Pullen Court  
KIRWAN QLD 4817  
Phone: 07-4773 4310 or 0455 940 615  
email: [raafatvlbranchpres@gmail.com](mailto:raafatvlbranchpres@gmail.com)

**Secretary**

Basil Nelson  
PO Box 4031  
KIRWAN QLD 4817  
Phone: 07-4773 7175 or 0456 992 621  
email: [raafatvlsectr@gmail.com](mailto:raafatvlsectr@gmail.com)

AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION – TOWNSVILLE BRANCH

# FLIGHTLINE

Volume 20 No. 7

**Next Branch Meeting**

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2020

1000 Hours

RSL, HMAS Room

**Next Branch Event**

Sausage Sizzle/Picnic  
(Jezzine Park, Cook St)

25<sup>th</sup> October 2020

1100 Hours

★★★★★★ This publication relies on you for its content ★★★★★★

On behalf of all members, we wish the following members a very Happy Birthday.

★ **HAPPY** ★  
**BIRTHDAY!**

**October**

6<sup>th</sup> October Allan O'Connor  
12<sup>th</sup> October Brent Villiers  
21<sup>st</sup> October Chris Wootten  
24<sup>th</sup> October Phillip Johnson  
29<sup>th</sup> October Gary Lane  
31<sup>st</sup> October Doug Bower

**November**

4<sup>th</sup> November Gary Young  
14<sup>th</sup> November Deb Fifield

If we have missed anyone, please forgive us and have a Happy Birthday.

## CONTENTS

Volume 20 No. 6

- 2 Member Profile
- 2 The CAC Sabre
- 3 A Book in Review
- 3 A Night Out
- 4 Aviation Humour
- 4 The CAC Sabre *continued from pg 2*
- 5 Padre in the Sandpit
- 5 Upcoming social events

## MEMBER PROFILE

Learn some interesting facts about your friends with this insightful probe into a member's life.

### Eddie Albert



*Where were you born?*

**Babinda, Qld**

*Where did you go to school?*

**Cardwell Primary and Tully High Secondary.**

*What are your interests/hobbies?*

**Playing and singing with Guitar and Woodworking**

*Do you have a favourite book/movie/song?*

**No favorite book , but True Australian outback yarns of Droving and Hardships are best. Movie. Coalminers Daughter and Song. Someone Killed Country Music.**

*When did you join the military?*

**15 July 1966. Discharged around August 1972.**

*Where was your favourite posting?*


**Williamtown NSW.**

*What is on top of your bucket list?*

**Visit Kakadu NT.**

*What do you like about Townsville?*

**The weather, great people**



**THE NQ CABLE GUY**

**Odilo Alvarez**  
Mobile: 0418 985 934  
Email: [nqcableguy@gmail.com](mailto:nqcableguy@gmail.com)  
<https://www.facebook.com/nqcableguy>

Digital Antenna Install and Service  
TV Wall mounting  
TV, DVD & Foxtel tuning  
CCTV TV Installation and service  
AND MORE

**15% Discount for Association Members**

Servicing All Areas  
Experienced, Reliable  
& Efficient  
Mt Louisa QLD 4814  
Digital Antennas, Installation  
Upgrades & Service

## THE CAC SABRE

The **CAC Sabre**, sometimes known as the **Avon Sabre** or **CA-27**, is an Australian variant of the North American Aviation F-86F Sabre fighter aircraft. The F-86F was redesigned and built by the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation (CAC). Equipping five RAAF squadrons, the type saw action in the Malayan Emergency in the late 1950s, and was employed for air defence in Malaysia and Thailand in the 1960s. Ex-RAAF models also saw service with the Royal Malaysian Air Force and the Indonesian Air Force.

### Development

In 1951, CAC obtained a licence agreement to build the F-86F Sabre. In a major departure from the North American blueprint, it was decided that the CA-27 would be powered by a licence-built version of the Rolls-Royce Avon R.A.7, rather than the General Electric J47. In theory, the Avon was capable of more than double the maximum thrust and double the thrust-to-weight ratio of the US engine. This necessitated a re-design of the fuselage, as the Avon was shorter, wider and lighter than the J47. Because of the engine change the type is sometimes referred to as the **Avon Sabre**. To accommodate the Avon, over 60 percent of the fuselage was altered and there was a 25 percent increase in the size of the air intake. Another major revision was in replacing the F-86F's six machine guns with two 30mm ADEN cannon, while other changes were also made to the cockpit and to provide an increased fuel capacity.

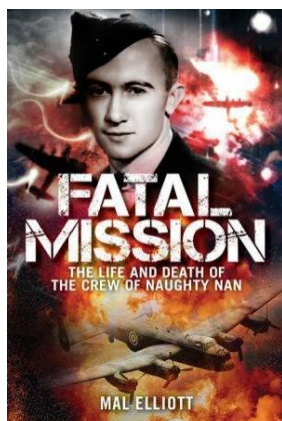
The prototype aircraft (designated **CA-26 Sabre**) first flew on 3 August 1953. The production aircraft were designated the **CA-27 Sabre** and first deliveries to the Royal Australian Air Force began in 1954. The first batch of aircraft were powered by the Avon 20 engine and were designated the **Sabre Mk 30**. Between 1957 and 1958 this batch had the wing slats removed and were redesignated **Sabre Mk 31**. These Sabres were supplemented by 20 new-build aircraft. The last batch of aircraft were designated **Sabre Mk 32** and used the Avon 26 engine, of which 69 were built up to 1961.



A94-901 (Mk 30), the first production CAC Sabre, in the colours of the "Black Panthers" aerobatics team of No. 76 Squadron

(continued on page 4)

## A BOOK IN REVIEW



### Authors

Mal Elliot

### ISBN

9781922265142

### Published

05/05/2019

### Binding

Paperback

Pages 224

Price \$29.99

Fatal Mission is the story of Australian navigator Oscar Furniss, just one of 55,000 young men who perished while flying for Bomber Command during World War II.

Lovingly crafted by his nephew, Mal Elliott, this book brings to life a young man whose name was never spoken by his family and who was a stranger to his modern-day descendants. Elliott follows Oscar from his carefree childhood in the Blue Mountains through his training over the vast emptiness of Canada to the mist-shrouded patchwork landscapes of Britain and on to the hostile skies of occupied France.

He uses the accounts of the two surviving aircrew to piece together the events of the fateful night that saw most of the crew of Lancaster JA901, affectionally know as Naughty Nan, perish as pilot Colin Dickson heroically manoeuvred his burning aircraft away from the towns and villages that dotted the landscape.

This has been a difficult book for Elliott to write as it contains a harrowing description of his uncle's last moments. The terrible impact of the deaths of the aircrew are vividly described alongside the miraculous tales of the two survivors. But for the family of Oscar Furniss there would be no miracle, just the lingering weight of deep and lasting grief.

This is a story that moves beyond the technical descriptions of bombing missions to describe the human toll of conflict. It underlines the crucial importance of commemoration, of refusing to allow those who perished in war to be forgotten. Theirs was a sacrifice that we who live in freedom should never forget.

*Have you read a good book lately that you think other members may enjoy? Then write a brief review and send it in for inclusion in our newsletter*

## A NIGHT OUT

On 19<sup>th</sup> September a group of members and their partners experienced a wonderful night out at the Stage Door Theatre Restaurant on Magnetic Island. The performance, "The Ultimate ABBA Show", was a hit with the group and was complimented by some good food and the odd drink or two.



The show had all the sparkle and long hair of the 70s, not to mention the flairs and platform shoes. Our hosts and performers, Bernadette Smith and Kevin Wright, created a memorable show full of recognisable music (sometimes with alternate lyrics), fun commentary and dazzling costumes.



Of course audience participation is always part of these shows. We did tell him not to sit at the front near the stage . . . . Fortunately he didn't have to sing!!!

Overall, a good night was had by all





# AVIATION HUMOUR



*The CAC Sabre – continued from page 2*

## Operational history

The RAAF operated the CA-27 from 1954 to 1971. The Aircraft Research and Development Unit (ARDU) received the first example in August 1954; re-delivered to No. 2 (Fighter) Operational Training Unit (2 OTU) in November. Over the next six years the Sabres progressively equipped 75 Sqn, 3 Sqn, 77 Sqn) and 76Sqn.

From 1958 to 1960, CAC Sabres of 78 Wing, comprising 3 Sqn and 77 Sqn, undertook several ground attack sorties against communist insurgents in the Federation of Malaya, during the Malayan Emergency. Following the Emergency, they remained in Malaysia at RAAF Butterworth. Armed with Sidewinder missiles, the Sabres were responsible for regional air defence during the *Konfrontasi* between Indonesia and Malaysia from 1963 until 1966, though no combat took place. Between October and December 1965, a detachment of six Sabres, initially from 77 Sqn and later from 3 Sqn, was based at Labuan to conduct combat patrols over the Indonesian–Malaysian border on Borneo.

In 1962, a detachment of eight CAC Sabres, which was later expanded and designated 79 Sqn, was sent from RMAF Butterworth to RAAF Ubon, Thailand, to assist the Thai and Laotian governments in actions against communist insurgents. Australia and Thailand were allies of South Vietnam and the United States during the Vietnam War; 79 Sqn was responsible for local air defence at Ubon, where USAF attack and bomber aircraft were based. The squadron never engaged North Vietnamese aircraft or ground forces. Two Sabres were lost to engine failure in Thailand, in September 1964 and January 1968. 79 Sqn ceased operations and was deactivated in July 1968.

## IT'S NEARLY CHRISTMAS . . . .

Santa Claus, like all pilots, gets regular visits from the Civil Aviation Authority, and the CAA examiner arrived last week for the pre-Christmas flight check.

In preparation, Santa had the elves wash the sled and bathe all the reindeer. Santa got his logbook out and made sure all his paperwork was in order. He knew they would examine all his equipment and truly put Santa's flying skills to the test.

The examiner walked slowly around the sled. He checked the reindeer harnesses, the landing gear, and Rudolph's nose. He painstakingly reviewed Santa's weight and balance calculations for the sled's enormous payload.

Finally, they were ready for the checkride. Santa got in and fastened his seatbelt and shoulder harness and checked the compass. Then the examiner hopped in carrying, to Santa's surprise, a shotgun.

"What's that for?!?" asked Santa incredulously. The examiner winked and said, "I'm not supposed to tell you this ahead of time," as he leaned over to whisper in Santa's ear, "but you're gonna lose an engine on takeoff."

The RAAF began re-equipping with the Dassault Mirage III in 1964. The last Sabres in Australian service, operated by 5 OTU, were retired in July 1971.



<b>Role</b>	Fighter aircraft
<b>National origin</b>	United States / Australia
<b>Manufacturer</b>	Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation
<b>First flight</b>	3 August 1953
<b>Introduction</b>	1954
<b>Retired</b>	1971 (Royal Australian Air Force) 1982 (Indonesian Air Force)
<b>Status</b>	Retired, 1 active as a warbird
<b>Primary users</b>	Royal Australian Air Force Indonesian Air Force Royal Malaysian Air Force
<b>Produced</b>	1953-1961
<b>Number built</b>	112
<b>Unit cost</b>	\$510,000 (1956)
<b>Developed from</b>	North American F-86 Sabre

## Padre in the Sandpit

Wayne is not feeling great at the moment so we will miss his article this time round. Get well soon Wayne.



*Padre Wayne Melrose,  
Townsville Branch Chaplain*

---

## UPCOMING SOCIAL EVENTS

### **Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> October – Sausage Sizzle/Picnic**



Feel like a sausage on bread? You don't need to go to Bunnings – come along to Jezzine Park, off Cook St, at 1100 and get your share for a gold coin donation. Plenty of parking available as well as toilets, grassed areas and childrens playground. Please bring your own everything (no alcohol allowed in the park) and we'll provide the sausages (cooked of course), onions, bread and sauces (tomato & BBQ). All members and families (including extended families) and friends welcome. **Please let me know no later than Thursday, 22<sup>nd</sup> October if you will be attending** and how many in your party

### **Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December - Christmas Lunch**

As we near the end of the year, it's time to get ready for our annual Christmas Luncheon. The function has been booked for **Sunday, 13th December**, at **1130**. **Please let me know no later than 4th December if you will be attending** and how many in your party. This function is open to members, families and friends. It will be greatly appreciated if you could bring a gift up to the value of \$10 to be prizes in our raffle.



Do you have a story to tell, a joke to make us smile, a poem, an event you want to tell us about or anything else you think our readership would be interested in? Then send it to [raafatvlsectr@gmail.com](mailto:raafatvlsectr@gmail.com). You never know, you could be the next Walkley Award winner.

