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AUSTRALIAN ARCHIVES
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HISTORICAL RECORDS

No. 453 SQUADRON

1942 1944

ANM 64

[1/230]

BY AIR MAIL

ENCLOSURE

1A

18/11/43/Air/11977

SECRET

12/5/43

The Secretary,
Department of Air,
Victoria Barracks,
MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA.

HISTORICAL RECORDS

No. 453 SQUADRON : R.A.A.F.

Forwarded herewith for historical records is a brief history of No. 453 Squadron, R.A.A.F., from the date of formation until 26/3/43, extracted from the Operations Records Books.

2. Please acknowledge receipt.

Sgd W.B. Tart

(W. B. TART),
Squadron Leader, for
Air Vice Marshal,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING

Secret

ENCLOSURE 18

HISTORY OF NO. 453 SQUADRON, R.A.A.F.

18th June, 1942 to 31st March, 1943

JUNE 18th, 1942. The Squadron started to form at R.A.F. Station, Drem, Squadron Leader Morello being its Commanding Officer.

The Officer and Airman pilots of the Squadron at this time are as follows: -

Aus. 403046 Sgt. R.C. Ford and Aus. 405519 Sgt. F.R. McDermott were among the first to join the unit. Aus. 411059 P/O. F.T. Thornley, Aus. 405117 P/O. R.H. Ewins and Aus. 416070 Sgt. G. Whiteford were also foundation members. Apart from a few highly experienced pilots from other services, flying personnel was all Australian and include Aus. 408606 P/O. T.A. Swift, Aus. 408172 P/O. R.J. Darcey, Aus. 401666 P/O. D.J. Reid, Aus. 416235 P/O. C.G. Riley, Aus. 403294 Sgt. L.J. Hansell, Aus. 401784 Sgt. J.R. Furlong, Aus. 401543 Sgt. G.J. Stansfield, Aus. 403278 Sgt. B.T. Nossiter, Aus. 401558 Sgt. W.J. White and Aus. 405575 Sgt. M.H.I. De Cosier, also F/Lt. Cock who is an R.A.F. Officer.

JUNE 26th, 1942. Flying was commenced on a limited scale owing to the newness of aircraft, shortage of equipment and shortage of experienced N.C.O's.

JULY 10th, 1942. Squadron started to provide readiness sections.

JULY 15th, 1942. Up to date the Squadron was run as one flight, partly because only half the pilots had arrived, but mainly because F/Lt. Hill, Canadian, was the only Flight Commander on the strength. On the arrival of F/Lt. Cock, D.F.C. the Squadron was divided, F/Lt. Cock taking Command of "A" Flight and F/Lt. Hill becoming Flight Commander of "B" Flight.

JULY 25th, 1942. F/Lt. Campbell-Colquhoun, British, was posted to the Squadron and took over "A" Flight.

AUGUST 1st, 1942. The Squadron suffered its first casualty when Aus. 416285 P/O. C.G. Riley crashed into a farmhouse and was killed. The occupants of the farmhouse were not injured.

AUGUST 3rd, 1942. F/Lt. Cock, D.F.C. once more took over the Command of "A" Flight.

AUGUST 4th, 1942. P/O. C.G. Riley was buried at Leuchars.

Aus. 405111 F/Lt. J.R. Ratten arrived and took over Command of "A" Flight.

AUGUST 8th, 1942. The Squadron was inspected by Air Chief Marshal Sir. W. Sholto Douglas, K.C.B., A.C., D.F.C., the A.O.C. of Fighter Command.

AUGUST 12th, 1942. Today the Squadron had its first Operational flights, two sections being sent up to intercept two enemy aircraft. No contact was made with the enemy but as Sgt. Ford came in to land he was followed in by a JU.88 which dropped eight bombs. There were no casualties.

AUGUST 14th, 1942. The Squadron was visited by the Press. The visit was arranged and conducted by F/Lt. Gibson, Public Relations Officer of H.Q. No. 13 Group and practically every newspaper in Australia, and most of those in Scotland were represented.

AUGUST 15th - 22nd, 1942. During this period a large number of the Squadrons aircraft were lent to 222 Squadron for use at Dieppe.

AUGUST 21st, 1942. P/O. Sobiecki and Sgt. De Cosier took off to chase an unidentified aircraft but no trace of the aircraft could be found.

AUGUST 28th, 1942. Another fatal accident occurred today when Aus. 416291 Sgt. D.H. Steele's aircraft dived to earth from 20,000 ft. Sgt. Steel has gone up with Sgt. Leith to practice dog fighting.

SEPTEMBER 5th, 1942. Squadron Leader Morello married in London. During his absence P/Lt. Harrison took over command.

SEPTEMBER 6th, 1942. Two aircraft were sent up to intercept a bandit which turned out to be a Blenheim.

SEPTEMBER 23rd, 1942. Farewell party was held in Officers Mess as Squadron was to move to Hornchurch the next day. Silver tankard presented to S/Ldr. Morello as wedding present from the Squadron.

SEPTEMBER 24th, 1942. The main party under the command of P/O. Browton left Drem for Hornchurch, taking with them nearly all the equipment.

SEPTEMBER 25th, 1942. The rear party travelled to Hornchurch by air transport

OCTOBER 1nd, 1942. Pilots and other officers together with eighteen aircraft left for Southend to take part in "Aflame" operation.

SWEEP. The Squadron did its first sweep - eleven aircraft taking part. Route: - Ostend-Ipres-Dunkirk. There were no engagements with enemy aircraft.

OCTOBER 6th, 1942. SWEEP to Boulogne-Dieppe-Cap Gria Nez, 19 aircraft taking part. The Squadron was not engaged.

OCTOBER 9th, 1942. Squadron returned to Hornchurch.

OCTOBER 11th, 1942. FIGHTER SWEEP was carried out with eleven aircraft taking part. On the homeward journey our aircraft were followed by 6 F.w.190s which did not attack. Sgts. Hossiter and Mensies, who were weaving, collided with each other and both were reported "missing believed killed."

OCTOBER 12th, 1943. ESCORT. Ten aircraft took off to escort Whirlwinds to attack E-boats. Nothing was seen.

OCTOBER 27th, 1943. RHUBARB. Five aircraft took off to attack troops near Bruges. On reaching Ostend however, there was no cloud and accordingly the section turned down the coast.

OCTOBER 31st, 1943. COMBAT. While on Convoy Patrol Aus. 401784 Sgt. J.R. Purlong had engine trouble and was last seen diving into the sea. He was reported missing believed killed. Four sections of the Squadron got mixed up with the large number of enemy aircraft sent over to attack Canterbury. Aus. 404811 P/O. Galway was shot down but managed to bale out and was picked up from his dingy by an A.S.R. launch the next day. Aus. 411404 Sgt. Swift claims one JU.88 damaged.

NOVEMBER 1st, 1943. Aus. 405111 P/Lt. Ratten posted to command the Squadron. S/Ldr. Morello who is far from well is awaiting posting.

NOVEMBER 6th, 1943. SWEEP to St. Omer with eleven aircraft of the Squadron taking part.

NOVEMBER 8th, 1943. SWEEP to Felixstowe-Sunkirk-Gravelines with 12 aircraft taking part.

Aus. 407662 P/Lt. Barclay is now Flight Commander of "A" Flight.

NOVEMBER 19th, 1942. Intended RHUBARB by two aircraft was not carried out. Aircraft arrived at Knocke instead of Blankenburgh and owing to the heavy defences did not attack.

NOVEMBER 24th, 1942. Aircraft, pilots and half the ground personnel moved to Martlesham for an Air Firing course.

DECEMBER 1st-6th, 1942. Squadron still at Martlesham.

DECEMBER 7th, 1942. Squadron moved to Southend.

DECEMBER 9th, 1942. SWEEP to Calais-Cap Gris Nez with twelve aircraft taking part. No enemy aircraft were engaged.

DECEMBER 10th, 1942. ATTACK ON ENEMY SHIPPING. Shipping Reconnaissance in the area of Blankenberg and Flushing, six aircraft attacked 4 merchant ships, one of which was left on fire. Aus. 402823 F/Lt. Yarra and Aus. 405575 P/O. De Cozier were shot into the sea and have been reported 'missing believed killed.'

DECEMBER 12th, 1942. SWEEP to Nieupoort and Ypres with twelve aircraft taking part. There was no engagement with enemy aircraft.

DECEMBER 20th, 1942. SWEEP to Abbeville with ten aircraft taking part. There was a fair amount of flak but all the aircraft returned safely.

JANUARY 2nd, 1943. SWEEP to Abbeville, twelve aircraft taking part. No enemy aircraft or flak were encountered.

JANUARY 9th, 1943. SWEEP to Mardyck, twelve aircraft taking part.

JANUARY 15th, 1943. SWEEP to St. Omer with eleven aircraft taking part. Heavy flak was encountered at Dunkirk and F/Lt. Andrews aircraft was holed in several places.

JANUARY 14th, 1943. V/Odr. Slater temporarily took over command of the Squadron.

JANUARY 19th, 1943. Weather has been very bad and not fit for flying, which is just as well as a number of pilots are in hospital with feverish colds.

FEBRUARY 3rd, 1943. CIRCUS in the morning escorting Venturas to Cambrai. Thirteen aircraft took part.

CIRCUS in the afternoon escorting Venturas to Abbeville. Twelve aircraft took part.

Squadron Leader Ratten returned and once more took over command of the Squadron.

FEBRUARY 6th, 1943. Aus. 411059 P/O. Thornley took part in football match between R.A.A.F. and New Zealand Combined Services. The N.Z.s won 8-5.

FEBRUARY 9th, 1943. A Dornier 217 passed over the aerodrome. F/Sgt. Wood was machine gunned, but not hit, while cycling to the Sergeants Mess.

SPECIAL SHIPPING RECONNAISSANCE was carried out by two aircraft over Ostend, Flushing, West Kapelle, Zeebrugge and Blankenburg. Intense flak was experienced and valuable information was brought back.

FEBRUARY 15th, 1943. ESCORT. Eleven aircraft escorted bombers to Dunkirk and all returned safely.

FEBRUARY 16th, 1943. SWEEP to Dunkirk-St. Omer-Boulogne. Eleven aircraft took part. Squadron was not engaged.

FEBRUARY 17th, 1943. ESCORT. Eleven aircraft escorted bombers over France but owing to thick cloud target could not be seen so bombers and escort returned.

FEBRUARY 26th, 1943. CIRCUS. This was a big day, the Squadron taking part in three Circus operations. At 09.45 eleven aircraft took off to escort bombers to Dunkirk. Owing to cloud conditions no bombs were dropped.

At 1400 hours twelve aircraft took off to escort bombers. Bombs were dropped and heavy flak was experienced but all our aircraft returned safely.

At 1635 hours twelve aircraft took off to escort bombers to Dunkirk. Accurate flak was experienced in the target area but all our aircraft returned safely.

FEBRUARY 27th, 1943. CIRCUS. Ten aircraft took off to escort bombers to Dunkirk. Flak experienced but no damage was sustained by our aircraft.

MARCH 1st-14th, 1943. Squadron was engaged on Exercise "Spartan".

MARCH 14th, 1943. RODEO with twelve aircraft taking part. No enemy aircraft were seen and no flak was experienced.

RAMROD. 12 aircraft escorted bombers to Abbeville. All returned safely.

MARCH 22nd, 1943. 8 aircraft took part in some army air support.

MARCH 24th, 1943. RAMROD 11 aircraft took off to escort bombers to Abbeville marshalling yards but had to return owing to bad weather conditions.

MARCH 25th, 1943. ESCORT. 12 aircraft escorted bombers to Le Crotey. All aircraft returned safely.

MARCH 26th, 1943. Two aircraft carried out RHUBARB in Knocke-Dixmade area. 1 barge and 2 locomotives were damaged.

During the month of March, flying has been greatly restricted owing to the bad weather conditions.

BY AIR MAIL.

2A

184/114/Air/12876

22/6/43.

SECRET

The Secretary,
Department of Air,
Victoria Barracks,
Melbourne, Australia.

1A

HISTORICAL RECORDS

No. 453 Squadron : R.A.A.F.

Further to this Headquarters
letter 184/114/Air/11977, dated 12/5/43,

2. Attached is brief history of
No. 453 Squadron, R.A.A.F. for April
and May, 1943, compiled from the Operations
Records Books.
3. Please acknowledge receipt.

W.B.T.

(W.B. TART)
Squadron Leader, for
Air Vice Marshal,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

History of No. 453 Squadron (contd).

APRIL, 1943.

APRIL 3rd, 1943. ROBED. Eleven aircraft made an uneventful sweep over the St. Omer - Gris Mes area.

APRIL 4th, 1943. ROBED. Eleven aircraft took off, but owing to bad weather conditions returned after flying fifty miles out to sea.

RAIROD. Eleven aircraft carried out a Raided operation. Squadron made orbit over Berck as warned of twenty enemy aircraft. Eight F.W.190's were sighted but not attacked. Squadron withdrew to Le Touquet and back over Dungeness.

APRIL 5th, 1943. RAIROD. Ten aircraft orbited over West Kapelle waiting for bombers. Joined up and came out West Hoofd where warned of 50 plus enemy aircraft but nothing seen. All aircraft returned safely.

APRIL 8th, 1943. CIRCUS - COMBAT. Twelve aircraft carried out a circus over Cayeux-Abbeville area. The wing was led by S/Ldr. Ratten. Eight F.W.190's were attacked, and two claimed as damaged. All our aircraft returned safely.

APRIL 10th, 1943. The Under Secretary of State for Air, Lord Sherwood, accompanied by Lord Wisborne, paid a visit to the Squadron, and were introduced to the pilots by S/Ldr. Ratten.

APRIL 11th, 1943. Air Vice Marshal Coles and W/Cdr. Ryland, R.A.A.F. visited the squadron.

APRIL 13th, 1943. RAIROD. In the morning eleven aircraft from the Squadron with Wing led by Squadron Leader Ratten acted as top cover and free lance to Whirlibombers. Swept Blankenburgh-Bruges-Scullers-Ypres-St. Omer-Le Touquet area and returned safely to base.

RAIROD. Thirteen aircraft again led by S/Ldr. Ratten carried out another raid in the afternoon. Swept St. Omer-Bangatte area.

APRIL 14th, 1943. RAIROD. Nine aircraft swept over Blankenburgh-Bruges-Bangatte area. No enemy aircraft were seen.

APRIL 15th, 1943. RAIROD. The Squadron did a First Echelon to a Bomphoon raid in the Le Harve area. Ten aircraft took part in this operation.

APRIL 17th, 1943. CIRCUS. Eleven aircraft carried out a circus to Berck. About forty F.W.190's were sighted but no engagement took place.

CIRCUS. Ten aircraft escorted bombers to Zebruge. Good bombing results were observed.

APRIL 18th, 1943. ROBED. Ten aircraft carried out a sweep to Daberg.

RAIROD. Eleven aircraft swept over Nieuport. Bomphoons and Typhoons were seen in the Dunkirk area.

APRIL 20th, 1943. A/Comdr. Thomas, W/Cdr. Sims, Sir Frederick Goldberg and Sir William Fraser visited the Station.

CIRCUS. Eleven aircraft carried out a sweep over the Amblesouse-Marduck area. All aircraft returned safely.

RAIROD. Eleven aircraft carried out sweep. They were warned of enemy aircraft off Dieppe and 5 F.W. 190's were sighted. Squadron did not attack.

APRIL 21st, 1943. CIRCUS carried out by eleven aircraft over the Le Touquet-Abbeville-Gravelles area. Enemy aircraft were seen but no engagement took place.

APRIL 29th, 1943. RAMROD Seven aircraft took part but after orbiting Hastings twice failed to rendezvous with Shirlibbers. Crossed to France independently and swept the Abbeville area. All aircraft returned safely.

MAY, 1943.

MAY 1st, 1943. CIRCUS. Eleven aircraft took part but owing to cloud conditions the French coast was not seen. Sweep was presumably over Pecamp/Le Havre area.

MAY 4th, 1943. CIRCUS was carried out by eleven aircraft over the Abbeville-Laeretroy area. All aircraft returned safely.

MAY 5th, 1943. Major Egerton-Smith visited the Station and lectured on Air Co-operation with the Army.

MAY 7th, 1943. RODED. Twelve aircraft carried out an uneventful sweep to Abbeville. All returned safely.

May 10th, 1943. A lecture was given by Sgt. Wareling on his escape from a Prisoner-of-war Camp in Germany.

MAY 11th, 1943. S/Ldr. Ratten became Wing Commander Flying -Hornchurch Wing - and therefore regretfully parts from the Squadron. He is the first Australian to get a Wing in Fighter Command.

F/Lt. Barclay was promoted to Squadron Leader Commanding.

F/O. Esau took over command of 'A' Flight.

CIRCUS. Ten aircraft took off to escort bombers but owing to bad weather conditions the bombers and escort turned back when half way out. The Hornchurch Wing went on to within 10 miles of the French coast in order to drop tanks, then returned.

MAY 13th, 1943. Air Vice Marshal H.W.L. Saunders, C.B.E., M.C., D.F.C., M.B., Commanding No. 11 Group visited dispersal with a delegation of Australian politicians and talked with pilots.

CIRCUS. Eleven aircraft from the Squadron in Wing led by W/Odr. Ratten took part in Circus to Boulogne. Intense heavy flak was experienced and one of the bombers was seen going down in flames. All our aircraft returned safely.

RAMROD. Nine aircraft escorted bombers to Berck. All returned safely.

MAY 14th, 1943. Lord Trenchard paid a short visit to the Station.

RAMROD. Twelve aircraft escorted bombers to Antwerp. On return journey 455 acted as cover while 122 Squadron led by W/Odr. Ratten had combat with about 10/12 enemy aircraft. All aircraft returned safely.

MAY 15th, 1943. CIRCUS. Eleven aircraft carried out an uneventful circus to Pont d'Ally. All returned safely.

MAY 16th, 1943. RODED. Eleven aircraft carried out an uneventful sweep to Abbeville. Bomb bursts were observed on Abbeville Ducat aerodrome. All aircraft returned safely.

CIRCUS. Eleven aircraft carried out a circus to Caen aerodrome where bomb bursts were observed. All returned safely.

MAY 17th, 1943. RODEO. Accompanied Fortresses to Cherbourg harbour. No enemy aircraft were seen and all returned safely.

MAY 19th, 1943. Sgt. Currie, W/O. Nicholls, and Sgt. Yarra represented the Squadron at the thanksgiving service at St. Pauls Cathedral.

RODEO. Eleven aircraft carried out an uneventful sweep over the Berck-Calais-Gravelines-St. Omer area. All returned safely.

RODEO. In the afternoon another eleven aircraft carried out a sweep in abd Hardyck-St. Omer-Ypres area. All returned safely.

MAY 20th, 1943. A "Wings for Victory" dance was held in the evening at which the Squadron was well represented.

RODEO. Twelve aircraft took off to sweep the St. Omer area but were recalled.

MAY 21st, 1943. W/Cdr. Roberts, R. A. A. F. Personnel Section, visited the Squadron.

MAY 22nd, 1943. F/O. Barrion, W/O. Clomesha and Sgt. Currie attended a "Wings for Victory" parade at Romford.

MAY 23rd, 1943. CIRCUS. Eleven aircraft carried an uneventful circus to Hardyck. All returned safely.

MAY 25th, 1943. CIRCUS. Twelve aircraft of 453 Squadron acted as top cover to 222 Squadron over Abbeville area. All returned safely.

MAY 26th, 1943. RODEO. Twelve aircraft took part in a Rodeo over the Blankenburgh-Boulers-Ypres-St. Omer area. In the absence of the Wing Commander, S/Ldr. Barclay led the Wing. Slight heavy flak was experienced. All returned safely.

MAY 27th, 1943. RODEO. Twelve aircraft swept the Calais-Dunkirk-Gris Mes area, and all returned safely.

MAY 28th, 1943. In the evening the Squadron met in town and presented Wing Commander Ratten with a pewter tankard as a parting gift.

MAY 29th, 1943. F/Sgts Leith and Stensfield took part in a "Wings for Victory" Parade at Grays.

CIRCUS. Eleven aircraft took part in a 10 Group Circus. Approaching Jersey S/Ldr. Barclay and Sgt. Morath engaged two F.W.190s which broke away and no claim is made. All 453 aircraft returned safely.

MAY 31st, 1943. CIRCUS. Eleven aircraft accompanied bombers to the Flushing area. A large column of smoke was seen rising from the target area after the bombing. All aircraft returned safely.

194/114/Air.

25/6/43.

Commanding Officer,
No. 458 Squadron, R.A.A.F.
R.A.F. Station,
Hornchurch, Essex.

UNIT HISTORIES

Pilot Officer W.H. Newham has been appointed to the Public Relations Branch to act as officer-in-charge of historical records. His duties include the collection and correlation of all information concerning R.A.A.F. Squadrons and personnel in Great Britain so that an adequate and comprehensive Official History of the R.A.A.F. may be written after the war.

2. Much valuable information has already been received from the perusal and extraction from the Squadron's Operational Records Books. From these, Daily Operational Narratives are compiled showing how each operation dovetails in with Group and Command activity.
3. It is suggested, however, that a member of your Squadron be detailed to write the history of the Squadron, with particular emphasis on its background, atmosphere, change of location, personalities, and achievements - in brief, a history covering all sides of the squadron, but particularly those aspects which can only be written by a person with an intimate knowledge of the Squadron.
4. This is already being done, largely through the enthusiasm of particular individuals, in several squadrons both in United Kingdom and Middle East. It is hoped each squadron will follow this lead as the inner story of the squadron is something which no one from Headquarters will have time or knowledge to write.
5. It is desired to assist in every way, however, and Pilot Officer Newham will visit the Squadron within the next few weeks to discuss the matter further with you, and with the member appointed to do the job. It is hoped in this way to

instigate the writing of a Unit history full of life and colour and which will be of value to the Nation as well as an intensely interesting document to everyone who has helped establish the fine reputation of the Squadron.

W.B. Tart

(W.B. TART)
Squadron Leader, for
Air Vice Marshal,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

ENCLOSURE 4A.



No. 453 Squadron R.A.A.F.,
R.A.F. Station,
IBSLEY. HANTS.

Reference:
453S/45/Air

3rd July, 1943.

Sir,

UNIT HISTORIES.

3A.

I have the honour to refer to your letter 184/114/Air dated 25th June, 1943.

2. It is advised that this Unit will do all in its power to co-operate in this scheme.

3. Flying Officer T.A. SWIFT of this Squadron has been appointed to perform this duty, and should P/O. W.H. NEWNHAM care to visit the Squadron at any time, the Adjutant will be only too pleased to give him an introduction to P/O. Swift, and they can discuss the details to date.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

W. H. Low P/O
1/a Squadron Leader, Commanding,
No. 453 Squadron, R.A.A.F.

Air Officer Commanding,
Overseas Headquarters,
R.A.A.F.,
Kodak House, Kingsway,
L O N D O N.

ACTION COPY TO *S.O.P.R.*
ON FILE NUMBER *184/114/aw*

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I have the honor to refer to your letter of the 14th inst.

in which you state that you are interested in the purchase of a certain quantity of the above mentioned material.

I am sorry to hear that you are unable to purchase the material in the quantities you require. I have, however, the pleasure to inform you that I have been able to secure a quantity of the material which I am now offering for sale at a price which I believe will be of interest to you. I have the honor to enclose herewith a copy of the invoice for the material and a copy of the contract which I have entered into with the manufacturer. I have also the honor to enclose herewith a copy of the invoice for the material which I have purchased from the manufacturer. I have the honor to enclose herewith a copy of the invoice for the material which I have purchased from the manufacturer.



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IMPORTANT

5A

184/114/Air/ 13604

22/7/43.

SECRET

The Secretary,
Department of Air,
Victoria Barracks,
Melbourne, Australia.

HISTORICAL RECORDS

No. 453 Squadron : R. A. A. F.

Further to this Headquarters' letter
184/114/Air/11977, dated 12/5/43,

2. Attached is brief history of No. 453 Squadron, R.A.A.F. for June, 1943, compiled from the Operations Records Books.
3. Please acknowledge receipt.

W.B.Tart
(W.B.TART)
Squadron Leader, for
Air Vice Marshal,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

JUNE, 1943.

JUNE 1st, 1943. VISIT. The G. in C. Air Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh Mallory, K.C.B., D.S.O. visited the Squadron.

AWARD. W/Cdr. Ratten received his D.F.C.

RODEO - COMBAT. Eleven aircraft took part in a Rodeo operation to Gravelines, Hasebrouck and Harellet. The Squadron encountered approximately twenty-one aircraft. P/O. Ewins and P/O. Thornley fired from long range but no claims were made. Sgt. Morath received head injuries when he force landed at Aveluy after take off.

JUNE 4th, 1943. BODEO - COMBAT. Eleven aircraft took part in a Rodeo operation over France. Enemy aircraft were engaged and W/Cdr. Ratten, who led the wing, destroyed one F.W.190 and S/Ldr. Barclay damaged one. All our aircraft returned safely.

PARTY. A party was held in town to celebrate W/Cdr. Rattens D.F.C. and the F.W.190 he had destroyed in the morning.

JUNE 5th, 1943. VISIT. Mr. T.E. Lloyd-Dumas of the "Adelaide Advertiser" and Mr. E.F. Kennedy of the "Sydney Sun" visited the Squadron.

JUNE 10th, 1943. RAMROD. Eleven aircraft carried out a Ramrod operation over France. Enemy aircraft were seen but not engaged. All our aircraft returned safely.

JUNE 11th, 1943. RAMROD. Eleven aircraft carried out a Ramrod operation over France. No enemy aircraft were seen and all returned safely to base.

JUNE 12th, 1943. RAMROD. Eleven aircraft carried out another Ramrod operation over France. No incident.

JUNE 13th, 1943. VISIT. S/Ldr. Payne, who has just arrived from Australia, visited the Squadron.

RAMROD. In the morning ten aircraft took part in a Ramrod operation over France, acting as high cover to bombers. All returned safely.

RAMROD. Eleven aircraft took part in another Ramrod operation over France in the afternoon. All returned safely.

JUNE 15th, 1943. RAMROD. Eleven aircraft took part in a Ramrod operation over France, acting as Second Flight cover to Portresses. No incident.

JUNE 17th, 1943. CIRCUS. Twelve aircraft took part in a Circus operation over France. Heavy flak was experienced but all our aircraft returned safely.

RODEO - COMBAT. In the afternoon eleven aircraft took part in a Rodeo operation over France. The Squadron attacked 15/20 F.W.190s and S/Lt. Andrews claims one probably destroyed. Heavy flak was experienced but all our aircraft returned safely.

JUNE 18th, 1943. ANNIVERSARY. A party was held on the Station to celebrate the first anniversary of the Squadron. S/Ldr. Tart from R.A.A.F. Overseas Headquarters attended.

JUNE 20th, 1943. CIRCUS. Ten aircraft took part in a Circus operation over France. No incident.

JUNE 22nd, 1943. RAMROD - COMBAT. Eleven aircraft took part in a Ramrod operation over France. Combat was had with 10-12 F.W.190s and S/Ldr. Barclay claims one damaged. Aus. 408989 P/O. Gray failed to return.

CIRCUS. Another circus was carried out in the afternoon - eight of the Squadron's aircraft taking part. No incident.

JUNE 23rd, 1943. RAMROD. Eleven aircraft took part in a Ramrod operation. No incident.

JUNE 24th, 1943. RAMRODS. Three Ramrod operations were carried out during the day with 8 - 9 - 9 aircraft from the Squadron taking part. No incident.

JUNE 26th, 1943. RAMROD. Another ramrod operation took place without incident. Eleven aircraft from the Squadron took part.

JUNE 27th, 1943. RODGO. The last operation of the month was a Rodgo over France. Eleven of the Squadrons aircraft took part. Four Me.109s were attacked, and P/O. Ferguson claimed one destroyed and S/Ldr. Barclay claimed one damaged.

JUNE 28th, 1943. MOVE. The Squadron moved to Ibsley and now belongs to No. 10 Group.

184/114/Air/14386.

23/8/43.

SECRET

The Secretary,
Department of Air,
Victoria Barracks,
Melbourne, Australia.

HISTORICAL RECORDS

No. 453 Squadron : R. A. A. F.

Further to this Headquarters' letter 184/114/Air/11977,
dated 12/5/43,

2. Attached is brief history of No. 453 Squadron, R.A.A.F.
for the month of July, 1943, compiled from the Operations Records
Books.

3. Please acknowledge receipt.

W.B. TAIT

(W.B. TAIT)
Squadron Leader, for
Air Vice Marshal,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

184/114/Air/15117.

20/9/43.

SECRET

The Secretary,
Department of Air,
Victoria Barracks,
Melbourne, Australia

HISTORICAL RECORDS

No. 453 Squadron : R. A. A. F.

Further to this Headquarters' letter
184/114/Air/11977, dated 12/5/43,

2. Attached is brief history of No. 453 Squadron,
R.A.A.F. for the month of August, 1943, compiled
from the Operations Records Books.
3. Please acknowledge receipt.

W.B. Tart
(W.B. TART)
Squadron Leader, for
Air Vice Marshal,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

AUGUST, 1943.

AUGUST 3rd, 1943. ARMED SHIPPING RECONNAISSANCE. Twelve aircraft swept the Caspette, E. Sark, W. Jersey and V. Guernsey area, encountering heavy flak from Guernsey. All returned safely.

AUGUST 4th, 1943. VIKING. Twelve aircraft acted as close escort to Whirlibombers attacking Brest. Good bombing results were observed and all aircraft returned safely.

AUGUST 4th, 1943. RAMROD. Twelve aircraft acted as Escort Cover to thirty-five Marauders attacking the docks at Le Trait. Six enemy aircraft made a pass at 453 Squadron but no engagement took place.

VIKING. Air Vice Marshal G.R. Steele, D.F.C. visited the Squadron.

AUGUST 5th, 1943. VISIT. Air Vice Marshal Urigley, R.A.A.F. visited the Squadron accompanied by General Smart, Australian Chief of Staff.

AUGUST 8th, 1943. RAMROD. Eight aircraft, as part of the Ibsley Wing took off from Warrnell and acted as first forward support to a large force of Boston attacking the marshalling yards at Rennes. A few bursts of heavy flak were encountered from Guernsey on the way back. All aircraft returned safely.

AUGUST 11th, 1943. ARMED SHIPPING RECONNAISSANCE. Nine aircraft escorted four Whirlibombers on an Armed Shipping Reconnaissance. They swept from North Alderney to Pointe de Balfleur, and all returned safely.

AUGUST 15th, 1943. RAMROD. Operating from Brakeswell Bay twelve aircraft acted as escort cover to Marauders attacking Wonsdrecht airfield. Over Tholon twelve plus P.W.190s bounced the Squadron. Aus. 404795 P/Lt. Andrews fought his way back from Holland alone against twelve P.W.190s, shooting one down and eventually landing at Manston without brakes and with his machine full of cannon and machine gun bullet holes. Aus. 411059 P/O. Thornley failed to return from this operation.

AUGUST 16th, 1943. RAMROD. Ten aircraft acted as Escort Cover to twelve Ventures attacking Tricquille aerodrome. Excellent bombing results were observed on dispersal buildings. All aircraft returned safely.

AUGUST 18th, 1943. VISIT. W/Cdr. Anderson, W/Cdr. Creightmore, P/Lt. Anderson and P/Lt. Cochran, R.A.A.F. Medical officers, visited the M.O. P/Lt. Sharp.

AUGUST 21st, 1943. MOVE. Squadron left Ibsley for R.A.F. Station, Perranporth.

AUGUST 24th, 1943. AIR SEA RESCUE. Two aircraft took off to locate a Fortress which was in difficulties and finally ditched. The search was carried out with an Anson and later they were joined by a Valrus which was conducted to the spot where the Fortress crew were in dinghies.

AUGUST 25th, 1943. AIR SEA RESCUE. The Air Sea Rescue patrol continued, six aircraft going out in relays until finally the crew was picked up by a launch.

AUGUST 30th, 1943. AIR SEA RESCUE. Eight aircraft took off on an Air Sea Rescue patrol. A pilot in a dingy was sighted and our aircraft stayed with him for one hour and ten minutes when they had to return owing to fuel shortage. In spite of repeated requests from our aircraft, no relief arrived.

STATISTICS FROM FORMATION TO 31.8.43

Operational miles flown 444,000
Number of sorties 1,620
Enemy ships and U-boats damaged 3
Enemy aircraft destroyed 2
Enemy aircraft probably destroyed 1
Enemy aircraft damaged 10

184/114/Air/16185

28/10/43.

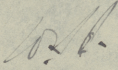
SECRET

The Secretary,
Department of Air,
Victoria Barracks,
Melbourne, Australia.

HISTORICAL RECORDSNo. 453 Squadron : R. A. A. F.

Further to this Headquarters' letter
184/114/Air/11977, dated 12/5/43,

2. Attached is brief history of No. 453 Squadron, R.A.A.F. for the month of September, 1943, compiled from the Operations Records Books.
3. Please acknowledge receipt.


(W.B. TART)
Squadron Leader, for
Air Vice Marshal,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

SEPTEMBER, 1943.

SEPTEMBER 7th, 1943. MOVE. The Squadron moved to Kenley for a short attachment.

SEPTEMBER 8th, 1943. RAIDED. Twelve Spitfires from the Squadron acted as Escort Cover to 72 Hurricanes in a bombing attack on Lille Verdville aerodrome. All returned safely.

RAIDED. Twelve Spitfires took part in a bombing raid on the docks at Boulogne and Gris Nez. No enemy fighters were seen and all our aircraft returned safely.

SEPTEMBER 9th, 1943. RAIDED. Twelve Spitfires acted as Escort Cover to Mitchell bombers in an attack on Bryas Red aerodrome. All returned safely.

SEPTEMBER 13th, 1943. FLYING ACCIDENT. Attempting to land from a practice flight, Aus. 406005 P/Sgt. R.F. Nolan overshot, crashed on houses and was killed. An occupant of one of the houses was killed and two were injured.

SEPTEMBER 16th, 1943. Eight Spitfires were engaged on a secret Naval Liaison job.

SEPTEMBER 22nd, 1943. RAIDED. Operating from Bolt Head, twelve Spitfires acted as escort to 12 Mitchell bombers in an attack on the airfield at Guipavas. All returned safely.

SEPTEMBER 21st, 1943. Aus. 404795 P/Lt. D.G. Andrews, D.F.C. has been made a member of the Caterpillar Club in recognition of his baling out at Isdale on 17.7.43 when his controls locked during an Army "beat up".

SEPTEMBER 23rd, 1943. RAIDED. The Squadron is now back at Fernborough and eleven Spitfires acted as close escort to Hurricane bombers in an attack on Ouchea airfield. All returned safely.

SEPTEMBER 24th, 1943. AWARD. The immediate award of the D.F.C. to Aus. 404795 P/Lt. Andrews was gazetted today.

RAIDED. Twelve Spitfires acted as Escort Cover to twelve Mitchell bombers in a raid on the Lanveoc Poulvic airfield south of Brest. Enemy aircraft were encountered, and three were shot down. 453 Squadron dived on the enemy but they dived away. All our aircraft returned safely.

RAIDED. Twelve Spitfires operating from Exeter, escorted twelve Mitchell bombers to Guipavas airfield and then returned safely to base.

SEPTEMBER 25th, 1943. CIRCLE. Twelve Spitfires escorted eight Whirlwinders to Guipavas aerodrome. W/Cdr. Charles flew with 453 Squadron. All returned safely.

SEPTEMBER 27th, 1943. Four aircraft carried out a special mission for the Navy.

SEPTEMBER 28th, 1943. Aus. 404795 P/Lt. Andrews has been appointed Acting Squadron Leader and takes over command of the Squadron from Aus. 407662 S/Ldr. Barclay who has been posted supernumerary to No. 10 Group.

SEPTEMBER 29th, 1943. Four Spitfires were engaged on a Navy Liaison job.

ENCLOSURE

9A.

184/114/Air/16364

2nd November, 1943.

SECRET

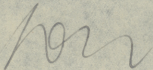
The Secretary,
Department of Air,
Victoria Barracks,
MELBOURNE, Australia.

HISTORICAL RECORDS

No. 453 Squadron: R.A.A.F.

Enclosed herewith is a copy of the story of the move made by this squadron from R.A.F. Station Ferranporth (Cornwall) to R.A.F. Station, Skeabrae, Orkney Islands.

2. This is forwarded to you for historical records purposes only.
3. Please acknowledge receipt.


(W.H. NEWHAM)
Flying Officer
for Air Vice Marshal
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

184/114/Air/16975.

23/11/43.

SECRET

The Secretary,
Department of Air,
Victoria Barracks,
Melbourne, Australia.

HISTORICAL RECORDS

No. 453 Squadron :R.A.A.F.

Further to this Headquarters' letter
184/114/Air/11977,

2. Attached is brief history of No. 453 Squadron, R.A.A.F. for the month of October, 1943, compiled from the Operations Records Books.
3. Please acknowledge receipt.

W.H.
(W.H. NEWNHAM)
Flight Lieutenant, for
Air Vice Marshal,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

184 / 111 / Air / 111

11A
6/1/44.

SECRET

The Secretary,
Department of Air,
Victoria Barracks,
Melbourne, Australia.

HISTORICAL RECORDS

NO. 453 SQUADRON : R.A.A.F.

Further to this Headquarters letter
184/111/Air/11977,

2. Attached is a brief history of No. 453 Squadron, R.A.A.F. for November, 1943, compiled from the Operations Records Books, and a Nominal Roll dated 1.10.43.
3. Please acknowledge receipt.

W.H.
(W.H. NEWNHAM)
Flight Lieutenant, for
Air Vice Marshal,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

NOVEMBER, 1943.

NOVEMBER 9th, 1943. Today Aus. 403000 F/O. McDade, Aus. 412624 F/O. McAuliffe, Aus. 412688 F/O. Quinn and F/O. Catchpole, the Intelligence Officer, visited and were shown over a submarine.

NOVEMBER 10th, 1943. VISIT. A return party from the submarine visited the Squadron and were shown over the Spitfires.

NOVEMBER 16th, 1943. AWARD. The non-immediate award of the Distinguished Flying Cross to Aus. 407662 Acting Squadron Leader K.M. Barclay, was gazetted today.

During the month patrols were carried out from Skeabrae and Sumburgh without incident.

STATISTICS.

Total number of sorties, hours and mileage completed by the Squadron up to 30.11.43

Sorties	2,947
Hours	3,790
Mileage	94,750

Enemy aircraft destroyed 7, probably destroyed 1, damaged 11.

Merchantman damaged 1
Locomotive severely damaged 1
Locomotive damaged 1
Flak ship damaged 1

184/114/Air/367.

12A
13th January, 1944.

SECRET

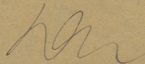
The Secretary,
Department of Air,
Victoria Barracks,
MELBOURNE, Australia.

HISTORICAL RECORDS

NO. 453 SQUADRON : R.A.A.F.

Further to this Headquarters letter
184/114/Air/11977.

2. Attached is a brief history of No. 453 Squadron, R.A.A.F. for December, 1943, compiled from the Operations Records Books.
3. Please acknowledge receipt.



(W.H. NEWHAM)
Flight Lieutenant, for
Air Vice Marshal,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

DECEMBER, 1943.

DECEMBER 2nd, 1943. JU. 88 DESTROYED. During a scramble Aus. 405473 P/Lt. E.A.R. Esau and Aus. 412624 P/O. L. McAuliffe attacked and destroyed a Ju. 88.

DECEMBER 6th, 1943. A Squadron party was held at Skeabrae. Several squadron members from Sumburgh attended and Wing Commander Ratten flew up from Peterhead.

DECEMBER 25th, 1943. Stand down, and a very good Christmas was enjoyed by all.

Uneventful patrols and scrambles were carried out during the month.

STATISTICS. Squadron statistics up to 31.12.43

Sorties 3,000
Hours 3,818
Miles (approx) 954,500

Enemy aircraft destroyed 8, probably destroyed 1, damaged 11.
1 Merchantman damaged
2 Locomotives damaged
1 Flak whip damaged.

ENCLOSURE 13A

184/114/Air/1542

16/2/44.

SECRET

The Secretary,
Department of Air,
Victoria Barracks,
Melbourne, Australia.

HISTORICAL RECORDS

NO. 453 SQUADRON : R.A.A.F.

Further to this Headquarters letter
184/114/Air/11977.

2. Attached is a brief history of No. 453 Squadron, R.A.A.F. for January, 1944, compiled from the Operations Records Books, and a Nominal Roll dated 1st. December, 1943.
3. Please acknowledge receipt.

(W.H. NEWNHAM)
Flight Lieutenant, for
Air Vice Marshal,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

JANUARY, 1944.

January 2nd, 1944. SOCIAL. The Skeabrae Flight gave a party to Station personnel.

January 10th, 1944. No. 801 Squadron (Seafires) from H.M.S. Furious were welcomed at Skeabrae today, where they are attached for a short time.

Up to the eighteenth of the month uneventful dawn and dusk patrols were carried out by the Squadron.

January 19th, 1944. MOVE. The Squadron is to move to 125 Airfield, Detling and this was commenced today. The flight from Sumburgh put down at Doncaster for the night but the Skeabrae Flight put down at Syerston and carried on by train.

CHANGE OF AIRCRAFT. The Squadron is now to use Spitfires IX B.

January 22nd, 1944. Pilots left for Hutton Cranswick where they are to have two weeks firing practice.

January 24th, 1944. P/O. F.J. Catchpole, the Intelligence Officer, has been posted to Skeabrae after eighteen months with the Squadron.

STATISTICS. Statistics from formation up to 31.1.44.

Operational Hours 3826
Operational Miles 956,400
Operational Sorties 3010

Enemy aircraft destroyed 8, probably destroyed 1, damaged 11.
Enemy shipping damaged 2.

184/114/Air / 3068

24/3/44.

SECRET

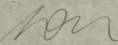
The Secretary,
Department of Air,
Victoria Barracks,
Melbourne, Australia.

HISTORICAL RECORDS

NO. 453 SQUADRON : R.A.A.F.

Further to this Headquarters letter
184/114/Air/11977,

2. Attached is a brief history of No. 453 Squadron, R.A.A.F. for February, 1944, compiled from the Operations Records Books.
3. Please acknowledge receipt.


(W.H. NEWHAM)
Flight Lieutenant, for
Air Vice Marshal,
AIR OFFICER COMMANDING.

FEBRUARY, 1944.

February 3rd, 1944. A practice move was made by the Airfield, and watched by Air Marshal Coningham. Approximately 160 vehicles stretched for over 5 miles.

February 4th, 1944. The Squadron returned to Detling from Hutton Cranswick by road and air.

February 10th, 1944. VISIT. S/Idr. T.E. Hilton, Liaison, Officer, visited the Squadron.

February 11th, 1944. RAMROD. The Squadrons first operation with Spitfires IX B. Twelve aircraft provided escort cover to 72 Marauders attacking Amiens. All returned safely.

February 13th, 1944. RAMROD. Eleven aircraft took off to provide escort to 72 Marauders bombing targets in Northern France. Four aircraft returned early with tank trouble.

February 15th, 1944. RAMROD. Two Ramrod operations were carried out today. In the first, eleven aircraft provided flight cover to Liberators, and in the second, twelve aircraft flew as close escort to 72 Marauders. Both operations were on targets on Northern France. All aircraft returned safely.

February 20th, 1944. RAMRODS. Another two Ramrod operations were carried out today. In the morning ten Spitfires acted as close escort to 72 Marauders attacking airfields in Holland. In the afternoon twelve spitfires provided withdrawal support to Fortresses and Liberators attacking targets in Northern Germany, and the deepest penetration yet was made by the Squadron. All aircraft returned safely.

February 21st, 1944. RAMROD. Nine aircraft acted as close escort to 72 Marauders attacking targets in Holland and all returned safely.

February 22nd, 1944. RAMROD. Twelve aircraft acted as withdrawal cover to Fortresses and Liberators attacking targets in Germany. All returned safely.

February 24th, 1944. RAMRODS. In the morning, operating from Bradwell Bay, twelve aircraft acted as close escort to 108 Marauders attacking Deelen, Holland, and returned safely to Manston. In the afternoon the same aircraft escorted Marauders to Northern France. All returned safely.

February 25th, 1944. RAMRODS. In the morning twelve aircraft swept the Brussels, Ghent, Chievres and Furnes area, and in the afternoon twelve aircraft provided withdrawal support to Fortresses attacking targets in Germany and all returned safely.

February 28th, 1944. RAMROD. Twelve Spitfires provided escort cover to 36 Marauders bombing Poseries airfield and all returned safely to base.

February 29th, 1944. RAMROD. Eleven Spitfires provided fighter cover to Mitchells, and returned safely to base.

STATISTICS. Statistics from formation up to 29.2.44.

Sorties 3,190
Hours 4,096
Miles 1,024,000

Enemy shipping damaged 2,

Enemy aircraft destroyed 8, probably destroyed 1, damaged 11.

BORROWER CARD.

RAAF Records

Unit(s) HISTORICAL RECORDS
No. 453 Sqn.
..MGR.:.1944...

I

Files listed over

Signature

Date

