



An excellent view of A16-87, NN-Q with an as yet unidentified NN-E in the background. Details of A16-87's history are sketchy after its issue to No. 1 Squadron on 9th July 1940. It was in No. 8 Squadron's hands prior to the start of the war against Japan and flown by Pete Henderson at Kota Bharu on the opening day of hostilities. Its fate is well recorded, though. This was the Hudson which Herb Plenty was flying on 24th January 1942 which was attacked and shot down by Japanese Army Type 1 Fighters. The date of this photo is not known but it is presumed to have been taken prior to hostilities. (courtesy Pete Henderson)



Whilst the Hudson is generally remembered, among other reasons for its jettisonable crew dinghy held in the entry door assembly, the RAAF found that the mechanical Type "G" operating heads, fixed to most Type "H" inflatable dinghies they had available to them as late as 1941, were not suited to an enclosed space. This was because the absence of a safety valve for the carbon dioxide bottle could make the situation dangerous. Until the correct operating head was available (and, as evidenced by the experience of Herb Plenty's crew, this had not occurred in Malaya by January 1942) it was decided, and promulgated in a technical order, that the dinghy be carried in a cloth bag stowed in the roof of the aircraft. The arrangement can just be seen at the top of this photo of the rearward section of the cabin of No. 8 Squadron's A16-14. The door compartment for the dinghy can be seen at right. At the rear of the aircraft are the aircraft's toilet and stowage compartments, which also form a step up to the gunner's position in the turret. Other notable features are the sea markers at left, trailing aerial at right and wing centre section in the foreground. (courtesy Les Easter)