

Guinea on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1942 and the upshot of the sighting of a force of major Japanese warships on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1942 by not one but two crews. For their input into these three stories I would particularly like to highlight the help given by Mrs Jess Yeowart, who provided so much of importance to me relevant to not only the Truk mission but other operational flights made by her late husband Bob; to the family of Warren Cowan, the pilot of the Hudson in the July story - wife Betty and children Blair and Libby as well as brother Jim - for their help with information and photos relating to Warren's RAAF service, as well as Mrs Margaret Ekberg and Bob Piper for providing photographs of the other crew members. Lastly, in respect of the August 1942 sighting, special thanks must go to former wireless air gunner Eric Geddes for his help in checking my version of events after earlier contact with former navigator Wilbur Courtis, who I met through the good offices of Cliff Hull. This is not the first time this story has been told; Mrs Nancy Milne, wife of the then flight commander responsible for the Milne Bay detachment, Lloyd Milne, established that naval signals traffic from 8<sup>th</sup> August 1942 had survived and was probably the first person to access it, certainly since the RAN's official wartime history had been published in 1968. Her research has helped authors since but this account is the first that looks at just the RAAF's involvement. Thanks too to Mrs Mona Davies for contacting me and providing details kept by her late husband, John, navigator with Merv Willman's crew that day.

I will try and list everyone else alphabetically; to G. S. & E. F. Boon who provided me with Rupert Boon's log book; to Vic Bottomley for providing the typescript of his reminiscences of early No. 32 Squadron operations; to Rod Carvosso of 6 Squadron, later 2 Squadron, for comments on the opening round of attacks at Milne Bay and also for the excellent side view of A16-244 used in Appendix Four; to John Clark for permission to quote from his diary entries published in *An Airman's War-time Diary: A Record of a Wireless/Air Gunner's Experiences with 6 Squadron RAAF in Papua/New Guinea During World War II*; to Bert Cookson whose notes on RAAF casualties continued to be an important cross reference to my research and alerted me to Ken Erwin's fate; to Steve Eather for assistance with aspects of the history of 6 Squadron (Steve is the author of *Blue Lightning: The Story of 6 Squadron AFC & RAAF 1917-2005*); Bob Green for providing a copy of his report on the loss of A16-106; Leslie Jillett for making available to me a copy of *Moresby's Few*, the first and best history of the early days of No. 32 Squadron, before I had even thought about writing this book; to all of Lex Halliday's crew, Lex, Alan Gawler, Lance Badman and Ron Castles, for their long term interest and assistance which began in 1984; to Ray Kelly for his help with the section of the chapter covering the time he served with No. 6 Squadron; to Mrs Margot Law for making available copies of photographs from the collection of her late husband Martin; to John Murphy, another of those from No. 32 Squadron who I first met in 1984 and who continued to provide assistance thereafter; to Mrs Barbara Prime for access to the log book and photos of her late husband Arch; to Mark Reichmann who, together with his son Jared, reported the find in 2008 of Hudson A16-129 lost 66 years earlier, and, last but not least, Wayne Zikan for earlier this year providing me with a copy of reminiscences of his father, F. P. "Gus" Zikan.

### Chapter Three

The Transports and Air Ambulances chapter benefited greatly from the assistance of Ken Cross for his long term interest and assistance with information and photos on No. 4 Comm Unit. Thanks also to Vic Bottomley, Mrs Rita Fitzroy-Kelly whose late husband, Keith, had been a member of No. 4 Comm Unit and Hugh Hawthorne from the same unit, for your assistance. Vic and Keith also served in No. 1 Comm Unit, and so the information and stories provided, as readers of Chapter Three will find, relate to that unit as well. For help with No. 38 Squadron's history, my thanks go to Jack Ryan for his insights into life as a wireless navigator, and to Ern Bergman for the provision of a copy of the report on A16-122's forced landing and photos taken after the event, also to Roy Carlin, one of the squadron pilots. When it came to the history of No. 2 Air Ambulance Unit, special thanks go to David and Carol Warwick for access to the papers and photos of David's father, former unit CO, John, to David Evans, former NavW and son Geoff for further assistance with paperwork, photos and contacts, Christine Underwood for the loan of the log book of her father Cyril Munchenberg (later Minchenberg), and lastly Pat Meredith for putting me in touch with Brian Navin, one of the last of the unit's Hudson pilots.

### Chapter Four

My knowledge of post-war Hudson activities extended to the time they were disposed of in 1949, but after that was very patchy to begin with. Fortunately, though, where my interest stopped, Geoff Goodall's really took off. Geoff, whose knowledge of the Lockheed 10, 12, 14 and 18 series in commercial usage in Australia makes him the authority on the subject, had written an early treatise on the use of these aircraft which was published by the Aviation Historical Society of Australia in 1975-1976 and this, in essence, formed the basis of Chapter Four post-1949 as I sought to establish my own contacts and undertake further research on the subject. Warren Penny was, appropriately, an early contact, as his Hudson was the first to be added to the Australian civil register post-war. Another was Ted Gabriel who participated in an early immigrant flight in VH-JCM. Thanks too to Greg Board who provided other helpful comments. The three main post-war users of Hudsons were East-West Airlines, Sydney Morning Herald Flying Service and the various incarnations of Adastral, each of which I tackled separately. In respect of East-West Airlines, thanks go to the *Northern Daily Leader* newspaper (Tamworth) and the Association of Airline Pilots (Queensland) for publishing a request for contact with former East-West personnel. To Hunter Neuss who put me in touch with his father, John, and to other former East-West employees Denys Bolton, Bob Heppell, Ron Penrose and Jeané Upjohn, thanks for your assistance along the way also. Thanks too to Col Klemm who put me in contact with Brian Smith, to whom special thanks go for permission to use extracts from *East-West Eagles*, presently the only published volume covering the early days of East-West. Ian Lobsey and Bob Dalkin both compiled excellent company histories, too, but neither has been published. Peter Dalkin had a copy of each, though, which he made available to me. Thank you again Peter! For access to some original East-West material, my thanks go to the University of New England and Regional Archives, whilst lastly, in respect of East-West, Dr Denis O'Brien for permission