

# PLANES SEEKING LOST WIRRAWAY

THE HERALD 22 JULY 1933

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## SEARCH FOR LOST PLANE

Contd. from Page 1

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The other was that an air-  
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A police-led party which  
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The Mt. Buninyong re-  
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# 16 PLANES SEEKING WIRRAWAY

THE HERALD 22<sup>nd</sup> JULY 1953

## Feared down in thick range

Sixteen planes continued the search this afternoon for the missing RAAF Wirraway training plane and its trainee pilot.

The search went on non-stop from dawn until some of the planes were grounded by poor visibility about 3 p.m.

The grounded planes had been concentrating on a triangle bounded roughly by Ballarat, Bacchus Marsh and Daylesford.

Late this afternoon other planes were still searching south of the Ballarat-Melbourne road in better visibility.

<sup>10 Course</sup>  
The missing pilot is Terrence Peter Hallinan, 19, of Maryborough, Queensland. He has been missing since 8.30 last night.

RAAF officials said today they had not ruled out the possibility of the plane's having gone down in Port Phillip Bay, but its last reported position made the present search area more likely.

The full search will be resumed at dawn tomorrow if visibility permits.

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The other was that an aircraft had been heard near Mt. Buninyong, near Ballarat.

A police-led party which investigated the Mt. Blackwood report found that the light had come from a cabin.

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His signals were "fairly clear and loud" indicating he was within 35, or at the most 50, miles of Essendon, at 5000 ft.

The single-engined aircraft, with RAAF markings, was on a night cross-country flight between Point Cook and Ballarat.

The pilot had no rations.

Today's air searches — which began as soon as visibility allowed a take-off — are under the direction of the Officer Commanding the Advanced Flying Training School, Pt. Cook, Wing-Commander R. H. Thompson.

He was due back at Pt. Cook at the time of his last message, but RAAF officials say that he reported no difficulties.

His plane then had two hours' fuel left and was only about three minutes' flying time from Pt. Cook.

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A20-719

# Copter stands by in search

The RAAF today extended its non-stop daylight aerial search for the missing Point Cook Wirraway plane and its trainee pilot.

A helicopter is standing by in case urgent rescue efforts are needed.

Late this morning it was sent out on one sortie over an area about Officer, on the Gippsland line, beyond Berwick.

Grave concern is felt for the missing pilot because exposure to the intense cold of the past two nights would be serious even for a fit man.

The extended search has covered the Mornington Peninsula and south from Cressy to Cape Otway.

The missing pilot is Terence Peter Hallinan, of Maryborough, Queensland.

The last report of him was a radio message from his plane to Essendon airport at 8.30 on Tuesday night a few minutes before he was due to land at Pt. Cook after a night training flight from the Pt. Cook Advanced Flying Training School.

## 13 planes

Thirteen aircraft — 12 Wirraways and a Search and Rescue Dakota — were out again from dawn today in continuous search operations.

Their areas were:

**Dakota:** North from Ballarat over an area bounded by Daylesford, Maryborough and Beaufort;

**Three Wirraways:** One searching the Bay area, the other two the Mornington Peninsula;

**Nine Wirraways:** Operating a parallel-track search, four miles apart, up and down the rugged, heavily timbered area bounded by Castlemaine, Heathcote, Laverton and Ballarat.

The searching planes cruised slowly at about 1000 ft. in good visibility.

The commanding officer of the Pt. Cook Advanced Flying Training School, Wing Commander R. H. Thompson, made three runs up and down this area himself.

"I still feel he may be down in that area, but one can conjure up a dozen theories about what happened to him," he said.

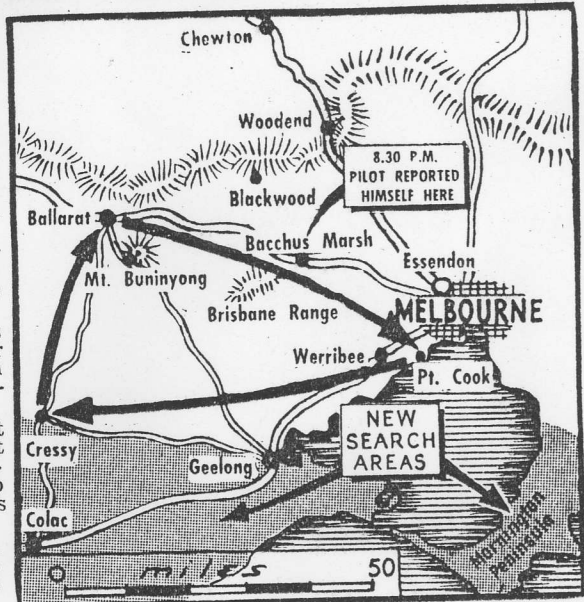
## Rescue plan

Only the Dakota carries emergency supplies and rescue equipment.

If any of the Wirraways sights anything, the pilots will radio back to Pt. Cook for the helicopter — a Sikorski S-51, manned by the Commanding Officer No. 21 (City of Melbourne) Squadron, Squadron Leader C. Thomas.

The helicopter could reach any point within the Wirraways' range within 30 minutes.

All normal training has



HERALD 23.7.53



THE MISSING PILOT, Terence Peter Hallinan, 19, of Maryborough, Queensland.

## Mass air search called off

The RAAF late today called off its mass air search for the missing RAAF Wirraway and its trainee pilot.

Only a RAAF Sikorski helicopter remained in the air near Mt. Macedon waiting for a break in low heavy clouds to contact a ground search party which is checking a report of what appears to be plane wreckage about 10 miles from Macedon.

Aircraft remained alerted at Pt. Cook in case of any new reports.

Earlier today a record number of 28 RAAF aircraft — 20 Wirraways and eight Tiger Moths — were in the search.

The Wirraway was last heard of by radio at 8.30 p.m. on Tuesday — a few minutes before its pilot, Terence Peter Hallinan,

19, of Maryborough, Queensland, was due to land at Pt. Cook after a night training flight.

Since then RAAF search aircraft have flown at least 27,000 air miles over a wide area from Port Phillip Bay, across the Great Dividing Range to north of Inglewood, about 130 miles north-west of Melbourne.

A RAAF spokesman said late today that everything possible had been done to find the lost aircraft from the air.

Low cloud today made the search difficult and dangerous.

The helicopter would continue the search tomorrow if necessary.

HERALD 24.7.53

## Missing Wirraway wreckage found?

**AIRCRAFT** wreckage—believed to be that of the R.A.A.F. Wirraway which disappeared on July 21—was found in the Bay yesterday. →

The wreckage was found by Mr. Vic Rekdale, 34, of High-st., Ashburton, and his brother-in-law Mr. Donald Butterworth, 34, of Normanby-rd., Caulfield.

Mr. Butterworth and Mr. Rekdale were fishing two miles from Rickett's Point, near Beaumaris, at 11 a.m. when they found the wreckage.

### Plane's tail?

R.A.A.F. technical experts will examine the wreckage at Malvern this morning.

It is believed that it is part of a plane's tail.

The wreckage, which is marked WBW AS 742 W/T DTD 308C, AS WBW2, is colored pale orange—R.A.A.F. training plane colors.

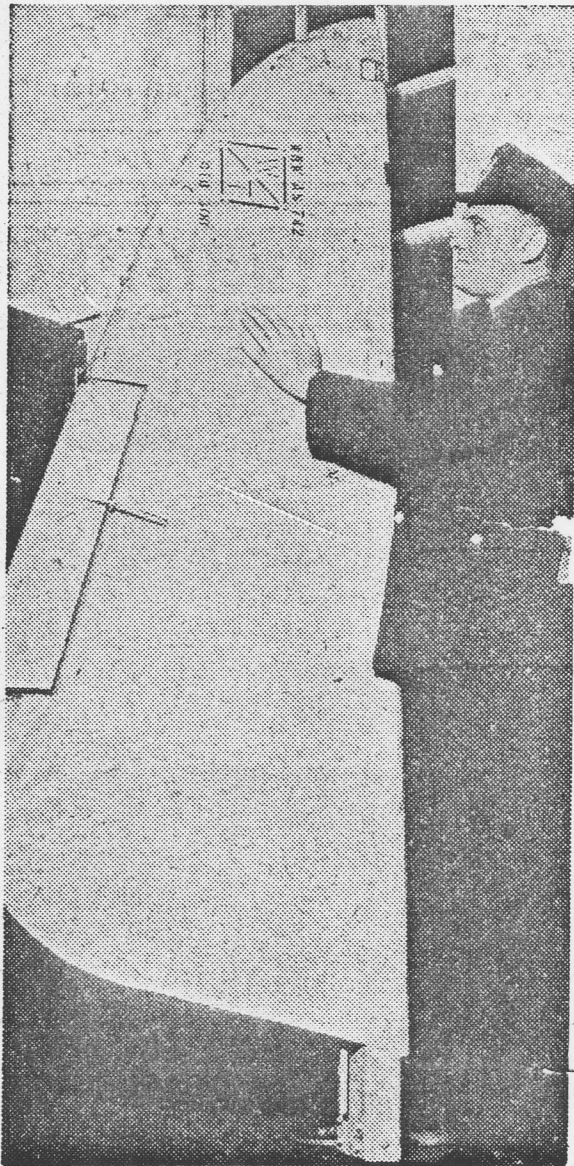
The missing Wirraway was piloted by Trainee Pilot Terence Peter Hallinan, 19, of Maryborough, Queensland.

### Like box

Mr. Butterworth said last night: "We thought it was a box or a yacht rudder, but when we pulled it in we could see the identification marks.

"We were being tossed about by waves, and it took some minutes of struggling to haul the wreckage into the boat.

"Only about a foot of it was floating above the water. It was moving fairly fast, and I think it must have come from much farther up the Bay."



## AIRCRAFT LOSS UNSOLVED

The aircraft "wreckage" found floating in the Bay near Rickett's Point yesterday did not come from a Wirraway trainer.

This disposes of the theory that it might be part of the trainer plane in which Trainee Pilot Terence Peter Hallinan, of Queensland, is presumed to have lost his life when flying from Point Cook on July 21.

RAAF technical officers who examined the find yesterday, said they believed it was part of the tail control surfaces of an Oxford.

It was undamaged, did not appear to have been in a crash and apparently had not been long in the water.

They think it may have been part of a disposal Oxford either dumped in the bay—possibly from Point Cook—or lost by some person who had been using it as a "float" at a beach.

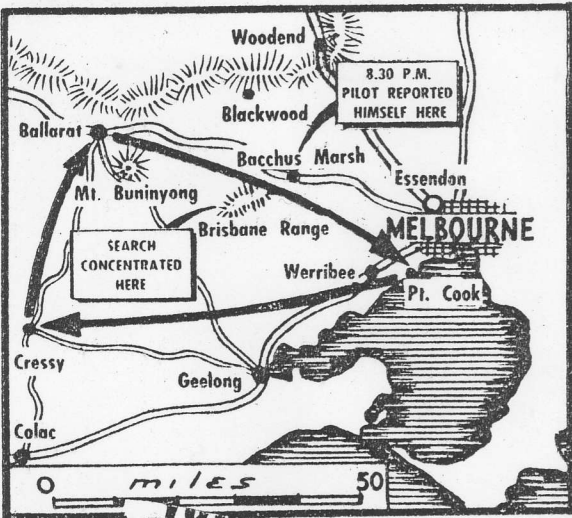
### RAAF appeal

Oxfords are no longer used by the RAAF, but the coloring of this wreckage marks it as from an Air Force training plane.

RAAF officers today urged that no aircraft parts should be dumped in the bay or disposed of without being definitely branded "Disposals" or in some way indicating that it did not come from a serviceable aircraft.

"The knowledge that there are bits of disposal aircraft floating about might hamper us in some future search for a missing plane," they said.

# MISSING <sup>SUN. 23/7/53</sup> PLANE FLEW NORTH?



SUN 23.7.53

**AIR FORCE** planes will today investigate a report that the missing Wirraway had been heard flying north-east of Ballarat.

The missing trainee pilot, whose name was released late yesterday, is Terence Peter Hallinan, 19, of Maryborough (Queensland). He has been missing since 8.30 on Tuesday night.

Late last night a man phoned The Sun to say that he had heard a plane fly over his home at Chewton, near Castlemaine, between 8.30 and 9 p.m. on Tuesday. It was heading north.

The Sun passed on the report to police and the R.A.A.F.

### Not in Bay?

Thirteen planes will leave Pt. Cook this morning to continue the search.

Focal point of the search will be the almost impenetrable scrub country of the Brisbane Ranges, 10 miles south of Bacchus Marsh.

The R.A.A.F. has almost ruled out the possibility of the plane being lost in Port Philip Bay.

Yesterday's search by six Wirraways, six Tiger Moths and a special air-search

Dakota from Sale began at dawn and continued until poor visibility at 4 p.m. grounded them.

They combed rugged country in the area between Ballarat, Bacchus Marsh and Daylesford.

Ground parties led by Bacchus Marsh and Ballarat police will stand by today.

Another ground party will also be on the alert at Point Cook if any news is received.

Police and R.A.A.F. agree that isolated ground searchers in the densely-timbered Brisbane Ranges would be useless at this stage.

If Hallinan crashed in the ranges or in the rugged country to the north of the Ballarat-Bacchus Marsh road, he may still be lying injured and unable to draw attention to his position.

Hallinan, who was halfway through his course, was on his first night solo training flight on the Cressy - Ballarat - Point Cook circuit.

He had covered the course at least six times in daylight.

Five other Wirraways were flying the same route on Tuesday night at 10-minute intervals, and Hallinan was third away from Point Cook.

From Ballarat to Bacchus Marsh he was flying on the civil airline route, and in contact with Essendon Flight Control.

At 8.30, as he was over Bacchus Marsh, he radioed Essendon:

"I request permission to divert to Point Cook." That was his last message.

Hallinan was only five minutes' flying time from Point Cook, and had enough petrol for another two hours. He made no report of being in difficulties.

The main reason for the R.A.A.F. belief that the plane did not go into the Bay is that Hallinan would have been able, on such a clear night, to see the lights of Melbourne and Geelong from his position at the time of giving his last radio message.

His signals were loud and clear, indicating that he was within 35 to 50 miles of Melbourne, and flying at 5000 feet.

Bacchus Marsh police said last night that the Brisbane Ranges, about 40 miles from Melbourne and 10 miles south of Bacchus

## Plane to hunt for Wirraway

A R.A.A.F. Wirraway will leave Pt. Cook today to search Mt. Zero, in the Grampians, for the missing Wirraway which disappeared nine days ago while on a night training flight.

The pilot of the missing aircraft, Terence Peter Hallinan, a Queenslander, has now been officially listed "missing believed killed."

Police from Horsham and a local farmer yesterday searched the slopes of Mt. Zero after Mr. J. A. Miller, of Laharum, reported that he heard a plane flying near Mt. Zero at 11 p.m. on the night the Wirraway disappeared.

SUN 30.7.53

# THIS SOLVED YEAR-OLD MYSTERY



**THE 13-MONTH-OLD MYSTERY** of the missing R.A.A.F. Wirraway training plane was solved yesterday. **ABOVE** is last night's picture of the crashed plane.

**TWO** men blazing a trail with a bulldozer found the wreckage in dense virgin timber on Mt. Disappointment, about 8 miles east of Kilmore.

The aircraft was identified by its serial number as one that vanished on July 21 last year during a night flying exercise from Laverton.

The pilot was 19-year-old Terence Mallinan, of Maryborough, Queensland Forestry Commission foreman, Jack Ross, 32, ex-R.A.A.F. sergeant, and Edward

mission's forest camp

Wreckage was strewn over a circle less than 30 feet wide. Apparently the plane flailed down in a spin and struck one of the giant 80-ft. high trees.

The body of the pilot had been jerked free of the safety harness and hurled about five feet from the cockpit.

One wing of the aircraft had crumpled beneath the fuselage and the other was buckled but still intact.

Absence of melted metal suggested that the plane did not

A R.A.A.F. investigation party will leave Wallan early today

The Wirraway was the third aircraft to crash in the rugged Mt. Disappointment area since 1939.

The find immediately reminded Messrs. Ross and Qullinan of another plane mystery.

They both share the belief of neighboring bushmen that the Southern Cloud crashed somewhere in the area in 1931.

Locals say it crossed the area each morning at 11 a.m.

17.8.54

PIT-QSA

# THEY UNCOVER LAST YEAR'S GRIM SECRET

By LEN HALL

**L**AST night, in thickly timbered country six miles east of Kilmore, I saw the wreck of the Wirraway that had disappeared on a night training flight from Laverton on July 21, last year.

The grotesquely twisted wreckage was discovered late yesterday by two Forests Commission workers.

R.A.A.F. officials will inspect it today.

They will see one blade of the plane's propeller embedded deep in a tree stump. Following a trail of wreckage they will find, nearly hidden in the foliage 30 feet away, the fuselage and one wing.

And still in the cockpit of the splintered fuselage they will see the body of the pilot who dived to his death in the plane.

Identification marking on the fuselage is A20/719.

The missing Wirraway was piloted by trainee pilot Terence Peter Hallinan, 19, of Maryborough, Queensland.

Last message from him

was when he reported cheerily that he could see the lights of Bacchus Marsh.

But he was nearly 40 miles from Bacchus Marsh. It was the lights of Kilmore he saw.

Seconds after he radioed his message his machine tore a wide swathe through the trees as it crashed to the ground.

Only a small patch near the front of the aircraft is charred by the flames that followed. The rest still glistens as if it had crashed only yesterday.

Mountain ferns have grown over parts of the wreckage, and giant ash trees soar above it. It lies at about the 2,300ft. level between Mt. Disappointment and Mount Cotterill, six miles east of Kilmore, 42 miles north of Melbourne.

Mr. Harry Ross, 41, staff foreman for the Forests Commission in the area, came on the wreckage just after 2 p.m. yesterday.



Last night's picture of the wreckage at Broadford.

17-8-54