

Burning Plane Heroes

A trainee to whom Flying-Officer Malcolm Wilbur Baker, of Harrismith (WA), was acting as safety pilot hit an obstruction, and their aircraft crashed and caught fire.

Baker kicked out the emergency panel and escaped. Despite injuries, he made several attempts to release the trainee.

He was assisted by LAC (Temporary Corporal) Alfred Thomas Norman Taggart, of North Fitzroy (Vic.), LAC John Campbell Riordan, of North Essendon (Vic.), and LAC George Henry Hoskins, of Corowa (NSW).

Hoskins eventually succeeded in releasing the trainee.

Baker and the three aircraftmen have been commended.

SUN(SYDNEY) 26.4.43

EIGHT R.A.A.F. MEN COMMENDED

CANBERRA, Friday.—The King has approved commendations for brave conduct for eight members of the R.A.A.F.

Flying-Officer Malcolm Wilbur Baker, of Harrismith, Western Australia; L.A.C. (Temporary Corporal) Alfred Thomas Norman Taggart, of North Fitzroy, Victoria; L.A.C. John Campbell Riordan, of North Essendon, Victoria; and L.A.C. George Henry Hoskins, of Corowa, New South Wales, were commended for their efforts to rescue a trainee from a blazing plane.

Baker was safety pilot with a trainee on a training flight, and in landing the aircraft hit an obstruction, crashed, and caught fire. Baker kicked out the emergency panel and escaped, and then, despite injuries, made several attempts to release the trainee. Taggart, Riordan, and Hoskins rushed to his assistance, and Riordan, in spite of the danger of the petrol tanks exploding, jumped on to the port mainplane of the blazing machine and, with Hoskins, dragged the trainee away from the aircraft.

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

26.6.43

Pilot Killed

R.A.A.F. Pilot-Sergeant Robert Donald Munro, 25, single, of South Australia, died of injuries received when his plane crashed on a training flight on Tuesday.

Flying-Officer Malcolm Wilbur Baker, 27, married, of Perth, was injured.

The plane was operating from a Victorian station.

DAILY TELEGRAPH (SYDNEY)

30.4.43