

**LEFT:** The City of Bundaberg and district Spitfire which was funded by local residents' donations during World War II. **BELOW:** A City Queen festival and quest was held as part of the fund-raising activities. **AT BOTTOM:** The winner and entrants can be seen dressed in Air Force gear.



# Spitfire history is sought

AVIATION enthusiast Merv McGrane needs more information before he can close his books on the history of Bundaberg's wartime purchase of a Spitfire.

In 1941, with the ever-increasing threat of the German invaders to Great Britain, Bundaberg residents pooled their resources to purchase the Spitfire at a cost of 7000 pounds.

Prominent among their fund-raising efforts, was the crowning of a Bundaberg Queen and Country Queen contest, won by Susie Wilmington (Comans) and Majorie Clifford. The women even held a football match made up entirely of women which was a great novelty in 1941.

Mr McGrane said the Spitfire, named The City of Bundaberg and District, saw service defending the United Kingdom, but came to grief somewhere over the Irish Sea and was never recovered. It is not known if the pilot survived the crash.

Mr McGrane has been putting together a history on Bundaberg's wartime efforts, including an elaborate scroll of each major contributor to the cause.

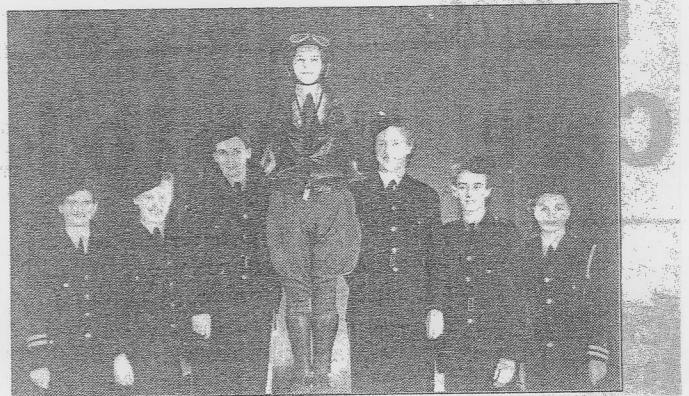
"I was in the RAF myself, so I wasn't in Bundaberg when this all happened," he said.

He is still puzzled by a few questions, including: How

much did people pay to have their names recorded on the scroll? Who was the draftsman of the exquisitely decorated honour Roll of the Spitfire Supporters?

If you have information relating to the Spitfire or the donors' roll, please contact Mr McGrane on 521142. He has been conducting research since 1988.

Once he has the answers, he will hand the scroll and the relating history to the Bundaberg and District Historical Museum for posterity.



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