

PLANE TRUTH SOLVES A MYSTERY

AT LAST the people of Texas will know why a field outside town has been called "the plane paddock" since the 1940s.

The key to the puzzle is a man who walked away from World War II Australian air- three crashes... one of them in the paddock.

Mr Rex Foy, of Loganholme, was the wireless operator/gunner in a Beaufort bomber which crashed there while being flown from Townsville to Wagga Wagga to be overhauled in April 1944.

The bomber lost one engine near Texas and the pilot and co-pilot managed to land the aircraft on a rough paddock," he said.

We all survived the crash, although the pilot and co-pilot were injured, but that was the end of my flying.

By MICHAEL McKINNON

"I souvenired the aircraft clock and I am going to present the clock to the Texas Historical Society because they already have some information on the crash."

However Mrs Coleen Glasser of the Texas Historical Society yesterday told how the paddock had always been called the "plain paddock", which people thought related to the flat ground.

Now they realise it came from the plane crash.

Mr Foy's first crash was during training, and the second was just before the Texas incident — the same pilot and co-pilot were at the controls in both cases.

He was one of just five hand-picked Australian airmen at-

tached to the United States Army Air Force flying B-24 Liberator bombers.

One morning in March, while taking off near Buna in Papua New Guinea with a full load of bombs and petrol, the plane stalled and fell from about 6m in the air.

"It skidded along the steel runway and came to rest in the mud — some of the crew fell out and some managed to climb out," Mr Foy said.

"I went into shock and I don't remember anything until the plane stopped."

He said it was the only recorded case in the southern hemisphere of a B-24 crashing on take-off and all the crew surviving.

Less than four weeks later, he was aboard the ill-fated flight which ended abruptly in the Texas paddock.



Rex Foy with the clock from the last of his three air crashes

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