

B-24D Information to Date (15/5/90)

- For interest,  
Bob*
- A72-1 41-11904 B-24D "Pride of the Yankees". Recd from ?? Sqn, 90th BG USAAC 15.2.44. Known Brisbane 25.5.44. Recd 7 OTU 29.5.44. Recd 7 AD 7.6.44. Returned 7 OTU ???.44. A/c partially destroyed by fire at Tocumwal 2.10.44; exact cause of fire not known but attributed to electrical short circuit in vicinity of bomb bay during electrical test assw rewiring of A72-4. Allotted 7 CRD & 7 OTU for conversion to components.
- A72-2 41-23720 B-24D-1 Recd from ?? USAAC 15.2.44. Recd 7 OTU 1.5.44. Allotted 7 AD for complete overhaul 24.7.44. Stored Category C 16.11.45. Cat D 22.3.46. Cat E 1.10.46. Passed to Dept of Defence Production for technical recovery action 7.7.52. Issued ex-Tocumwal as above 3.12.52.
- A72-3 41-24018 B-24D-15 "Margie". Recd from ?? Sqn 90th BG USAAC 15.2.44. Recd 7 OTU 16.4.44. Became Instructional Airframe No.1 and allotted 7 OTU for instructional purposes 10.11.44. Offered to CDC for disposal. CDC authorised write-off 4.12.46. Passed to DAP 16.1.48. Disposed of by DAP 23.3.48.
- A72-4 42-40489 B-24D-65-CO "Miss Giving". Recd from 528th Sqn, 380th BG 15.2.44. Original equipment flown over by Banks. Flew 27 missions before being sent to a salvage depot at Townsville. Nose art painting ("a scantily clad girl dropping a bomb" - Dekeyne) by Ebbeson - his first effort. Crew Chief: MSGT Leonard A Caster. Photograph of aircraft from Dick Dekeyne - glasshouse nose. Recd 7 OTU 19.3.44. A/c partially destroyed by fire Tocumwal 2.10.44 with A72-1 which see. Allocated 7 CRD & 7 OTU for conversion to components.
- A72-5 42-40512 B-24D-65 "She Asta". Recd from 530th Sqn, 380th BG 15.2.44. Squadron records indicate aircraft transferred 3.3.44. Dick Dekeyne recalls aircraft as DEFINITELY a "glasshouse nose with four free guns". Recd 7 OTU 16.4.44. Recd 7 AD for complete overhaul 7.2.45. Recd 3AD for further repairs 1.5.45. To 3 AD store Cat D 22.3.46. Cat E 1.10.46. Authorised for write-off 4.12.46. Passed to DAP 7.10.49. Sold by DAP ex-3 AD 2.6.50.

- A72-6 42-40522 B-24D-65-CO "Deliverer". Recd from 531st Sqn, 380th BG 15.2.44. Turret conversion completed in Townsville (Dekeyne). Published photograph (Credited Frank Smith) Aero Pictorials 3 (The Royal Australian Air Force and Royal New Zealand Air Force in the Pacific), Rene J Francillon, Ph.D - P.77. Pre-transfer photo p183 of "Log of the Liberators" by Steve Birdsall. Recd 7 OTU 1.5.44. To Instructional airframe No.2 10.11.44. To Point Cook 29.11.44. Converted to components (authority 29.10.45 - completed 18.8.47).
- A72-7 41-24070 B-24D-90 "Miss Deed". Recd from ?? Sqn, 90th BG 22.2.44. Recd 7 OTU 22.2.44. Must have been repainted in RAAF markings at Tocumwal - Record Card notes "to be renumbered A72-7"; this dated four days later. Converted to Instructional Airframe No.3 10.11.44. Converted to components 29.10.45.
- A72-8 41-24290 B-24D-25. Recd from ?? 22.2.44. Recd 7 OTU 22.2.44. RAAF re-numbering dated 4 days later. Aircraft crashed on take-off at Tocumwal 11.1.45 after nose wheel collapsed. Recd 7 CRD 27.1.45 for conversion to components. Photograph of crashed aircraft published in "RAAF Camouflage and Markings Vol II" page 124. Photograph also held in personal collection sourced through Bob Piper. Unusual items noted are blanked off astrodome and a rpoundel on the lower nose, port side.
- A72-9 41-11868 B-24D "Change O' Luck" later "White Cargo". Recd from ?? Sqn, 90th BG ?.?.44 Allotted 7 AD ex "Forward Echelon for overhaul" (Townsville?) 26.2.44 but not delivered 7 AD until 19.3.44 Record Card states that 7 AD were to "inscribe RAAF No and markings on this aircraft". Recd 7 OTU 6.7.44. Recd 1AD TPTF(?) 22.11.44. Remained at T&F (?) Sqn (possibly in store) until recd 7 AD 28.2.45 for 160 hourly repairs as necessary and engine change as required - aircraft required for training of ferry crews. Initially allotted to 1 AD T&F Sqn 12.3.45, but cancelled 1.5.45. Allotted 82 Wing for use only of movement of spares between Wing and Brisbane. A/c to proceed via Archerfield to uplift spares. A/c to be based on 24 Sqn 1.5.45. Issued 82 Wing 29.5.45. Recd 24 Sqn 3.6.45. Allotted to 12 ARD ex 24 Sqn fro flight to Darwin. A/c not to be flown after delivery, no repairs to be carried out. Recd 12 ARD 9.6.45. Allotted 8 CRD for conversion in situ. Issued 8 CRD for conversion to components 11.9.45. Assume 8 CRD at Darwin.

A72-10 41-24127 B-24D-20. Recd from ?? 22.5.44.  
Renumbered by 7 AD and overhauled. Recd 7 OTU 25.8.44.  
Slightly damaged while being pushed out of hanger away  
from fire which destroyed A72-1 & 4. Allotted 7 AD for  
storage 19.11.45 and recd by 7 AD 10.1.46. 23.2.46 Cat D.  
1.10.46 Cat E. Held in storage until 7.7.52 when passed  
to Dept of Defence Production for technical recovery.  
Issued to Dept of DP 3.12.52.

A72-11 42-40514 B-24D-65 "Lucky Legs". Recd from 529th Sqn,  
380th BG ?.?.44.  
29.7.44 A/c at Archerfield - 5 MG (?) to arrange take  
over from 5th Air Force. 3 AD to inspect. A/c not  
BOC 3 AD but to proceed direct 7 OTU. Recd 7 OTU  
4.9.44. 22.2.45 Aircraft to be returned to FEAF No.3  
Strip Nadzab. (Record Card carries further details)  
1.3.45 A/c now to be issued to FEASC (?) No.3 Depot,  
Biak. Issued USAAF 17.4.45. 22.4.45 Emergency landing  
Booktown (?). Port outer fuel tank failed and damaged  
port inner engine. 3.5.45 allotted 13 ARD for repairs  
in situ at 27 OBU (?). 7.7.45 27 OBU advise fuel cell  
not received. 13 ARD not able to complete - allotted 3  
AD for completion 15.9.45. Other fuel tanks suspected  
perished - tanks, engine and rubber fuel lines required.  
A/c understood to be on ferry to No.3 USA Depot Biak for  
breaking up. Approval finally given to convert a/c to  
components and allotted to 6 CRD fro conversion in situ  
at 270 BASU 5.11.45. Engines appear to be the only items  
of interest to the RAAF.  
Lin McDonald has log book entry for this aircraft at  
Tocumwal with 7 OTU.

A72-12 42-41132 B-24D-135-CO. Recd from ?? 13.9.44.  
As per A72-11 but Recd 3 AD 13.9.44. Recd 7 AD 16.9.44.  
Recd 7 OTU 21.9.44. 22.2.45 A/c to be returned to FEAF  
No.3 Strip Nadzab. 1.3.45 A/c to be issued to FEASC No.3  
Depot Biak. 17.4.45 Issued to USAAF.

Two other aircraft appear in USAAF Lend Lease records as  
theatre transfers but do not appear in RAAF records: 42-40508  
(B-24D-65-CO "80 Day Major") sent from the 380th BG in late  
September 1943; and 42-40534, a B-24D-70-CO.

Dick Carroll states that he was on the first conversion course for  
engine fitters (IIE) about the time the D'S arrived at 7 OTU. The  
CO is reported to have stated that that he would be quite happy to  
have 2 or 3 in the air at the same time as they were, most of the  
time, U/S.

Telephone conversation with Steve Birdsall indicates that 43rd BG is an unlikely source for these aircraft - this Group's serial numbers do not start as low as these, so at this time the source of A72-2, -8, -10 and -12 is not known. Photographs of some of the transferred 90th BG aircraft are available. More information to come from this source.

From Mike Nelmes: "Australian Archives file 1/501/533 I dated 10/7/44: Quote from a telex; 'Have taken over 10 B-24D part-used aircraft for flying purposes, also in process of taking over 2 additional B-24D aircraft (unfit for flying) for conversion as spares. 10\* were at repair units and either had been or were undergoing routine major inspection and repair of damage received in combat.'

\*I suspect that these 10 are different from the first ten mentioned because it then goes on to the effect that 7 of these were war-weary and 'unacceptable', making me think that these 7 may not have been among the ones given A72 numbers and therefore additional to the 10 received earlier by 7 OTU; and also, of the other three, one was a B-24J. It also states that civil contractors (perhaps QEA?) were working on them. The details of the three 'acceptable' ones were:

42-40514 A72-11  
42-41132 A72-12  
42-100194 A72-13 (B-24J-80-CO)

Elsewhere it is stated that there were 8 B-24's on hand (presumably at 7 OTU) on 18.5.44 and 10 on 30.10.44."

Record card for "VH-CBL" indicates a/c received on loan from the USAAC by 36 Sqn on 23.4.44. Fitted R-1830-33 (mechanically supercharged P&W twin-row). Allotted 13 ARD for repairs to nosewheel. Returned to 36 Sqn 4.8.44 and returned to USAAC 8.8.44 "on termination of loan".

Engine quoted is a quandy, as only LB30's and Lib I's were supposed to be fitted with this engine. The Lib II (which is what I reckon this aircraft is because the nose dimensions fit this model, and not the earlier shorter nosed types) is reported to have been fitted with P&W commercial R-1830-S3C4G engines, later redesignated R-1830-61's. It would appear that this was one of the Project X aircraft, and is probably equivalent to the BOAC/QANTAS Libs.

See "The B-24 Liberator" by Alan G Blue pp131-138 for details of British Contract aircraft retained by the USAAC. Photographs of BELLE are published in "There and Back" by Alan Randall p71 (operating details pp70-72, and between pages 136 and 137 in John Balfe's "...And Far From Home". Operating details on p166 - some discrepancies!

The following Bomb Groups made up the 5th Air Force:

90th Bomb Group (Jolly Rogers) entered combat in the SWPA from Iron Range in November 1942. Squadrons were 319th (red tail), 320th (blue tail), 321st (green tail) and 400th (black tail).

380th Bomb Group (Flying Circus) was set up in Australia April-May 1943. Initial operations were carried out from Fenton Field and Manbulloo Field in Northern Australia. Although assigned to the 5th Air Force, the 380th flew under RAAF operational control until January 1945 when it moved to Mindoro.

43rd Bomb Group (Ken's Men) converted from B-17's at Dobodura, New Guinea in May-September 1943.

22nd Bomb Group (Red Raiders) began operations with Liberators out of Nadzab, New Guinea in February 1944.

"Log" pp 179-200, and Blue's "Liberator pp 166-169 refer.

The Thirteenth Air Force had two Bomb Groups of Heavy Bombers (Liberators) which fought in the Pacific, beginning in December 1942, and which might be candidates (though considered unlikely) for transfers:

307th BG (Long Rangers) and 5th BG (Bomber Barons).