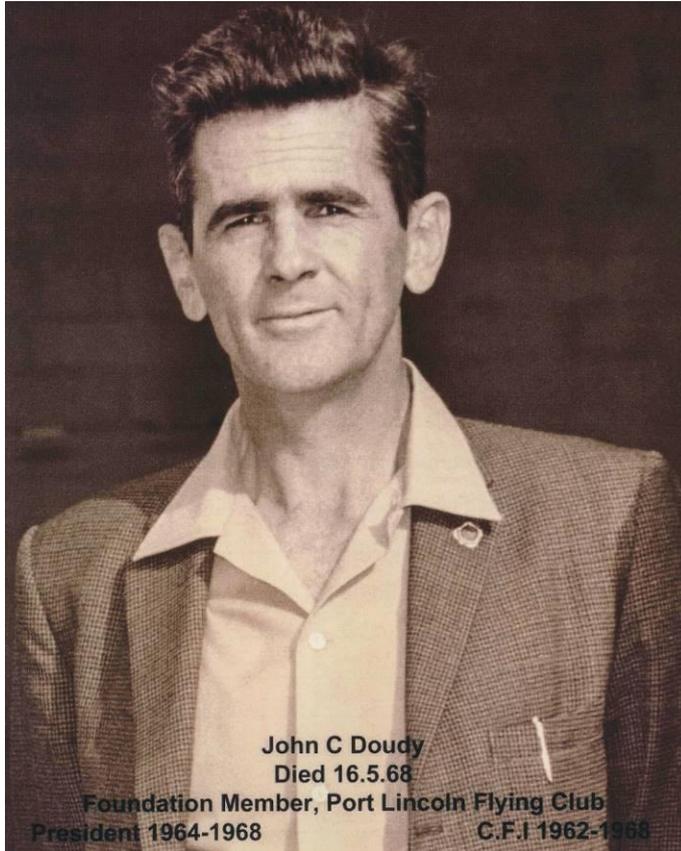


SOUTH AUSTRALIAN AVIATION MUSEUM

SIGNIFICANT AVIATOR PROFILES

JOHN C. (Jack) DOUDY



Jack Doudy c1968

Jack Doudy was born on 1 August 1924 in Port Lincoln, the third child of Cecil and Alice Doudy. He attended local schools then worked as a station hand in the upper Eyre Peninsula until he turned 18. He then joined the Australian Army but was discharged on 14 October 1942 to join the RAAF. His older brother, Henry, was already serving in the RAAF and may have influenced his decision.

RAAF/RAF Service

Jack underwent basic training in Victoria at 1RD Shepparton and then 1ITS Somers, which he completed by July 1943. He then commenced 61 hours of basic flight training in August on DH-82 Tiger Moths at 40 11EFTS Benalla before being posted to 42P 6SFTS Mallala in South Australia. He completed 59 hours training on Oxfords and then a further 126 hours

to complete flight training by 24 April 1944. Air Commodore Cobby presented him with his wings on 30 April in Adelaide, by which time Jack had accumulated 245 hours on DH-82s and Oxfords.

He was promoted to Temporary Sergeant, completed a further 10 hours training on Oxfords at 1SFTS Point Cook 65 8EAM and then embarked to England on 1 July 1944, where he arrived on

12 August 1944.

On 21 September 1944 Jack

was posted to RAF Station Burnaston in Derbyshire for flight instructing duties on DH-82s



Wings presentation 30 Apr 1944

and was promoted to Flight Sergeant. After 46 hours of instructing he was posted to RAF Station Woodley in Berkshire on 13 February 1945. There he completed another 99 hours of flight instruction on DH-82s, Magisters and Masters with 10FIS (E) Unit. On 7 November 1945 he was promoted to Warrant Officer having reached 400 flight hours and attended several short courses including the NCO's course at Whitley Bay in Northumberland.

On 1 October 1945 he had married Rosemary, a Kentish girl who was a Corporal Driver with the Women's Royal Air Force (WRAF). She was known by all as "Wuz". They embarked together for Australia, arriving in Perth on 22 November 1945, and Jack was demobbed on 30 January 1946 with a clean record and character rating of 'very good'. He was awarded the Defence Medal, the War Medal and the Australian Service Medal.

They lived initially in Port Lincoln with Jack's parents, but soon moved to Parkside in Adelaide where their first child, Chris, was born in July 1947. After 18 months in Adelaide the three of them returned to England where, with the help of Wuz's parents, Jack set about establishing a pig farm in Kent. Their second child, Robyn, was born in 1949.

On 18 October 1951 Jack enlisted for an eight year term with the RAF at Springfield in Essex, and then completed familiarisation, staff training and local orientation on Proctors and Ansons on Course 1 ASS RAF Swanton Morely in Norfolk. In December 1951 he moved to RAF Shawbury, Shropshire, where by the end of February 1952 he had completed course no. 28 having flown 106 hours on Avro Ansons.

The following month he was transferred to No1 ANS RAF Hullavinton in Wiltshire, where he instructed navigation in Avro Ansons on local navigational duties; and then joined 'C' Flight of the advanced squadron, flying the Vickers Wellington and its replacement, the Varsity, on training missions to the North African coast.

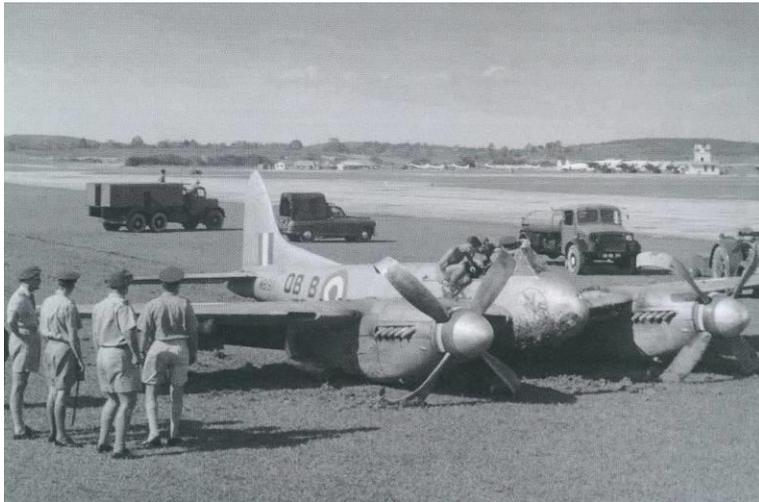
Over twenty months he completed a further 979 flight hours before being assigned RAF Benson in Oxfordshire for de Havilland Mosquito and Hornet conversion courses in preparation for overseas duty. He left RAF Benson with 167 Squadron on 25 January 1954 to RAF Seletar in Singapore via Europe, the Middle East, Pakistan, India, Burma and Malaya, and arrived on 8 February after total ferry time of 26.65 hours over ten days.

67 Squadron was assigned to the Far East Training Flight for local familiarisation and preparation for combat missions against the Communist insurgents in Operation Firedog.



WO Jack Doudy c1945

They also underwent conversion to de Havilland Vampires and Venoms, which replaced the Hornets and Mosquitos as they became available.



Jack lands Hornet WB 911 wheels-up on 14 Sep 1954 at RAF Tehgah

Jack then joined 45 Squadron at RAF Tengah Singapore. That squadron was established in March 1916 and had flown more than 5,000 missions against the insurgents throughout the Malayan Peninsula since 1949. It was awarded the Queen's Standard in February 1955. Jack mainly flew Hornets with occasional sorties in Vampires and Venoms, carrying out a number of strikes and bombing missions. On 14 September 1954 he landed Hornet WB 911

wheels-up at RAF Tengah due to an undercarriage problem – such problems being commonplace because of fungal growth in the aircraft's wooden structure. This, together with the greater performance capability of the new Vampire and Venom jets, contributed to the changeover to them.

In February 1955, Jack and Wuz's third child, Jane was born; and in July the family returned to England while Jack was on leave. He returned to RAF Tengah in November 1956 and joined 60 Squadron until August 1957, then Base Flight RAF Seletar for target towing with Pembroke, Meteors and Beaufighters for the Allied navies stationed in and around Singapore. The squadron towed targets for gunnery practice for ships including HMS Newcastle, Anzac, and Tobruk; HMAS Voyager and Warramungaby; and USS Bremerton.

On 28 November 1958 Jack's RAF service ended, by which time he accumulated 2,558 flight hours and completed over 70 strike and bombing missions against the Communist insurgents during his five years service in Singapore and Malaya.

Auster VH-SEB

During Jack's RAF Tengah posting he joined the Singapore Flying Club in January 1957 and accumulated 123 flight hours instructing on the club's Tiger Moths, Auster, Chipmunk, Cessna 170 and 172 and a Hindustani.



Jack and the Auster he built

While he was at the club, he discovered the fuselage of an ex-RAF 1943 MkV Auster, which he

set about restoring. He had planned to take the aircraft to Port Lincoln for use in general charter and flight training. The story of its restoration and modification, registration as VH-SEB, Jack's subsequent flight in it from Singapore to Parafield in December 1958, the Australian DCA's refusal to certify it for commercial operations, its sale and eventual display in the Port Lincoln Airport terminal in February 2019, is told in his son Chris Doudy's booklet *The plane that Jack built from scrap – Jack's life in aviation*. SAAM also published the story in its April 2019 newsletter.



Auster VH-SEB restored and displayed in the Port Lincoln Airport Terminal - 1 Mar 2019

Port Lincoln Flying Club and the birth of Commodore Aviation



Trevor Shepherd's Chipmunk VH-UEK

After the disappointment of VH-SEB not being approved for commercial flying, Jack teamed up with an Eyre Peninsula farmer named Trevor Shepherd who wanted to establish a flying club on the Peninsula. Shepherd purchased Chipmunk VH-UEK through Bert Tilbrook of Aviation Services Pty Ltd at Parafield, then agreed to lease it back to him for a three month trial

period for him to form a flying school in Port Lincoln with Jack. VH-UEK was one of five DHC-1 Chipmunks purchased on behalf of the Royal Aero Club of South Australia by the Royal Federation of Aero Clubs of Australia, as part of its bulk purchase of surplus ex-SAAF Chipmunks from South Africa for the Australian Aero Club movement. It was landed at Port Adelaide in September 1956 but never put into service by the Club, which sold it to Aviation Services Ltd in August 1958.

The flying school commenced operations in February 1959, based at Port Lincoln Airport, with Jack as its manager. Bert Tilbrook sold Jack's Auster the following January, which gave Jack sufficient capital to ride out a three year period while the Port Lincoln Flying Club was established and he was able to regain his instructor's rating. By 1962 he was appointed Chief Flying Instructor with two other flying instructors reporting to him, Bert Tilbrook had built the first hangar at the airport that he sold to the club, and the club was fully

operational under a constitution that Jack had brought down from the Singapore Flying Club and was modified by the club's committee for local use. The club is still in operation, 60 years later.



Wreckage of Chipmunk VH-UEK crashed 28 Jan 1963, after being moved to Butler Tanks Farm

Once the club was up and running, Bert Tilbrook's Aviation Services Pty Ltd had based Auster VH-PSM in Port Lincoln to augment Trevor Shepherd's Chipmunk in Flying Club use, and he replaced that Chipmunk with another registered as VH-BSP plus Cessna 175 VH-RGR. Chipmunk VH-UEK was written-off in a crash at Tumbly Bay while on local hire on 28 January 1963. Trevor Shepherd moved the wreckage to his farm, then donated it to the South Australian Aviation Museum where it was displayed for some years before being placed into storage for eventual restoration.

Jack demonstrated the advantages of the use of the Auster for fish spotting to the local tuna and salmon fishermen and set about building the general charter side of the business with both the Auster and Cessna 175.

Jack parted company with Aviation Services in 1961 in order to form his own company that he called Commodore Aviation Pty Ltd. He purchased Auster VH-RAD in partnership with Ron Fuller, who was the inaugural president of the Flying Club and the area manager for Goldsbrough Mort & Co Rural Services, with the main purpose being to enable Ron Fuller to commute more efficiently around the Peninsula in his role with Goldsbrough Mort.

By this time Port Lincoln fishing interests were convinced of the merits of aerial fish spotting, and Jack was able to negotiate a contract with SAFCOL, for which he purchased a Republic RC-3 Sea Bee amphibian VH-WWA. The season was a success but limitations of the aircraft's range were evident, which led to Jack researching other options. He settled on the Czechoslovakian built Aero 145, which featured with low wing, twin supercharged Walter M332 engines, four wing fuel tanks, variable pitch twin blade propellers, retractable main gear, large flaps and swivel tail



Republic RC Sea Bee VH-WWA

wheel. Its eight hour endurance and short field capability made the aircraft ideal for the contract, so he traded the Sea Bee in for an Aero 145 and, with SAFCOL's financial assistance, took delivery of VH-WWC in December 1962 for the 1963 tuna season.

The aircraft's characteristics also made servicing the Althorpe and South Neptune islands lighthouses south-east of Port Lincoln at the bottom of Spencer Gulf by air feasible. Up until then their marginal weather and 900 metre airstrips required regular mail and fresh food to be supplied by sea. Jack submitted a proposal to the Department of Navigational Aids and



*Aero 145s VH-DUH and VH-WWC at Althorpe Island SA
1973 (CAHS)*

Civil Aviation, and was successful in gaining a contract he continued for ten years. He also supplied services to other local islands including Reevesby and Spilsby in the St Joseph Banks group and Thistle and Wedge islands.

During this period Jack also bought a Piper Pawnee and, with the help of retired farmer Denis Kildea, set up Commodore Agricultural Services to provide aerial crop

spraying and superphosphate spreading for local farmers on the Peninsula. Jack had purchased the Port Lincoln Flying Club's hangar when the club was in difficulties having lost both Chipmunks to accidents, and Kildea provided finance for him to build a second hangar. This enabled Commodore Aviation to run a maintenance business servicing its own aircraft as well as those of the Flying Club and other general aviation clients. Services ranged from 100 hourly services to major engine and airframe overhaul and general repairs. The company was also the local avgas agent.

Jack provided emergency services to the community through his company. He provided search aircraft for missing people and boats and transported injured people to hospital in Adelaide

On 16 May 1968 Jack was killed in a car accident on the Lincoln Highway.

At the time of his death he had accumulated a total of 6,220 flight hours, of which 2,558 were in RAAF/RAF service and 3,662 in civil aviation.



Aero 145 WWC Adelaide Airport 12 Nov 1970 (Nigel Daw)

He continued as an active member of the Port Lincoln Flying Club until his death, serving as Chief Flying Instructor from 1962 to 1968 and as President from 1964 to 1968.

He achieved aircraft endorsements as follows:

Military

Airspeed Oxford, Miles Magister, Miles Master Mk 11, Proctor, Anson XII XXI & XIX, Wellington T10, Varsity, Mosquito T3, Hornet F4, Vampire T11 & 9, Venom FB14, Meteor T7 & F8, Pembroke C1 and Beaufighter TT10.

Civil

DH-82, Auster Mk V, Chipmunk 22, Hindustani 2, Cessna 170 172 175 & 206, Zlin Z226, Proctor, Aero 145 & 45, Republic Sea bee, Beech 23 & C35, Piper Colt, Piper Apache, Meta Sokol L-40 and Mooney Mk20b.

Mike Milln

History Group

From *The plane that Jack built from scrap – Jack's life in aviation*, compiled by Chris Doudy 2015

All photos Chris Doudy except where otherwise indicated