

= William Anderson (RAAF officer) =

Air Vice @-@ Marshal William Hopton (Bill) Anderson , CBE , DFC (30 December 1891 ? 30 December 1975) was a senior commander in the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) . He flew with the Australian Flying Corps in World War I , earning the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Belgian Croix de guerre , and leading Nos. 3 and 7 Squadrons . Anderson commanded the Australian Air Corps during its brief existence in 1920 , before joining the fledgling RAAF the following year . The service 's third most senior officer , he primarily held posts on the Australian Air Board in the inter @-@ war years . He was appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 1934 , and promoted to air commodore in 1938 .

When World War II broke out , Anderson was Air Member for Supply . In 1940 he acted as Chief of the Air Staff between the resignation of Air Vice @-@ Marshal Stanley Goble in January and the arrival of Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Burnett , RAF , the next month . He led the newly formed Central and Eastern Area Commands between December 1940 and July 1943 , briefly returning to the Air Board as Air Member for Organisation and Equipment in 1941 ? 42 . Anderson was founding Commandant of the RAAF Staff School from July to November 1943 , and held this post again from October 1944 until his retirement in April 1946 . Known to his colleagues as " Andy " or " Mucker " , he died on his birthday in 1975 .

= = Early life and World War I = =

Born on 30 December 1891 in Kew , Victoria , Bill Anderson was the third son of surveyor Edward Anderson , from England , and his wife Florence , a native Victorian . The youth was educated at Melbourne Church of England Grammar School , where he joined the cadet corps . He began his professional military career as a Royal Australian (Garrison) Artillery officer in December 1910 , before transferring to the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force , based at Rabaul in what was then German New Guinea , in March 1915 . The following January , Anderson joined the Australian Flying Corps (AFC) as a captain , serving with No. 1 Squadron in Palestine . He was posted to No. 3 Squadron (designated No. 69 Squadron Royal Flying Corps by the British) in August 1917 , operating Royal Aircraft Factory R.E.8 two @-@ seat reconnaissance aircraft on the Western Front .

From October 1917 , No. 3 Squadron was heavily involved in artillery ranging , activity that left the slow R.E.8s vulnerable to attack by German fighters . Twice that month Anderson 's plane was dived upon by multiple enemy aircraft . He was , in his own words , " too scared to think " on the first occasion , but both times held his nerve and manoeuvred his plane so that his observer could hold off their opponents with Lewis Gun fire while other R.E.8s came to their aid . Anderson was spotting for artillery near the Messines Ridge on 6 December when he engaged a German two @-@ seat DFW that observer John Bell was able to shoot down ; it was No. 3 Squadron 's first confirmed aerial victory . In January 1918 , Anderson was given the temporary rank of major and posted to England to take charge of No. 7 (Training) Squadron AFC . He was recommended for the Military Cross (MC) on 12 March for his achievements with No. 3 Squadron in France , the citation noting his " resolute fight " and " cool and capable flying " in evading attacks by enemy aircraft and successfully carrying out his reconnaissance missions . In the event , he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) in the King 's Birthday Honours promulgated in the London Gazette on 3 June , becoming the first Australian to receive the newly created decoration . He was also awarded the Belgian Croix de guerre , gazetted on 9 July . Anderson went back to France in October 1918 as commanding officer of No. 3 Squadron . His service earned him a mention in despatches on 11 July 1919 .

= = Inter @-@ war years = =

Anderson relinquished command of No. 3 Squadron in January 1919 and returned to Australia two months later . In December that year the Australian Flying Corps was disbanded , to be replaced on

1 January 1920 by the short @-@ lived Australian Air Corps (AAC) , which was , like the AFC , a branch of the Army . The AFC 's senior officer , Lieutenant Colonel Richard Williams , was still in England , and Major Anderson was appointed commander of the AAC , a position that also put him in charge of Central Flying School (CFS) at Point Cook , Victoria . On 31 March 1921 , he joined the newly formed Australian Air Force (the " Royal " prefix being added in August) as a squadron leader , becoming its third most senior officer after Williams and former Royal Naval Air Service pilot Stanley Goble , both now wing commanders . During 1921 , Anderson headed up the RAAF 's Point Cook base and its two major units , No. 1 Flying Training School (No. 1 FTS) ? the successor to CFS ? and the newly established No. 1 Aircraft Depot (No. 1 AD) . Over the next four years he acted as Director of Personnel and Training , Chief of the Administrative Staff , and Second Air Member on the RAAF 's controlling body , the Air Board , when Goble was away on overseas postings . In April 1922 , he took part in the new service 's first army co @-@ operation exercise , piloting an Airco DH9 with Flight Lieutenant Adrian Cole , who spotted for artillery firing from an emplacement at Queenscliff , Victoria . A year later , Anderson proposed a special RAAF workshop for research and development , which was duly formed at Point Cook later that year .

The young Air Force staged numerous public displays in its early years ; on one such occasion over the Melbourne suburb of Essendon in September 1924 , Anderson , Ray Brownell and another pilot took part in a mock dogfight while ace Harry Cobby gave a demonstration of balloon busting . During 1925 ? 26 , Anderson again took command of No. 1 FTS , as well as occupying a position on the Air Board as Air Member for Personnel . He was posted to England between 1927 and 1929 , attending RAF Staff College , Andover , and serving as Air Liaison Officer (ALO) to the British Air Ministry . On 23 March 1927 he was promoted to wing commander . As ALO in 1928 , he provided information to the Air Board concerning shortcomings of the de Havilland Hound light day bomber , then being strongly considered for the RAAF , that led to the Westland Wapiti being ordered instead . Returning to Australia in mid @-@ 1929 , Anderson was for a short time in charge of No. 1 AD , now based at RAAF Station Laverton , Victoria , before appointment to the Air Board as Air Member for Supply in October . He spent most of the 1930s in this position , aside from an acting role as Air Member for Personnel in 1933 ? 34 , and attendance at the Imperial Defence College , London , the following year . Anderson had no formal training in the supply field , and though regarded with affection was variously considered " not quite on the same wave length as others " and " so immersed in the minutiae of administration that some important policy matters languished " . His chronic shyness with women other than his unmarried sister also made him an object of fun in some quarters . He was raised to group captain in December 1932 and air commodore in January 1938 . Appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the 1933 King 's Birthday Honours , he was promoted Commander in the same order (CBE) in the 1934 New Year Honours .

= = World War II = =

Anderson was still serving as Air Member for Supply when Australia declared war in September 1939 . On 9 January 1940 he was appointed acting Chief of the Air Staff (CAS) , following the resignation of the incumbent , Air Vice @-@ Marshal Goble . Anderson remained in the position until 10 February , when Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Burnett , seconded from the Royal Air Force , arrived to take over . The Australian government at this stage had so little faith in the leadership of its Air Force that it had briefly considered offering temporary command of the service to a Royal Australian Navy officer , Second Naval Member Commodore Maitland Boucher , before deciding against such a " monumental slight to the senior ranks of the RAAF " and settling on Anderson . After relinquishing his temporary position as CAS , Anderson briefly reverted to his previous role as Air Member for Supply before taking over as Air Member for Personnel (AMP) in March 1940 ; he was succeeded in November by Air Vice @-@ Marshal Henry Wrigley . The next month , Anderson took over from Air Commodore Cole as Air Officer Commanding Central Area , with responsibility for air defence , protection of adjacent sea lanes , and aerial reconnaissance for most of New South Wales ; he remained at this post until it was disbanded in August the following year .

Promoted acting air vice @-@ marshal in September 1941 , Anderson resumed his position on the

Air Board by replacing Air Marshal Williams as Air Member for Organisation and Equipment . In May 1942 , he assumed command of the newly established Eastern Area , which was headquartered in Sydney and controlled seven squadrons from southern Queensland to southern New South Wales . One of the area 's main roles was anti @-@ submarine warfare ; its squadrons also included fighters and army co @-@ operation aircraft . In July 1943 Anderson became the inaugural Commandant of the RAAF Staff School at Mount Martha , Victoria . The school was instituted to further the training of officers at the squadron leader and wing commander level , whose basic education standards Anderson , among others , found sadly lacking . In December 1943 he was again appointed Air Member for Personnel , taking over from Air Commodore Frank Lukis , before returning to command the RAAF Staff School in September 1944 . He continued in the latter role until being forcibly retired , along with a number of other senior Air Force commanders , in April 1946 , ostensibly to make way for younger and equally qualified officers . A confidential report in September 1944 had found him " hard working , conscientious and loyal " but lacking in " constructive capacity and organising ability " . He was still four years below the statutory retirement age of fifty @-@ seven for his substantive rank of air commodore .

= = Retirement = =

Following his discharge from the RAAF as an honorary air vice marshal , Anderson lived in East Melbourne . A lifelong bachelor , he shared a house with his sister , who also never married . From 1947 until 1971 , he served as honorary chairman of the Victorian branch of the Services Canteens Trust Fund . On 31 March 1971 , he was among a select group of surviving founder members of the RAAF who attended a celebratory dinner at the Hotel Canberra to mark the service 's Golden Jubilee ; his fellow guests included Air Marshal Williams , Air Vice @-@ Marshal Wrigley , Air Commodore Hippolyte (Frank) De La Rue , and Wing Commander Sir Lawrence Wackett . Bill Anderson died on his birthday in 1975 , and was buried in Boroondara Cemetery , Kew .