

= William Hely =

Air Vice Marshal William Lloyd (Bill) Hely , CB , CBE , AFC (24 August 1909 ? 20 May 1970) was a senior commander in the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) . He graduated from the Royal Military College , Duntroon , in 1930 before transferring to the RAAF as a cadet pilot . Hely came to public attention in 1936 ? 37 , first when he crashed on a survey flight in the Northern Territory , and later when he undertook two successful missions to locate missing aircraft in the same vicinity . His rescue efforts earned him the Air Force Cross . After occupying staff positions during the early years of World War II , Hely was appointed Officer Commanding No. 72 Wing in Dutch New Guinea in May 1944 . Later that year he formed No. 84 (Army Cooperation) Wing , commanding it during the Bougainville Campaign until the end of the Pacific War .

Hely spent the immediate post @-@ war period on the staff of RAAF Headquarters , Melbourne . From 1951 to 1953 he served as Air Officer Commanding (AOC) Western Area Command in Perth , after which he was appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire . He was Deputy Chief of the Air Staff from 1953 to 1956 , AOC Training Command from 1956 to 1957 , and Head of the Australian Joint Services Staff in Washington , D.C. from 1957 to 1960 . He then served as Air Member for Personnel (AMP) for six years , his tenure coinciding with a significant increase in manpower to meet commitments in South East Asia and the demands of a major re @-@ equipment program . Having been promoted acting air vice marshal in 1953 (substantive in 1956) , he was appointed a Companion of the Order of the Bath in 1964 for his service as AMP . He retired from the Air Force in 1966 and made his home in Canberra , where he died in 1970 at the age of sixty .

= = Early career = =

The third child of Prosper Frederick Hely , a storekeeper , and his wife Alice (née Lloyd) , William Lloyd (Bill) Hely was born on 24 August 1909 at Wellington , New South Wales . He was educated to Intermediate Certificate level at Mudjee , Wollongong and Rozelle Public Schools , and at Fort Street High School , Petersham . Leaving school in 1926 , he worked as a clerk and studied accountancy in his spare time . On 16 February 1927 , Hely entered the Royal Military College , Duntroon , as one of four cadets sponsored that year by the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) , which did not yet have its own officer training college . He graduated as a lieutenant on 9 December 1930 , and the following day enlisted in the RAAF . As well as the four graduates the Air Force had enrolled in 1927 , budgetary constraints imposed during the Great Depression necessitated the transfer from Duntroon to Point Cook of eight other RAAF @-@ sponsored cadets midway through their four @-@ year course , including Alister Murdoch , Bill Garing and Douglas Candy . Initially ranked pilot officer , Hely commenced his flying training course at RAAF Point Cook , Victoria , on 15 January 1931 , graduating on 10 December . His early postings as a pilot in 1932 and 1933 were to RAAF Station Richmond , New South Wales , and RAAF Station Laverton , Victoria . Qualifying in aerial photography , he served at Point Cook from 1933 to 1936 . He was then transferred to No. 3 Squadron at Richmond , receiving promotion to flight lieutenant .

In April 1936 , Hely took command of No. 3 Squadron 's North Australia Survey Flight , one of two such flights formed by the Air Force that month to carry out photographic surveys . Flying a twin @-@ engined de Havilland Dragon Rapide (serial number A3 @-@ 2) , Hely departed Richmond on 11 April for Port Hedland , which was to be the flight 's base for its initial survey work in Western Australia . Over the Northern Territory , between Newcastle Waters and Wave Hill , he became lost , ran out of fuel , and had to crash land . He and his crew of two were found by RAAF search aircraft ten days later , on 22 April . The Argus had reported that " grave fears " were held for their safety , but they were largely uninjured , Hely having suffered cuts and abrasions to his head and leg . The aircraft was badly damaged and had to be transported back to Richmond in pieces . In February 1937 , Hely took part in the search for a missing Stinson airliner that was eventually found in the McPherson Range , Queensland , five of its seven passengers and crew dead .

For its 1937 aerial survey program , the RAAF formed the Communications and Survey Flight under

No. 1 Aircraft Depot 's Recruit Training Squadron at Laverton on 3 May . The flight was divided into Western and Eastern Air Detachments , the former under Hely . Flying a Tugan Gannet , Hely 's first task became searching for survey director Sir Herbert Gepp , whose Rapide (A3 @-@ 2 , the same one Hely crash landed the previous year) had gone missing on an inspection flight in the Northern Territory between Tennant Creek and Tanimi . Hely located the downed Rapide on 23 May , guiding in a ground party that was able to clear a makeshift runway and allow Gepp and his team to take off and resume their journey . On 25 September , Hely was again diverted from survey work to search for a lost plane , this time the de Havilland Gipsy Moth of flying doctor Clyde Fenton , who had gone missing north @-@ east of Newcastle Waters . Hely , once more piloting Rapide A3 @-@ 2 , found the Moth three days later and landed to rescue the lost doctor . Fenton was subsequently quoted as saying " I have only the highest praise for the efficient manner in which Hely conducted a difficult search and the skilful way in which he located me and picked me up " . The rescue efforts made Hely one of the RAAF 's best @-@ known public figures . Completing his posting to the survey flight , he served as adjutant at Laverton in 1938 . He was awarded the Air Force Cross on 9 June for " zeal and initiative in searching for Sir Herbert Gepp 's party and later for Dr. Fenton when lost in Central Australia " . On 29 November 1938 , he married secretary Jean McDonald at St Aidan 's Anglican Church in Launceston , Tasmania ; the couple would have two daughters . Hely spent the following year in Britain , attending the Royal Air Force Staff College , Andover , and was promoted to squadron leader in September .

= = World War II = =

At the outbreak of World War II , Hely was attached to the operations room at RAF Coastal Command . On his return to Australia in January 1940 , he was appointed Staff Officer Plans at RAAF Headquarters , Melbourne . In October , he joined the Deputy Chief of the Air Staff , Air Vice Marshal Bill Bostock , as a delegate to a defence conference in Singapore . The Australian contingent found the local forces ill @-@ prepared for an attack by the Japanese and recommended significant increases in air capability , both in Australia and the Pacific Islands , to meet the threat . Hely was promoted to temporary wing commander the following January , and was the ranking Air Force delegate at a series of staff talks in Batavia and Singapore regarding the defence of the Dutch East Indies . He became Director of Operations at RAAF Headquarters in August . His promotion to acting group captain was announced on 17 February 1942 . Two days later , the Japanese bombed Darwin , Northern Territory ; Hely circulated a memo early the next month to all commands on the lessons learnt from the raid . He was posted to Darwin in May to join North @-@ Western Area headquarters as senior air staff officer , and was granted the temporary rank of group captain in January 1943 . Hely returned to RAAF Headquarters in March to become Director of Air Staff Plans .

In May 1944 , Hely assumed command of No. 72 Wing at Merauke , Dutch New Guinea , succeeding Group Captain Allan Walters . Comprising fighter and dive @-@ bomber squadrons , the wing had been established to undertake air defence and patrol tasks in and around western New Guinea . Hely departed Merauke in September 1944 to establish an army cooperation formation , No. 84 Wing , in Cairns , Queensland . It was one of two such wings formed by the RAAF in the South West Pacific Theatre late in World War II . They were , as described by the official history of the RAAF in the Pacific , " essentially non @-@ offensive in character " , responsible for reconnaissance , artillery spotting , supply drops to ground forces , spraying DDT to combat malaria , and guiding close support aircraft to their objectives . The wing could also carry out its own strikes on " targets of opportunity " . No. 84 Wing comprised No. 5 (Tactical Reconnaissance) Squadron , No. 17 Air Observation Post Flight , No. 10 Communication Unit (subsequently renamed No. 10 Local Air Supply Unit) , and No. 39 Operational Base Unit . It deployed to Torokina in October to support Australian troops during the Bougainville Campaign . No. 5 Squadron , equipped with CAC Boomerangs and Wirraways , was assigned to mark targets for F4U Corsairs of the Royal New Zealand Air Force . Between December 1944 and January 1945 , the wing lost one Auster , one Wirraway , and one Boomerang on operations . Despite shortages of pilots and equipment , Hely 's

formation was generally able to keep pace with the army 's requirements . By the end of June 1945 , it had flown over 4 @, @ 000 sorties .

= = Post @-@ war career = =

Hely relinquished command of No. 84 Wing on 12 August 1945 and returned to RAAF Headquarters in October . He was by this time among a coterie of officers at group captain level , including Val Hancock , Alister Murdoch and Bill Garing , earmarked by the Australian Air Board for leadership roles in the post @-@ war RAAF , which was to shrink rapidly with demobilisation . At RAAF Headquarters , Hely was appointed Deputy Director of Operations , in which capacity he served on a committee to investigate proposals for an officer training college , later established as RAAF College , Point Cook . Along with Hely , all officers associated with the proposal 's examination were former Duntroon students , including the Deputy Chief of the Air Staff , Air Commodore Frank Bladin , the Director of Postings , Group Captain Murdoch , and the Director of Training , Group Captain Paddy Heffernan . Another Duntroon graduate , Air Commodore Hancock , became the college 's first commandant . Hely was appointed Director of Organisation and Staff Duties in 1946 . That November , he became Director of Postings . The following year , he took up the position of Director of Personal Services , before departing for Britain in December 1948 to study at the Imperial Defence College , London .

Returning to Melbourne , Hely served as deputy to the Air Member for Personnel from January 1950 . He became an aide @-@ de @-@ camp to King George VI in June 1951 . In September , he was appointed Officer Commanding Western Area , Perth , taking up his new post in mid @-@ October . He was promoted to acting air commodore in July 1952 , becoming Air Officer Commanding (AOC) Western Area . His rank was made permanent in September , and the same month he was appointed aide @-@ de @-@ camp to Queen Elizabeth II . Among Hely 's duties as AOC Western Area was coordinating air support for the British atomic test on Montebello in October 1952 , including supply and observation flights by Dakotas of No. 86 (Transport) Wing . He was appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the Queen 's Coronation Honours promulgated on 1 June 1953 , for his war service and his work during the Montebello test . In August , he was named Deputy Chief of the Air Staff (DCAS) , with the acting rank of air vice marshal , effective from October ; he replaced Air Vice Marshal Hancock . Between October 1953 and February 1954 , the RAAF underwent major organisational change , as it transitioned from a geographically based command @-@ and @-@ control system to one based on function , resulting in the establishment of Home (operational) , Training , and Maintenance Commands . At the same time , RAAF Headquarters in Melbourne was absorbed by the Department of Air in Canberra . Hely was acting Air Member for Personnel from 3 January to 7 March 1955 , between the terms of Air Vice Marshals Val Hancock and Fred Scherger . On 24 January 1956 , he became AOC Training Command , taking over from Air Vice Marshal Murdoch . He was succeeded as DCAS by Air Vice Marshal Douglas Candy . Hely 's rank of air vice marshal became substantive on 5 September . In January 1957 , Point Cook retired its last de Havilland Tiger Moth trainers , signalling the end of the biplane era in the RAAF . That May , Hely was seconded to the Department of Defence and posted to Washington , D.C. , to head up the Australian Joint Services Staff . He was succeeded as AOC Training Command by Air Vice Marshal Ian McLachlan .

Hely became Air Member for Personnel (AMP) on 28 March 1960 , taking over from the acting AMP , Air Commodore Frank Headlam . Responsible for the Personnel Branch of the RAAF , the position of AMP occupied a seat on the Air Board , the service 's controlling body that comprised its senior officers and was chaired by the Chief of the Air Staff (CAS) . The Air Force expanded greatly during Hely 's term as AMP , owing to Australia 's increasing commitment to the security of South East Asia , and the most significant rearmament program the RAAF had undertaken outside of World War II . Its permanent establishment increased from a steady 15 @, @ 000 or so in the 1950s to over 18 @, @ 000 by 1966 . Hely himself initiated a scheme to attract staff from the Royal Air Force , which was suffering cutbacks , by opening a recruitment office in London and taking advantage of the Australian government 's assisted passage scheme to import trained personnel

and their families . He was appointed a Companion of the Order of the Bath (CB) in the 1964 New Year Honours for his " tactful and careful handling of personnel matters " , and for having " done much to improve the manning level of the Air Force " . As AMP , Hely put forward proposals to increase the number of diploma @-@ qualified engineering and equipment officers in the Air Force . He was also closely involved in deliberations concerning the balance of academic and military studies at the RAAF Academy (previously RAAF College) , the outcome of which is considered to have left the course biased towards pure science , rather than its applications to air power .

= = Retirement = =

Hely retired on 24 August 1966 , after almost forty years in the military . He was succeeded the following day as AMP by Air Vice Marshal Candy . In retirement , Hely was active in the Canberra branch of the Air Force Association . He died of cancer in Canberra on 20 May 1970 . Survived by his wife and children , he was accorded an Air Force funeral at St John the Baptist Church and cremated at Norwood Park Crematorium , Gungahlin . The official mourning party included Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (CCOSC) General Sir John Wilton , former CCOSC Air Chief Marshal Sir Frederick Scherger , Secretary of Defence Sir Arthur Tange , CAS Air Marshal Colin Hannah , former CAS Air Marshal Sir Alister Murdoch , Vice Admiral Sir Victor Smith , Air Vice Marshal Brian Eaton , and Group Captain John Waddy . The guns at Duntroon were fired in salute as the cortege left the church .