Our proud history: The Air Training Corps and Australian Air Force Cadets in Camden

Originally known as No. 3 Flight, New South Wales Squadron, Air Training Corps, the unit was formed on the 20th June 1946.

Established at St. Josephs College in Hunters Hill, it continued there for 20 years, until its re-location to the current site at Camden Airport in 1966.

No. 3 Flight AIRTC was renamed 303 Squadron in 2001, following the re-organisation of the newly named Australian Air Force Cadets.

We were honoured by Camden Council with Freedom of Entry to Camden on 17th August 2014, with the formal Entry procession down the main street of Camden, with RAAF Hercules flyover, occurring on 6th December 2015, due previous weather washouts.

303 Squadron continues to provide youths from the Macarthur Region with valuable life skills, developing qualities of leadership, self-reliance, confidence, communication and teamwork.

303 Squadron proudly supports our local community and RSL’s through participation in Australia Day parades, ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day services each year.

Supporting our commitment to youth development, 303 Squadron has also led in the management of health and safety risks, with our award winning Safety Program receiving recognition from Air Force, Defence and the Commonwealth WHS Regulator (Comcare). Our Safety Program has now been replicated throughout the AAFC.

303 Squadron AAFC has a current strength of 70 Cadets plus uniformed and civilian staff.

The RAAF at Camden Airport

Originally a race track owned by Arthur Macarthur-Onslow, prior to World War II, Edward Macarthur-Onslow established Australia’s first private aerodrome and the Macquarie Grove Flying School on the “Macquarie Grove” property.

With the onset of World War II, Edward Macarthur-Onslow offered the aerodrome to the Commonwealth Government for the duration of hostilities "for the training of Australian war pilots". The Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) moved in and about 50 prefabricated huts were erected “overnight” with the 1st Light Horse Garrison also moving in to patrol the aerodrome.

RAAF Camden became home to the Central Flying School between 1940 and 1942 and during the war up to six RAAF Squadrons and a Royal Air Force Squadron (No. 243) were stationed at RAAF Camden.

In May 1942, No. 4 Squadron RAAF moved to Camden from Canberra equipped with CAC Wirraway’s, but were redeployed to Kingaroy, Queensland in September.

No. 15 Squadron RAAF was formed as a maritime patrol unit at Camden on 27 January 1944 equipped with Australian built versions of the Bristol Beaufort torpedo bomber. The squadron maintained detachments at Camden until the end of the war although it was based at other airfields for short periods.

No. 21 Squadron RAAF arrived at Camden in January 1944 from New Guinea to re-equip with Consolidated B-24 Liberators. The conversion was complete by July and the squadron departed to forward operating bases in northern Australia.

No. 32 Squadron RAAF equipped with the Lockheed Hudson, deployed to Camden in November 1942. While stationed at Camden the squadron performed anti-submarine patrols and was re-equipped with Beaufort torpedo bombers. The base hosted the squadron until May 1944 when it was redeployed to Lowood, Queensland.

No. 78 Interceptor Squadron RAAF, equipped with P-40 Kittyhawk fighters was formed on 20 July 1943 at RAAF Camden. The squadron trained here until it was operational and deployed to Kiririwina Island in November.

No. 83 Squadron RAAF equipped with Australian built CAC Boomerang fighters arrived at Camden from Gove in the Northern Territory in August 1944. The squadron had moved to nearby Menangle by early 1945.

Following the cessation of hostilities, RAAF Camden was returned to its civil status and handed back to the Department of Civil Aviation in September of 1946.
The 303 Squadron AAFC Banner

The 303 Squadron AAFC Banner is the result of a design competition amongst the Cadets of our Squadron. Cadets were asked to submit a design they believed would best to symbolise our Squadrons’ identity within the Camden area and encourage pride and esprit de corps.

The Obverse features a background of Azure Blue with a red Waratah in each corner representing our state of New South Wales.

The device consists of a Brown Goshawk, with three F/A-18 Hornet aircraft flying in formation above the Goshawk.

The Brown Goshawk is common throughout the Camden area, due to its position near forested areas on low-lying land near the Nepean River, which surrounds 303 Squadron’s home at Camden Airport.

The three F/A-18 Hornet aircraft flying in formation are represent the Squadrons’ values of loyalty, strength and teamwork.

The reverse features a background of Azure Blue with the red Waratah in each corner and the AAFC Crest in the centre.

Our banner was formally blessed and introduced at our Final Parade 1st December 2012.