

Air Commodore R.M. (Bob) Greenwood AFC (Retd)

7 May 1936 - 17 February 2019



Bob Greenwood passed away on 17 February 2019 and was farewelled at a service in Williamstown, VIC on 24 February. He was born on 7 May 1936 in Sydney, the son of Arthur and Dulcie Greenwood. From an early age, he caddied and played golf at the magnificent links courses that surrounded his home in Kingsford. In the summer he swam in the surf at Maroubra.

During his early teenage years Bob had his eyes on the sky and would cycle to Bankstown Airport on weekends to work at Marshall Airways. He also joined the air cadets with a single purpose - to become an air force pilot.

He was accepted into the RAAF College in January 1953, before his 17th birthday. However, he then chose the alternative opportunity of direct entry pilot training and graduated in August 1955 from the Applied Flying Training School as a Sergeant pilot.

Commissioned during 1957, successfully completed the Advanced Navigation Course at East Sale. Bob's already close relationship with the Sale district was deepened with many return visits over the years to the Bertacchini family dairy farm.

He was awarded the Ford Trophy for achieving the highest aggregate marks in Number 30 Flying Instructors Course in 1964 and posted to Pearce again as a flying instructor. In March 1966 Bob was posted to RAAF Richmond, to fly the C130E Hercules. He completed a C130E conversion in the US then returned to RAAF Richmond, delivering the second aircraft to the newly reformed 37 Squadron.

Bob was awarded the Air Force Cross in 1970 in recognition of his contribution to aircrew training and bringing 37 Squadron up to strength. During a posting as CO No 1 OSU in Vung Tau, South Vietnam in 1970-71, Bob flew Caribou in his spare time, which was often. He attended Staff College in Canberra during 1972 and following promotion to Wing Commander, was posted as CO No 2 Flying Training School, RAAF Pearce, in 1973. He was posted to Canberra in 1975.

Bob had a number of ground jobs in the next few years: CO BASQN Williamstown, Staff Officer Plans and Intelligence at HQOC, Deputy Director and Director at Joint Exercise Planning Group (JEPG) in the late 1980s and on promotion to Air Commodore, in Personnel in Canberra.

He left the RAAF in 1991 and was an Examiner of Airmen with CASA in Melbourne. While still with CASA, he joined the Friends of the RAAF Museum as an archival assistant where he worked with the Museum's imagery and technical manuals.

After his retirement, Bob continued to add to his Dakota flying hours flying the Shortstop Gooney Bird with Mike and Mike Junior. In the 52 years from his first flight as co-pilot in a Dakota at East Sale in 1955 and his last flight as a pilot with Shortstop in 2007 Bob had flown 2300 hours in the Dakota. When the author was NavO at 2FTS in 1971-1974, he spent many hours as navigator in the Dakota with Bob as Captain and know how he loved the 'Dak'. He was a professional aviator and flying Dakotas was a long-standing and enjoyable part of Bob's life.