



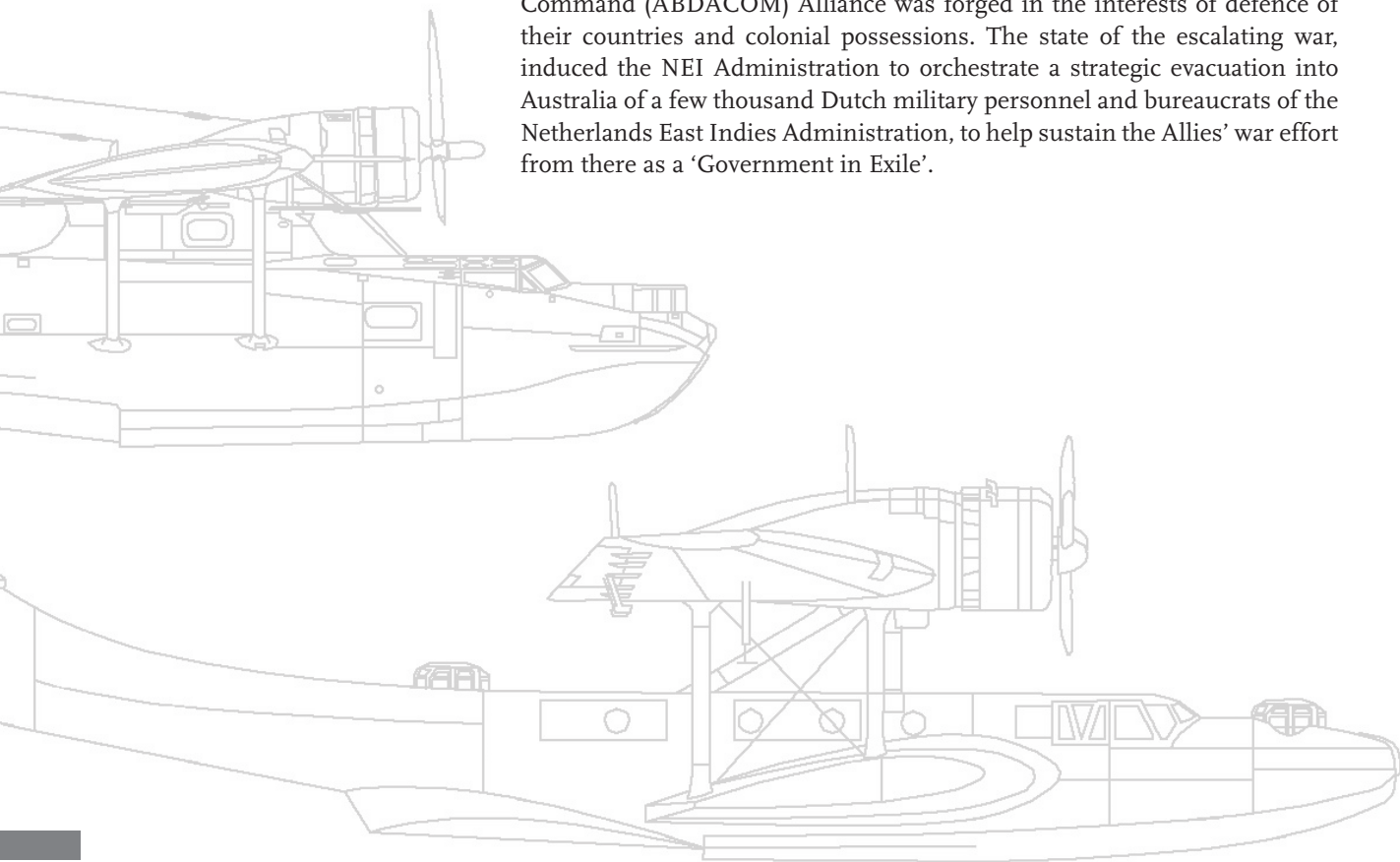
SECTION TWO:

MILITARY

Nonja Peters

This section, explores the Dutch military connection with Western Australia during the Second World War. World War II broke out in Europe on 1 September 1939 when, without a declaration of war, Germany invaded Poland. The Netherlands (NL) faced a similar situation on 10 May 1940 when, despite it having declared its neutrality, Nazi Germany invaded and it became an Occupied country for the next five years. This set of circumstances left its colony, the Netherlands East Indies (NEI), unsupported and also not well prepared for war.

As Japan's incursion into the South East Asian and Pacific Regions became ever more aggressive the American, British, Dutch and Australian Command (ABDACOM) Alliance was forged in the interests of defence of their countries and colonial possessions. The state of the escalating war, induced the NEI Administration to orchestrate a strategic evacuation into Australia of a few thousand Dutch military personnel and bureaucrats of the Netherlands East Indies Administration, to help sustain the Allies' war effort from there as a 'Government in Exile'.



The Allies' losses had been particularly heavy after the fierce warfare of the Java Sea Battle on 27 February 1942. History has described this event as the decisive naval battle of the Pacific campaign of World War II. For during it the Allied Forces suffered a disastrous defeat at the hand of the Imperial Japanese Navy and in secondary actions over successive days.

An important player in this war arena was the *Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij* (or KPM)¹, a Dutch shipping company that maintained the sea connections between the islands of the NEI from 1888 and services that included Australia, New Zealand and Africa. At the outbreak of war in SE Asia, it had 140 ships in service. These ranged from small vessels to passenger vessels that included the famed trio of *Boissevain*, *Ruys*, and *Tegelberg*, which operated the South Africa, Java /Japan route, as well as the *Nieuw Holland* and *Nieuw Zeeland* who took passengers to Australia and New Zealand. During the war the KPM lost a total of 98 ships.²

The Australian War Memorial, records how from 1942 - 45, the vast majority of all supplies reaching Allied troops in New Guinea were carried by the 30 Dutch freighters of the KPM that had managed to make it to Australia. In Australia they were converted to 'Defensively Armed Merchant Ships' under the auspices of the US army, via the Allied Consultative Shipping Council (ACSC). These Dutch vessels including the *Bantam*, *Bontekoe*, *VanHeemskirk*, *VanHeutz*, *Karsik*, *Swartenhondt*, *Tasman*, *Japara* and *s'Jacob* to name but a few – became an essential part of the Allies' (American, British, Dutch, Australian) offensive operations from Australia. Transport vessels were at a premium and the 'DEMS', as they were familiarly known, carried Australian gun crews on board for protection.

All the Chapters in Section II of this book focus on various aspect of the Dutch military connection with Australia and SE Asia before, during and immediately after WWII. The authors contributing to this section: Jung, Eaton, May, van Velzen and Wills, Summers, Appleyard, Houen and Peters, explore the impact – on the lives of Dutch resident in Australia or the NEI – of the highly dangerous often volatile and even extreme socio-political situations and relationships roused by the war.

ENDNOTES

- 1 The KPM was founded by the Stoomvaart Maatschappij Nederland (SMN) and the Rotterdamsche Lloyd (RL) on 1 January, 1888 and took over the ships and lines from its predecessor the Nederlandsch Indische Stoomboot Maatschappij (NISM) founded in in 1865 by William Mackinnon (British India Steam Nav. Co.) and on 1 January 1891 started the service with 29 ships, 13 Dutch new buildings and the 16 ships of the NISM.
- 2 <http://www.theshipslist.com/ships/lines/kpm.shtml>



Figure 1
Dem, *Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij*
Hofman Ship in Lae PNG early 1944.
Courtesy: Aart Ritse Hofman www.daaag.org

ONE-WAY FLIGHT TO HELL: NEI DUTCH REFUGEE EXPERIENCES OF THE JAPANESE AIR RAID AT BROOME, WESTERN AUSTRALIA 3 MARCH 1942

Silvano Jung¹

INTRODUCTION

I remember that any information or instructions about the Allied flying boats on the bay were not given till we found them in the bay of Broome, and our great fruits of battle were beyond expectations.²

An often forgotten aspect of the Dutch presence in Australia during World War II relates to dangerous evacuation shuttle flights that brought out bureaucrats and military personnel from Java, in the Netherlands East Indies (NEI — now Indonesia), to continue the war effort from Australia.³ First landfall in Australia, after a seven-hour flight, was the small pearling town of Broome, Western Australia. Unluckily, the last flying boats from Java were caught at Broome and all of them, 15 in total, were sunk during a Japanese air raid on Tuesday 3 March 1942 – Australia's third most devastating air raid. The wreck sites of the flying boats today provide a remarkable archaeological record that is linked to some of the most tragic stories of the Pacific War. Some of those stories are recorded in this chapter.

The Java to Broome shuttle was occasioned by the outbreak of the Pacific War on 7 December 1941, which also marked the beginning of a three and a half year alliance between the American, British, Dutch and Australian (ABDA) military in the interests of the defence of the region including Australia. The Allies, however, were ill prepared for the Japanese advance. On land, they were no match for the Japanese armies, battle hardened since 1931. At sea, they were powerless in the face of the Japanese navy. Consequently when Japanese forces, swept through the region, leading to the fall of Singapore on 15 February 1942, the fate of Java and the NEI was sealed. Civilians began evacuating Java on any sea worthy vessel they could purloin. The luckier ones were taken to Broome by air-shuttle. However, this window of opportunity was limited and all shuttle flights stopped on 28 February 1942, with the loss of the British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) Short Empire flying boat *Circe* (G-AETZ) on the day after the Battle of the Java Sea, which saw a valiant attempt by the combined Allied fleet to stop the invasion of Java. Following the Japanese invasion of Java on 1 March 1942, the *Marineluchvaartdienst* (Royal Netherlands Naval Air Service, or *MLD*) were forced to evacuate their flying boats. The decision to leave, gave the boats' crews and their families, a few remaining VIPs and some of the Java Sea battle orphans and widows a last chance to exit the NEI. It was, the final flight for nine of these *MLD* flying boats and in essence a one-way journey to Australia (Fig. 1).⁴

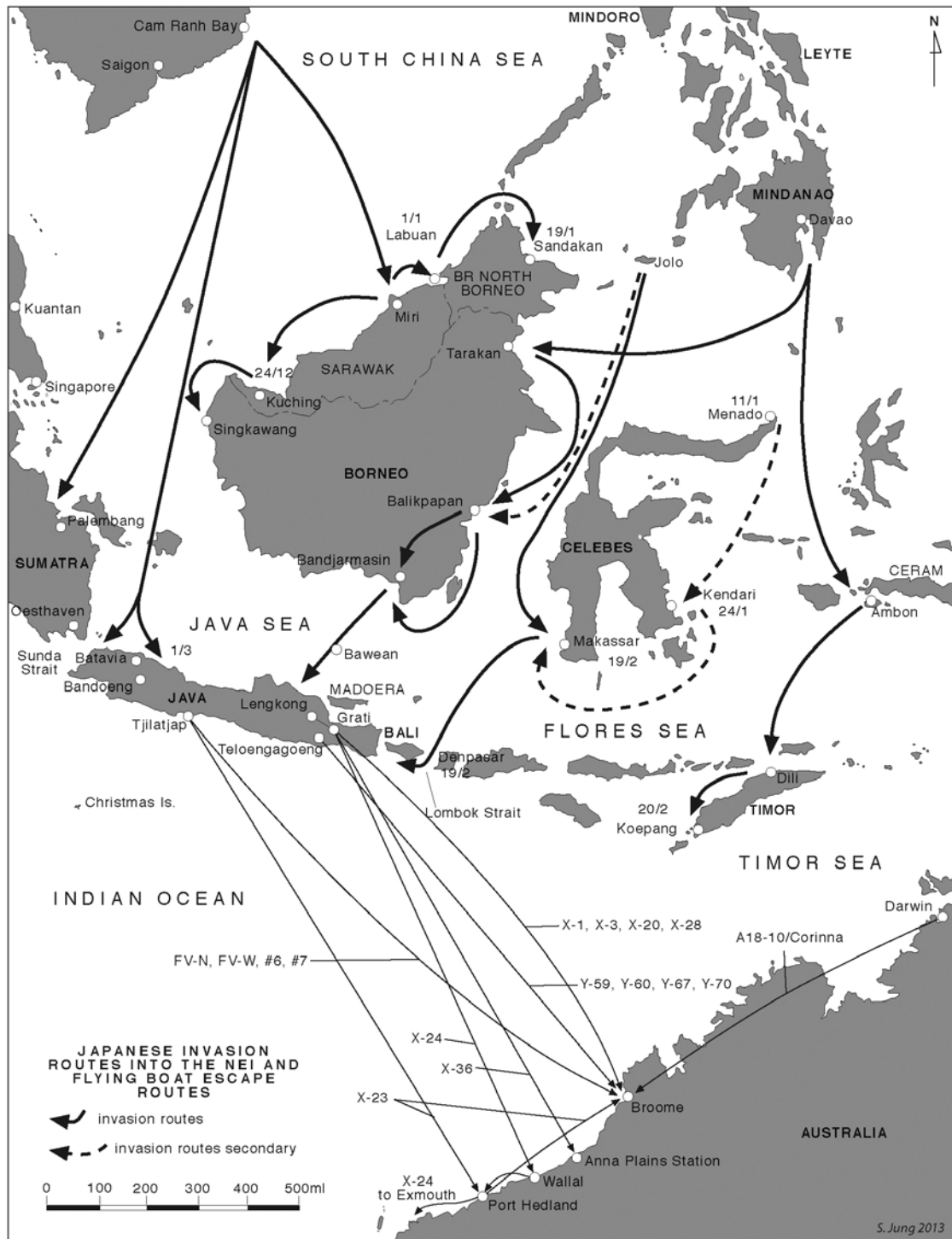


Figure 1
Map showing Japanese invasion routes into the NEI and flying boat escape routes (After Shores *et al.* 1992:473).

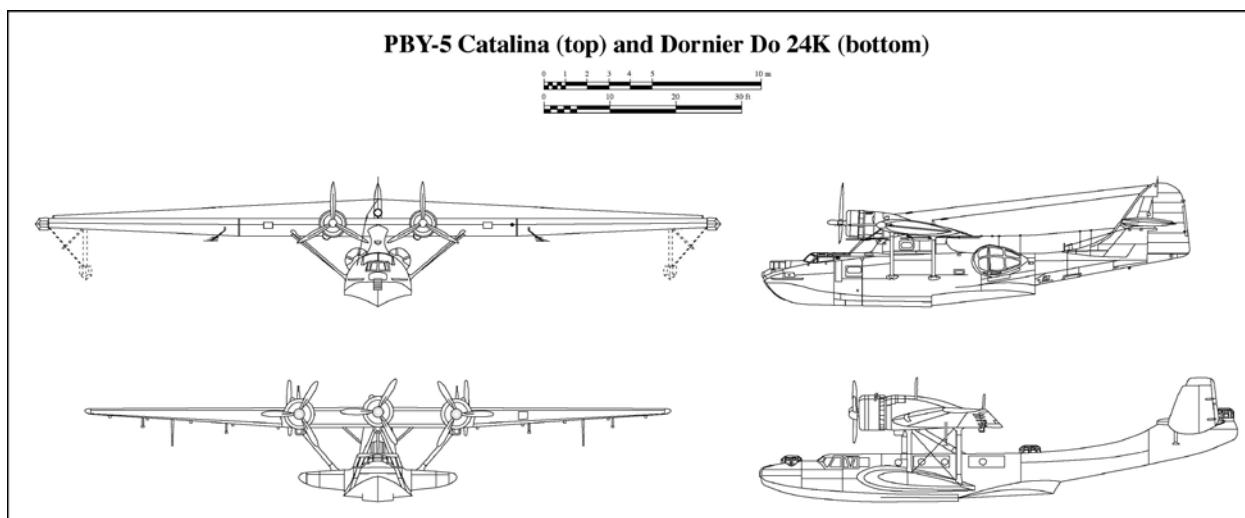
The *MLD*'s flying boats destined for the trip to Broome, consisted of five Dornier and four PBY-5 'Catalina' flying boats. These two types of flying boats were known as 'X' and 'Y' boats, after their serial number prefix 'X' for Dornier and 'Y' for Catalina (Fig. 2). Of the 30 people on the Y-59, half would be killed. On the Y-70, thirteen of the twenty-five on board would die in the air raid. The Dorniers X-1, X-20, X-23 and X-28 would suffer much lower casualties (only eight in total). Approximately 50 Dutch evacuees, mainly women and children, are recorded to have died in Broome. Over 80 Dutch are either known to have been killed, or are missing – believed dead.

There were another six flying boats of the United States Navy (USN), Royal Air Force (RAF) and Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), lying at anchor on Broome's Roebuck Bay, waiting to refuel for their flight down south to Perth and other Australian capital cities. A veteran of Singapore, the RAF's Catalina FV-W suffered six crew killed out of a total of 17 on board. There were no casualties on the other RAF and USN flying boats, but an additional 20 people were killed after a United States Army Air Force B-24 Liberator was shot down off Cable Beach, just after take-off. The Japanese lost only one pilot. Posthumously awarded the rank of Lieutenant junior grade — Lt (jg), Osamu Kudo is believed to have crashed somewhere in the sea near Broome.

The *MLD* departed the NEI by stealth, during the night of 2 March 1942, from secret hiding places — Lake Grati, Lengkong (Lengkung) and Teloengagoeng (Tulungagung) in east Java, as well as Tjilatjap (Cilacap) on the island's southern shore. They arrived in Broome the following morning. Not long after coming to rest, nine Japanese Zero fighters entered Roebuck Bay airspace and on sighting the boats proceeded to levy a brutal attack on the unprotected aircraft and their human cargo. It is estimated that over 100 people were killed during the air raid, with the greatest number of casualties coming from the *MLD* flying boats.⁵ While military personnel lists are well documented, the names of the refugees are not. In the frantic escape from Java, there was little time for formalities such as drawing up passenger lists. In this chapter I reconstruct *MLD* crew and passenger lists from known data and new documentation sourced from the National Archives in the Netherlands and Australia and the Australian War Memorial.³ My main focus will be on the passengers and crews in the *Groep Vliegtuigens* (aircraft groups - *GVTs*) that are known to have had refugees on board: *GVT-7* and *GVT-17* (Table 1 and Fig. 3).⁶

BACKGROUND TO THE AIR RAID

Broome was not the ideal terminus for a major aerial evacuation out of Java. The small town had only two moorings, which were used by BOAC flying boats during the shuttle flights of February 1942. Refuelling was limited by the few vessels available; the big tidal differences made going ashore problematic for flying boats moored or anchored a long way offshore, and there was no accommodation in town. With the recent devastating surprise air raids of 19 February 1942 at Darwin, this Northern Territory town was too



dangerous for a major evacuation operation out of Java. Broome would have to make do as the hub for the world's greatest airlift of people in history up until that time. A hub where many of its permanent residents had already been evacuated, certainly few of its women and children were left in the town.

Reconnaissance flights by the Japanese were recorded over Broome at 1500hrs on 2 March 1942 and again at approximately 0400hrs on 3 March 1942.⁷ These Japanese pilots had most probably seen three flying boats on the water — the RAAF's A18-10 and two USN Catalinas. The reconnaissance of 2 March 1942, found eight large aircraft on the aerodrome at approximately 11.10hr. A USN seaplane would have been in Roebuck Bay too, but the *MLD* flying boats had not yet arrived. Throughout the night and early morning of 2/3 March 1942, a further eleven flying boats, including two RAF Catalinas, alighted on Roebuck Bay. Now in Australia, the Dutch refugees thought they were safe from the Japanese because Broome was considered out of Japanese fighter aircraft range ... or so they thought.

THE JAPANESE

In reality the Japanese had been moving steadily and stealthily into the region since the fall of Singapore, for the purpose of carrying out long-range missions that included Australian ports. For example, when on 2 March 1942 Colonel Shibata ordered two of his chief pilots: Lieutenant Zenziro Miyano to attack Broome and Sub-Lieutenant Toshitada Kawazoe to attack Wyndham, they had been located in Kupang (West Timor) since 23 February, and their aircraft groups had been fitted with long-range fuel tanks, which enabled them to strike targets at great distances from their

Figure 2
Flying boats sketch - Line drawings of a Dornier Do 24K and a PBY-5 Catalina flying boat, two types of flying boats used by the *Marineluchvaartdienst* (After van Wijngaarden and Staal, 1992; Scarborough, 1983).

base. Consequently, when they departed 335 Air Base, Penfoei aerodrome (near Kupang) at 07.05hr, they were clearly in a position to inflict serious damage on Australian facilities and to effect attacks by complete surprise.⁸

THE AIR RAID

When the nine Japanese ‘Zero’ fighters entered Roebuck Bay on 3 March 1942, their pilots were shocked to find 15 flying boats on the water, with no discernible means of defence. There were no fighters at the aerodrome to scramble for interception, nor were there any anti-aircraft guns. Even so, the ensuing conflict was not a one-sided affair. Roebuck Bay became a battlefield, with fierce machine gun exchanges between sea and air conducted from a number of the flying boats. The attack at the aerodrome was focused on the array of allied military aircraft lined up along the airstrip, and in amongst the exploding aircraft and black smoke, a young pilot by the name of Lt Gus Winckel, grabbed a machine gun and while holding the barrel in his left hand, fired off round after round directly in front of him across the air strip, (he could not wield the heavy machine gun with any accuracy). One of the low flying Zeros attacking the aerodrome flew into Winckel’s deadly stream. While no one saw Lt (Junior Grade) Osamu Kudo crash, it is believed that Gus shot him down, since he saw the Zero that he hit, trailing smoke. Kudo was the only Japanese pilot on the Broome mission, recorded not to have returned to base.

If the Allies were unlucky to have been caught on ‘the ground’, it could equally be said that the Japanese were lucky to have escaped the mission with the few casualties that they sustained. All of the attackers, with the exception of one Zero, were damaged in the air raid and another was missing, but its pilot, 1st Air Private Yasuo Matsumoto, was rescued several weeks later after he was forced to ditch near the island of Roti. The Battle of Broome was a spontaneous and fast-played-out encounter that is generally believed to have lasted for no more than twenty minutes, with both protagonists unaware of the other’s presence and disposition until the moment of contact. It is important to consider that although, as a result of previous reconnaissance flights, the Japanese knew that Broome was being used as the aerial evacuation point, they were unaware of the presence of so many flying boats on Roebuck Bay until the morning of the air raid.

The Japanese mission that day was to destroy all Allied aircraft at the Broome aerodrome, as well as any other Allied aircraft in the area. The raid was never intended to attack Broome itself. On the aerodrome were eight large aircraft, one of which was shot down shortly after take-off. In total, 26 aircraft were destroyed that day, including a Japanese Zero, a DC-3 at Carnot Bay just north of Broome- shot down by the departing Zeros and a B-24A ‘Liberator’, shot down off Cable Beach, with approximately twenty-one people on board — there was only one survivor.⁹ For the Dutch, it was the darkest day in the history of the *MLD* (Fig. 3).¹⁰

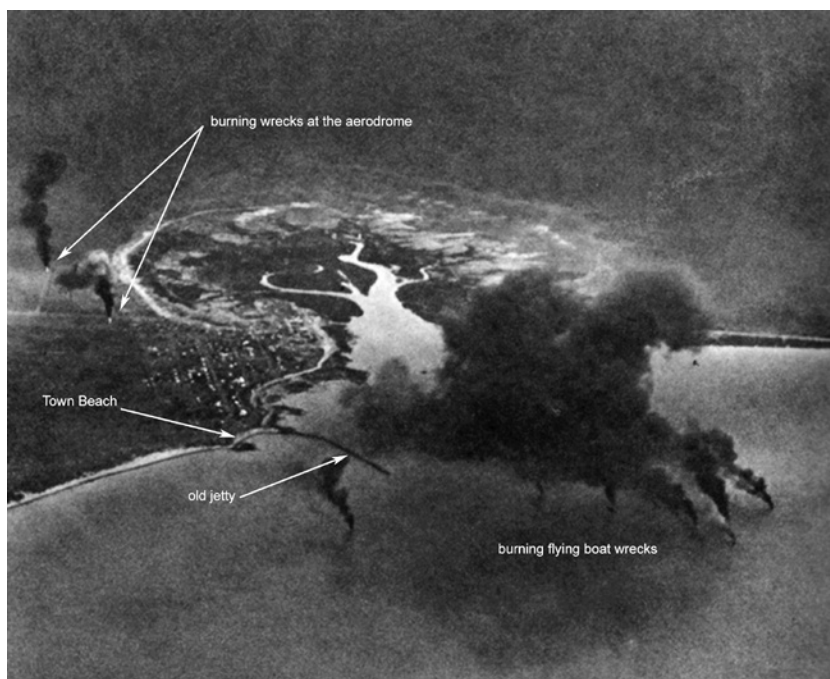


Figure 3
View of Broome and Roebuck Bay showing the aftermath of the air raid, taken by the 'Babs' (After *Ashai Shimbum* n.d. via Willy Piers 2005).

ACCOUNTS OF LOSS – THE X BOATS

End of the prototype – X-1's battle and tragic defeat

From the Japanese account of the air raid, some flying boats were moving in Roebuck Bay when they arrived, but as will be discussed in this and other sections, not all were necessarily taxiing to leave, some were just arriving. One machine, the X-1, was taxiing to find an anchorage in the now crowded area south of the jetty. The following account is from that aircraft's pilot, Henk Hasselo (Fig.4).¹¹ On the night of 2 March 1942, while still in the NEI, he had been ordered to take on as many refugees as his aircraft could hold. Hasselo recalls that in an aircraft designed to take only six or seven crew, the additional personnel made life on board the flying boat extremely uncomfortable. The flight itself, however, was uneventful, although the machine guns had been deployed in case the Japanese spotted them.¹²

Upon arriving in Broome, Hasselo began to look for a suitable spot to anchor. After they had stopped, people were urged to get outside and to take in the fresh breeze by sitting on the *stummels* (sponsons, or wing stubs attached to the fuselage) under the shade of the wings. Hasselo went to the rear of the flying boat to supervise the children and to make sure that they didn't fall into the water by accident. Shortly afterwards, he would be pushing them into the water to save their lives! They had not been anchored long, when the Japanese began their attack. The Japanese were spotted before they attacked the *MLD* flying boats (they attacked the large four-engine Short Empire



Figure 4
Henk Hasselo, pilot of Dornier
Do 24K Registration X-1
Courtesy: Broome Historical
Society Museum.

flying boats first), which gave some of them precious seconds, enabling many people to escape. This also gave Hasselo time to man the machine gun in the tail turret of his Dornier and fire back at the Zeros. He was in the flying boat for a considerable amount of time, before it took on a list that made it impossible to continue training the machine gun on the Japanese aircraft. He abandoned ship when the water began to rise in the flying boat, but not before he scored several non-fatal hits on the Zeros, and was himself wounded by shrapnel.

Hasselo took off his shoes and dived into the water. While in the water, he urged on a boy to keep swimming for the shore. The boy soon tired, but Hasselo and the X-1's co-pilot, Jan van Persie, who was swimming in the same direction, supported him and pulled him along with them. Fortunately, the trio was soon picked up by the refueling lugger *Nicol Bay* which had been chartered the month before by BOAC to service the Short Empire flying boat shuttle flights. Hasselo believes that he wouldn't have survived, if *Nicol Bay* hadn't arrived when it did. He had not slept for two days and was quickly tiring in the water while supporting the child. The identity of the boy, unfortunately, was not recorded. More people were hauled aboard *Nicol Bay* before the vessel then made its way to the jetty, where Hasselo was treated for his wounds. *Nicol Bay's* captain, Harold Mathieson, had the Order of Oranje Nassau bestowed on him by Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands, for his rescue of many Dutch at Broome. For his bravery in helping Dutch survivors in the water, an Aboriginal man, Charles D'Antoine, and a sailor on the *Nicol Bay*, received the Medal for Humane Actions in bronze by the Dutch Queen.

However, not all the passengers on Hasselo's X-1 flying boat survived. Crew member, Jan Ruiter recalls the horror of the loss of the wife, Cornelia Gerardina Elisabeth and two sons, Cornelis and Frans of crew member Sergeant Jan Piers (Fig. 5):¹³

I will never forget the screaming and the crying of the Jan Willem Piers calling for his wife and children. Not for the rest of my life.' He had jumped into the water and tried to persuade his wife and children to do the same, but she couldn't swim and was afraid to jump, also because there was fire everywhere. She decided to stay on the flying boat (probably near the opening of the door) and was holding her sons against her. He even tried to get on the boat again that was already burning like the flames you can see when phosphorus is burning, but the current was too strong. Two members of the crew had to take him away from the boat by force. Thanks to these men he reached the shore but he was crying and screaming all of the time.¹⁴

The three were the only losses on X-1. All the other 18 crew and passengers survived.

It is impossible to swim against a 4 knot current; the massive tides at Broome were flooding the harbour. Jan was carried away from the horror of witnessing the death of his family. It saved him, but only to suffer the memories for the rest of his life.

The other Dornier loss in the aircraft group GVT-7, the X-20, did not involve such a tragic loss of women and children, although three of the aircraft's crew were killed; Johannes Blommert, Joseph Henricus Wolters and Albert Kweekstra. It was the MLD Catalinas of GVT-17, however, that suffered the heaviest casualties.

THE LIEUTENANT AND HIS FAMILY, SURVIVING THE LOSS OF THE X-20

There are no first-hand accounts of the sinking of the Dornier X-20. However, the son of the X-20's Captain recounts how his father, Lieutenant (2nd Class) Bastiaan Sjerp, had saved him (Fig.6). David Sjerp was only 16 months old at the time of the air raid, but he holds dear the account related to him by his father:

The flight to Broome probably was uneventful and the next day, after the aircraft was refuelled, people were waiting for further instructions. Then the raid came and we ended up in the water. My mother was not a good swimmer and had she not been helped by one or two crew members of my dad, she would have drowned. On the contrary my father was a very good swimmer and took care of me ... I was told that his wedding ring kept going over his knuckles and to be able to keep me, he had to throw it away and never ever wanted a replacement ring.¹⁵

No further information is known about this flying boat's passengers, but it would appear that they all survived, as none of the known persons on board were listed as having been killed.

HEAVY CASUALTIES – LOSS OF THE Y BOATS

Catalina Y-59 and Y-60

The MLD Catalinas of GVT-17 suffered the greatest number of casualties during the air raid. A list of those known to have been on board is found in Table 2. Accounts of the loss of the Catalinas have been found for three machines, with the exception of the Y-60. The first account related below is from Frits van Hulssen (Fig. 7), who recounts the final moments in Java and in Broome and the loss of the Catalina Y-59, in response to questions posed to him by the Dutch aviation historian Prudent Staal in 1995:

The attack began about 9.30 am. The Zeros (nine of them) were coming from land towards Roebuck Bay. The period the



Figure 5
Back L-R: Jan Willem Piers (Jantje), Jan Willem Piers. Front L-R: Frans Piers, Cornelia Piers-Morien and Cornelis Piers. Courtesy: W. Piers, 2005.



Figure 6
LTZV 2 Bastiaan Sjerp, commander of GVT-7. Bastiaan saved his son David by swimming with him on his chest until they were rescued. David's mother, Alida also survived. Courtesy: D. Sjerp, 2005.



Figure 7
Fritz van Hulssen in Broome 2001
Courtesy: Jon Davidson, 2001.

Zeros were over Broome, I imagine was about 20 minutes. I have no recollections of the attack itself. Everything happened so quickly. But I remember that the Zeros made a slow fly past with open cockpits. I was injured in the raid ... Of the crew the 2nd pilot van Emmerik and 2nd engineer Spreeuw were killed instantly ... I believe that a number of the passengers were killed by bullets and many were wounded. The situation after the attack was chaos. Many survivors were trying to swim to shore, but by this time the tide was really going out. My recollection of that day is total shambles. It was noon when I was picked up. It was impossible to swim to shore because of the strong outward current. Thus remaining in our position was the only hope to be rescued and that is what many of the survivors did. How many people were killed or injured is something I don't know.¹⁶

As I mentioned above, there is no account of the attack from anyone aboard the Y-60. Significantly, the only reference to the flying boat in the National Archives of Australia (NAA) is the immigration papers for Klasina Polak. Her papers record that she was a passenger in the Y-60.¹⁷ This is the only known direct mention in any of the NAA records that links the Broome air raid survivors with the machines that they flew in, apart from the tragic loss of four children of the same family in the Y-70 (see below). There were three Polaks in the Y-60 and fortunately they all survived. The only other Y-60 passenger details are the immigration papers for Elizabeth Cathleen Höfelt, who, as Staal records, was on board the aircraft with her husband and daughter Marianne, both of whom also survived.¹⁸

More data has been sourced about the Hebly family, who were on board the Y-60 when it sank; there is an unpublished family history of a *Koninklijke Nederlandsch-Indische Luchtvaart Maatschappij* (Royal Dutch East Indies Airways – *KNILM*) pilot, John Gyzemyter, who was a family friend of the Heblys. This family suffered the loss of husband and father, Sgt Hendrik Johannes Hebly and a two-year-old child named Henny J, while the wife Corrie Hebly-Hooghuis was severely burnt. Gyzemyter writes about his meeting with Corrie and describes what had happened to her since the air raid:

In Sydney one of the KNILM ground engineers gave me an identification disc with the name Hebly on it. He thought he had heard me mentioning the name, and said he had found it in one of the Lockheeds, which had ferried people, injured in the Broome [sic] disaster, to Perth. We did not know that the Heblys had been amongst the group of Navy personnel in Broome, but now I decided to go to Navy Headquarters in St Kilda Road in Melbourne and make some enquiries, the next time Dr van Mook wanted to go there.



Figure 8
The photo was taken for an article in *Woman's Home Companion* of January 1943 on Theo Doorman's mother, with the title *Escape from Java*.
Courtesy: T. Doorman 2005.

That happened within the next few days. When I presented myself at Headquarters, one of the officers was Beugeling, one of my old flying instructors. I showed him the identification disk, and he confirmed that the Hebllys had indeed been on board one of the flying boats. His file showed that Henk, my old flying mate, had been killed. His son, aged two years, was missing, presumed killed, while Corrie, his wife was in hospital in Perth with severe burns. I told him that we would contact the hospital to find out how she was and how we could be of assistance. He appreciated that, and he showed me the wedding ring they had taken off Henk's finger. He said if I wanted to sign for it, I could take it with me to give to Mrs. Hebly at some future date.

... One day a letter came from Corrie Hebly, who was still in hospital in Perth, saying that she would be released soon, and that she would love to take up our invitation to come and stay with us in Sydney.

... Corrie received an invitation from the Dutch Navy to travel to Port Jackson in the USA, all expenses paid, where she could consult a plastic surgeon and skin graft specialists to see what could be done for her burn scars. She left before us and we promised to contact her as soon as we arrived and knew where we were going to stay.¹⁹

This account provides a vivid reminder of the impact the air raid had on its survivors. No further information is known about what became of Corrie, except that she remarried and that her last name became Speelman-Hooghuis.²⁰

Catalina Y-67

The loss of the Catalina Y-67 is one of the best-documented accounts of any of the flying boats' losses. Two detailed accounts are from Isabelle Doorman-Herligus (the second wife and widow of Rear Admiral Karel F.W. Doorman) and her son Theo Doorman (Fig. 8), who was six years old at the time of the air raid. Theo Doorman recounted his experiences of the air raid in an email to the author in 2005:

... Suddenly there was shouting, the roar of engines and the rattle of bullets piercing the aluminium. My mother grabbed me and shoved me under the bunk. Shortly after, when the plane was on fire, we climbed up to the flight deck. Mrs. Lacomblé, the wife of the Captain of HNMS 'De Ruyter', had been wounded and lay huddled on the starboard side. Apparently she told my mother to go on as she could not swim anyhow. We jumped into the water from a hatch near the starboard pilot seat. I lost sight of my mother and I was sucked

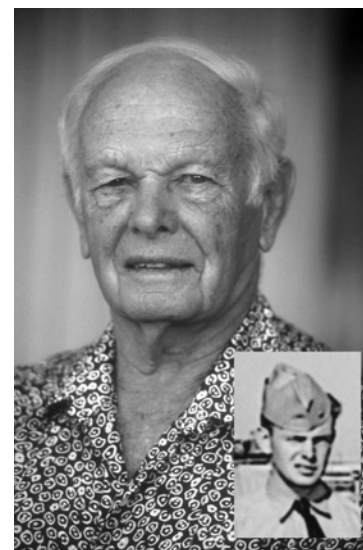


Figure 9
Y-70 crew member Albert van Vliet in Broome 2001. Inset: van Vliet at Corpus Christi, Texas 1942.
Courtesy: Jon Davidson, 2001. Inset: Courtesy: van Hulssen, 2003.

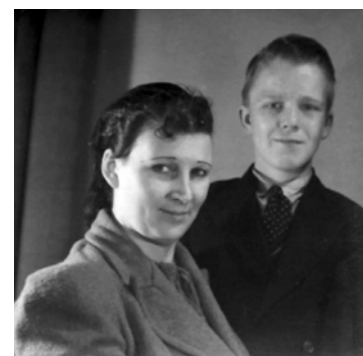


Figure 10.
Y-70 passengers Jeannette Lokman with one of her two surviving sons, Johan Hendrik Jr. (11 years old) in Melbourne (Four Lokman children died in Broome, two children and both parents survived). (Series number: B6531. Control symbol: Left Commonwealth/1938 - 1945/Lokman Jeannette, NAA).



Figure 11.
Y-67 and Y-70 passengers – 'Left to right: Mrs. Hendrikse (died at Broome), my grandfather captain K.W.F.M. Doorman, his (second) wife I.J.J. Doorman-Heijligers (mother of Theo, survived Broome), Commander P.J. Hendrikse, he had the command of the navy airfield Morokrebanggan at Soerabaja from 1937-1942 and was ... killed at Broome'.
Courtesy: Jan Maarten Doorman, 2005.



Figure 12.
Y-67 and Y-70 passengers 'Hendrikse giving a speech, Admiral Doorman is seated to his right. Officer to the left of Hendrikse with his eyes closed is Commander J. Schraver, second in command of Morokrebanggan'.
Note: Schraver's wife Caroline Schraver-Kam, is seated far right at the end of the table.
Courtesy: Jan Maarten Doorman, 2005.

under the burning starboard wing by a fairly heavy current. I managed to swim free and after a while I saw another boy, who later appeared to be 12-year old Rob Lacomblé. Together we dived underwater whenever we heard the roar of the Zeros.²¹

Isabelle was relieved to see her son being picked up together with Rob Lacomblé by a USN barge. Eventually she herself was rescued after having been in the water for over an hour, fighting the now outgoing tide — high tide was at 11.15hrs. She fought fatigue as her arms got tired, but she wouldn't give up and kept swimming for the shore.²² A further account of the loss of the Y-67 details the horror of the slaughter. Lt. Commander Henri Juta's account of the air raid tells of the passenger's suffering while withering under the Zero's cannon and machine gun fire, but what stands out is the pathos of picking the survivors out of the water. Probably the same boat that rescued the Doormans, rescued the Jutas as well. The following is an extract from Juta's account:

I then heard the sound of a motorboat and a few minutes later I was hanging on the transom, utterly exhausted, whilst a Yank was pulling my wife over the gunwale.

The Yank turned out to be a pilot and the sole occupant of the boat. Up front in the boat was a young girl with a badly damaged wrist caused by machine gun fire. In the middle lay a rubber dinghy at the bottom of which were puddles of blood.

The Yank took a knife from his belt, grabbed a can out of the carton, punched two holes into it and handed it to my wife saying: 'You better drink some of this juice: it is the only thing I have' and to me he said: 'You are the second – I found her', pointing to the girl, 'all alone in that dinghy'.

I looked at the girl with pity. Her wound was shocking and a tourniquet was placed on her upper arm. The Yank noticed that I was looking and said: 'I think it was the last thing her parents did for her before putting her in the dinghy. They are both dead'.

We continued on and heard many calls for help. I drank some of the fruit juice and felt my strength slowly returning and assisted to help the Yank pulling in bodies at times and did not know whether or not they were dead or alive. Amongst them were men and women with totally burned faces, some with their hair burned and I noticed one human body with the inside hanging out.

It was not long before the boat became overcrowded and in order to make further space, I chucked out the dinghy. Even though it was only partly inflated, she floated well and could carry at least 2 or 3 persons. We pulled in more survivors and as the boat was now straining under the load and barely afloat,

I decided to switch to the dinghy. One of the English Catalina crews followed my example, thus lightening the boat by two people.

The American now made it clear that he wanted to return to the jetty. The boat was full and the wounded needed urgent medical attention.

... Our overloaded boat with its burden of groaning and perhaps dying wounded slowly crawled along and it took another 20 minutes before we reached the jetty.

Arriving at the wooden stairway alongside the jetty, my English colleague and myself got out of our dinghy as fast as we could in order to help carrying the wounded up the stairs.

My second load was a young woman who did not show any sign of life. She was dressed in black slacks, a blue blouse and a blue head cloth. The remarkable thing was that there was not a trace of a wound. Another girl helped me carrying her up the stairs and once on the jetty I carefully put her down on a trolley. I turned the body over on the stomach and pulled up her blouse in order to loosen any tight-fitting garments. I could have saved myself the trouble because near her shoulder blades I discovered 2 neat bullet holes more or less going straight to the heart.

This shook me a lot and I will never forget that scene: a beautiful sunlit bay with here and there some smoke plumes; the heat of the sun and a jetty full of human misery and wrecked bodies, some of which were naked. I looked again at the dead body of this beautiful young woman and thought what a senseless world.²³

Catalina Y-70

There is one account of the loss of the Y-70, which is from Albert van Vliet, a crew member who did not know which flying boat he was on at the time of the attack (Fig. 9).²⁴ It was van Hulssen who told him years later, which aircraft he was on. Van Vliet was not a regular crew member of the Y-70 and was posted to the aircraft for its final fight. The suddenness of the attack, gave van Vliet no time to do anything except to slide off the cockpit canopy where he was sitting. The Y-70 fire, but not during the first pass:

... on the first run the plane didn't catch fire, I thought, maybe I'll swim back to the plane and then the next Zero came over again and [the plane] caught fire and that was it and we started swimming to the jetty.²⁵

The Japanese pilots, it would appear, were launching simultaneous attacks on the flying boats. The occupants of the Y-70 had no warning of the attack



Figure 13
65th air raid Commemoration Ceremony at Notre Dame University, Broome campus. Peace has finally come to David Sjerp (left) and Theo Doorman (right).
Courtesy: Jung, 2007.



Figure 14
Elly and Peter Koens Doeland who swam to safety with their parents.
Courtesy: Doeland Family.

until bullets started flying around them. The lack of warning, together with the large number of people on board, resulted in this flying boat having the second largest recorded number of casualties after the Y-59, with 13 people killed.

There were eight people from the Lokman family on board the aircraft, two parents and six children.²⁶ The loss of four of the children is perhaps one of the greatest recorded tragedies within one family in the air raid on Broome. The bodies of Hendrika, Jeanette, Jan and Johannes Lokman were never recovered. Their father, J.H. Lokman, had requested their death certificates in 1950, but was not given them then because their bodies were not recovered.²⁷ The death certificates were eventually released and record that the family was on the Y-70. Jeannette Lokman survived the air raid with two of her sons (Fig. 10). She is believed to have had another son and a daughter after the war. She died in the Netherlands in 1989.²⁸

Two photographs have been discovered, courtesy of Jan Maarten Doorman, Theo's nephew, one showing Rear Admiral Doorman and his second wife Isabelle together, and one of KTZ Pieter Johannes Hendrikse and his wife Jenny Hendrikse-van der Putte, as well as KLTZ Jorinus Schraver at a dinner party in Java on 4 May 1940. The dinner was held at the navy club called 'Modderlust' at *Marinevliegkamp* (Marine Flying Base) Morokrembangan in Surabaya (Fig. 11 and Fig. 12). The Hendrikse couple died probably because of drowning. Jenny could not swim and it was reported that she and Pieter were found dead, wrapped together in an embrace.²⁹



Figure 15
Site of Flying boat wrecks at Broome.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

This has been a brief overview of the impacts the air raid had on the survivors of five of the nine *MLD* flying boats lost in Broome's Roebuck Bay. These were carrying refugees, but the others only had their crews on board and with one exception, they did not suffer loss of life. There were another six (seven including a USN seaplane from the USS *Houston*) flying boats on the bay and with the exception of one machine (the *X-23*), they all escaped the air raid without loss of life. An aeromedical flight by a United States Army Air Force B-24A 'Liberator', however, suffered the heaviest casualty rate of any of the aircraft lost that day in the Broome area. Like some of the flying boats, its wreck site is yet to be discovered.

The accounts of the Broome air raid survivors in this chapter have provided insights into what the air raid was like; these significantly change previous perceptions of the events that occurred on 3 March 1942. The destruction of the flying boats on Roebuck Bay was a battle, albeit a one-sided battle, with many Allied casualties. This chapter has identified whom most of the Dutch refugees in Broome were during the air raid, from documented sources and from accounts provided by the survivors themselves. For the first time in 74 years, images of some of the passengers have been discovered, and show the human face of the event. Records relating to these people in the NAA also help to establish the circumstances of their arrival in Australia as refugees.

The outcomes of this research indicate the potentialities and limitations of determining who the refugees were that transited through Broome in February/March 1942, with recent research questioning the number of people evacuated by air out of Java in February 1942.³⁰ The accounts of the circumstances of these previous arrivals in Australia, however, would be equally informative about the nature of the evacuation flights. What sets the Broome flying boat refugees apart from these nameless and faceless masses, however, is that the event of their arrival left behind a remarkable archaeological assemblage in Roebuck Bay, that is, the flying boats themselves and the artefacts of the refugees and crews that they contain. It is only recently that archaeologists have begun the process of discovering, documenting and analysing this assemblage. Broome and its flying boats, therefore, have an enduring link with this aspect of its past, and this link still brings back the survivors of the air raid in pilgrimages to Broome. It is now important to give these people, their families and people interested in Australian aviation history, an authentic interpretation of the flying boat wreck sites, which still remain an enigma. As with the people that were on the flying boats, historians and archaeologists may never discover all of the machines that were lost on that fateful in day March 74 years ago (Fig. 13). To date, ten of the fifteen flying boat wrecks have been located, but Broome, for all its tourist attractions, holds a deeper significance to passing and future generations that can be enhanced by understanding Roebuck Bay's unique archaeology.



Figure 16
Gus Winckel 1943.
Courtesy: Mykeljon Winckel.

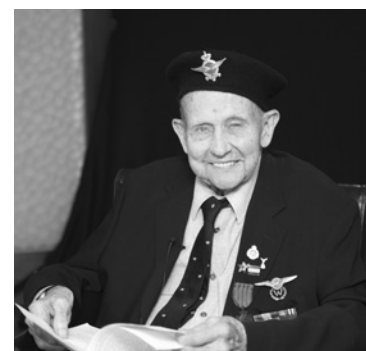


Figure 17
Captain Gus Winckel c2012.
Courtesy: Mykeljon Winckel.

Table 1

Crew and passenger details per
MLD flying boat on 3 March 1942.

GVT	Flying boat	Crew	Passengers	Total	Killed
6	X-3	11	0	11	0
	X-23	1	0	1	1
	X-28	2	0	1	1
7	X-1	10	11	21	3
	X-20	10	7	17	3
	X-24▽	?	?	?	0
	X-36*	?	?	?	0
17	Y-59Minaidao8	15	16	31	14
	Y-60	11	13	24	4
	Y-67	11	18	29	9
	Y-70	10	16	25	13
Totals		81	81	162	48

▽ Flew to Port Hedland and then to Exmouth. Became A49-6 in the RAAF

*Burnt by crew at Anna Plains Station, south of Broome approximately 40 people on board.

Table 2

Crew and passengers GVT-17, Y-59 (Staal 2004).

No.	Serial No.	Rank or Title	Name
Crew			
1.	15920/D	MILMATRVGMR	ALBINUS C.F.J. †
2.	11013	SGTVGMR	AGGELEN Johannes Gerardus van †
3.	?	LTZ 2 KMR	BORSCH Maarten †
4.	?	LTZV 2	BRUIJN J.M. de
5.	13424	VGMRMT	BRUINSMA Lukas
6.	20508	VGMRMT	CATS Volkert
7.	12519	SGTVGMR	EMMERIK Bart van †
8.	?	VGTLGMT	HULSSEN Frits Adriaan van
9.	?	LDST.ST.OM	KWINKELBERG K.J.H. van
10.	20550	LTZ STK	MULLER Johannes Jacobus
11.	?	LTZ 3 KMR	POLDERMAN H.
12.	20171	VGTLGMT [FE2?]	SPREEUW Emmanuel Gustaaf Adolf †
13.	9025	SGTTLG	TOUR Albert van †
14.	13409?	KPLVGMRM	WEEHUIZEN Henk T.H.
15.	?	LTZV 2	WISSEL F.J.

Civilian passengers					
16.	Ms.	ARENDZ Judith M. † (verl. [engaged] POLDERMAN)	24.	Mrs.	BORSCH-BAARS Johanna G. †
17.	Child	ARENDZ	25.	Child	BORSCH Hans
18.	Mrs.	AGGELEN van – Kooten van †	26.	Mrs.	EMMERIK-BOER Frericka Wilhelmina van
19.	Child	AGGELEN Josina van	27.	Child	EMMERIK Bernhard Adriaan van †
20.	Mrs.	BRUIJN-GIELES Hendrika Johanna de [wife of Bruijn J.M.?)	28.	Mrs.	TOUR-KLAPPER Sophia van
21.	Child	BRUIJN Klaas. de [son of above]	29.	Child	TOUR Catharina (Ina) van †
22.	Child	BRUIJN Arina Anke de † [daughter of Bruijn J.M.?)	30.	Child	Vermeij Judith † (daughter of Doctor van J.M. Arendz?)
23.	Child	BRUIJN Hendrik de † [son of Bruijn J.M.?)	31.	Mrs.	Wissel-Reis E.

† - killed in the air raid

ARCHIVAL REFERENCE MATERIAL

National Archives of Australia, series number: AA1966/5, control symbol: 146, title: Enemy air attacks, item barcode: 1351508, Canberra, A.C.T.

– series number: A12508, control symbol: 20/973, title: HOFELT Elisabeth Catharina born 23 August 1918; Marianne age 1 month; nationality Dutch; arriving in Perth on 5 March 1942, Canberra, A.C.T.

– series number: B6531, control symbol: left Commonwealth/1938-1945/Hofelt Elizabeth C, title: HOFELT Elizabeth Cathleen: nationality - Dutch: date of birth - 23 August 1918: date of arrival - 5 March 1942: arrived by aircraft: certificate number - 318: date of issue - 15 April 1942: first registered at Bourke Street West [contains 1 black and white photograph], Victoria.

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– series number: MP742/1/0, control symbol: 76/1/143, title: [Mr]H. Lokman: request for death certificates for four children killed at Broome in March 1942], Melbourne, Victoria.

– series number: PP246/4, control symbol: Dutch/Hofelt E C, title: Hofelt Elizabeth Catharina, nationality: Dutch - arrived Perth per (unknown) 5 March 1942, Perth, Western Australia.

ENDNOTES

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- 2 Matsumoto, Y., 'Mervyn Prime Collection, volume 1, section 8: Japanese personnel correspondence and interviews, 17 July 1978', Broome Aircraft Wreck File, 54/02. Department of Maritime Archaeology, Western Australian Museum, Fremantle, Western Australia.
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- 4 Connaughton, R., *Shrouded secrets: Japan's war on mainland Australia 1942-1944*, Brassey's, London, 1994; C Shores, C Cull, and Y Izawa, *Bloody shambles, volume two: the defence of Sumatra to the fall of Burma*, Grub Street, London, 1992; Rorrison, *Nor the years condemn*.
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- 6 Today, pilgrims and tourists flock to the wreck sites of these flying boats, some of which are exposed at very low tides in Broome. The wrecks have been investigated by archaeologists from the Western Australian Museum. The team conducted a side-scan survey there in 2001 and excavated one wreck

- site; this was the first archaeological excavation of an aircraft wreck in Australia. On the basis of artefactual evidence, the site was determined to be one of the MLD flying boats, the Y-59; S Jung, 'Artefacts from Broome's World War Two flying boat wreck sites: a survey of data collected 1979-2001', *The Bulletin of the Australasian Institute for Maritime Archaeology*, volume 28, 2004, pp. 63-80.
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 - 9 Prime, M., *Broome's one day war: the story of the Japanese raid on Broome on 3rd March 1942*, 6th ed., Broome Historical Society, Broome, 2004.
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 - 11 Prospero Productions, *Shipwreck detectives: Henk Hasselo Interview – Dornier X-1*, copy held at the Department of Maritime Archaeology, Western Australian Museum.
 - 12 Fifty-nine years after the air raid, Henk Hasselo (Fig. 4) was interviewed in 2001 by Prospero Productions, a Perth-based documentary film-making company, which recorded Hasselo's military history and his experience of the air raid at Broome.
 - 13 E Doeland-Koens, via N Piers, pers. comm., 2 February 2004.
 - 14 Fig 14 is Elly & Peter Koens Doeland who swam to safety with their parents.
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 - 18 NAA, series number: PP246/4, control symbol: Dutch/Hofelt E C, title: Hofelt Elizabeth Catharina, nationality: Dutch - Arrived Perth per (unknown) 5 March 1942, Perth, Western Australia; 20NAA, series number: B6531, control symbol:left Commonwealth/1938-1945/Hofelt Elizabeth C, title: HOFELT Elizabeth Cathleen: nationality - Dutch: date of birth - 23 August 1918: date of arrival - 5 March 1942: arrived by aircraft: certificate number - 318: date of issue - 15 April 1942: first registered at Bourke Street West [contains 1 black and white photograph], Melbourne, Victoria; 21NAA, series number: A12508, control symbol: 20/973, title: HOFELT Elisabeth Catharina born 23 August 1918; Marianne age 1 month; nationality Dutch; arriving in Perth on 5 March 1942, Canberra, A.C.T.
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 - 25 Prospero Productions - Shipwreck detectives: Albert van Vliet.
 - 26 The names of the six Lokman children are: Johannes Hendrikus Jr. (born 1931) Hendrika Adriana (8 yrs†), Jeanette (4 yrs†), Jan (2 yrs†), Johannes (8 months old†), Johnny (born 1935) - † killed in the air raid.
 - 27 NAA, series number: MP742/1/0, control symbol: 76/1/143, title: [Mr J.H. Lokman: Request for Death Certificates for four Children Killed at Broome in March 1942], Melbourne, Victoria.
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 - 30 Lewis, T., and Ingman, P., *Zero Hour in Broome: the untold story of the attacks on northwest Australia in 1942*, Avonmore Books, Kent Town, South Australia, 2010.



Figure 18

A group of young Dutch airmen evacuated into Australia from the Netherlands East Indies to keep up the war effort in 1942. Stationed at Batchelor NT, 1942. Courtesy: Willemsen Family Collection.



Figure 19

No.191 Squadron ground crew prepare a Mitchell for a bombing raid. Batchelor, NT Australia, 1943. Courtesy: Willemsen Family collection.



Figure 20

Flying boats on the way to Broome, March 1942. Courtesy: <http://www.avonmorebooks.com/images/content/jmag-Mavis-flying-boats-photo.jpg>.