



CHIEF OF AIR FORCE

CHIEF OF AIR FORCE'S
READING LIST

2010



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Air Power Development Centre
TCC-3, Department of Defence
CANBERRA ACT 2600
Australia

Telephone: + 61 2 6266 1355
Facsimile: + 61 2 6266 1041
E-mail: airpower@defence.gov.au
Website: www.raaf.gov.au/airpower



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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. Binskin'.

Air Marshal Mark Binskin, AM

MARCH 2010

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PREFACE

A wise man learns from his experience; a wiser man learns from the experience of others.

Confucius

The strategic doctrine of the Royal Australian Air Force (AAP 1000–D—*The Air Power Manual*) states that ‘professional mastery is founded on a balance of skill, training, military education, experience and motivation to apply air power effectively in operations and to advance the Air Force.’¹ Professional mastery cannot be obtained merely by attending courses. Nor can it be achieved through concerted activity alone. It is obtained through diligent study over a long period and is the culmination of a conscious effort. It is more an art than science. Reading is a key part of an individual’s endeavor to achieve professional mastery and, as the essay by Dr Alan Stephens explains, reading good history is one of the keys to its attainment.

This is the first Chief of Air Force’s Reading List in the history of the Royal Australian Air Force and it is an attempt to facilitate and improve the level of professional mastery of its members by providing a ready reference of books that have contributed to the history and development of air power theory, strategy and practice.

The Chief of Air Force’s Reading List comprises two sections: the first section contains a list of 13 books and two papers that have been published within the last five years, with two being a little older; the last section contains a list of what is believed to be the more timeless books. The first section will be updated with new books every year while the last section will be more steadfast. It is likely that the second list will be enlarged as time goes by.

Additionally, the first section is divided into the following themes: Air Power Concepts, Strategy and Doctrine; Contemporary Air Power Issues; Air Power History and Analysis; Air Power Command, Leadership and Management; and Royal Australian Air Force History. It is hoped that members of the Royal Australian Air Force and the broader defence community will avail themselves of the recommendations to improve their understanding of strategy, air power and aviation history.

¹ Royal Australian Air Force, 2007, Australian Air Publication 1000–D—*The Air Power Manual*, 5th Edition, Air Power Development Centre, p 12.



Five of the 15 publications in the first section and seven of the 15 books in the second section are downloadable at no charge from the provided URLs. The hard copies may be sourced from either Australian or overseas suppliers.

While the Air Power Development Centre has produced many fine publications over its 20 years of service, none have been included in the first section. This has been deliberately done to ensure that a broad cross-section of authors and their works were included—both from Australia and overseas. It is also worth pointing out that of the 15 books in the timeless section, six were written by either Dr Chris Clark or Dr Alan Stephens—two historians who have either been directly or indirectly associated with the Centre for over 20 years.

This reading list is unashamedly Air Force and air power focused. The Chief of Navy and Chief of Army have similar reading lists that are recommended if you desire or require a broader knowledge base on military matters. Also, the Chiefs of the Royal Air Force and United States Air Force publish reading lists of great quality that are also recommended.

As a final point, the list is not exhaustive and there are no doubt excellent books that have not been included in an effort to keep the numbers manageable. As such, any suggestions in terms of format or future inclusions will be readily considered.

R.J. Keir, AM, CSC

Group Captain

Director, Air Power Development Centre

March 2010



FOREWORD

War is a matter of vital importance to the State, the province of life and death, the road to survival or ruin. It is therefore mandatory that it be thoroughly studied.

Sun Tzu

In my *Commander's Intent* dated 4 July 2008, I stated that I intended that the Royal Australian Air Force will continue to develop its professional mastery of air power so that it will be able to best exploit the future force that Australia is building. I also stated that the Royal Australian Air Force will progress the way it educates, trains and prepares its people so that it will become more adept at employing the current force and is prepared and capable of fully utilising the enhanced future force.²

My *Commander's Intent* included five key priorities of which professional mastery is one. I believe that while the Royal Australian Air Force has had high levels of technical mastery and has been a very effective training organisation, it has not been similarly focused on education. Training is about imparting skills while education is about developing one's character and the mind. Technical mastery is achieved by training; professional mastery, on the other hand, can only be facilitated by education and experience. As My Commander's Intent states '... appropriate, broad and ongoing education, including on-the-job development and mentoring by leaders and commanders, is fundamental to being able to produce people who can consistently apply sound judgement in the complex and ambiguous situations we find ourselves in every day'.³

Some 18 months into my command, I believe this as strongly, even more so perhaps, than I did when I assumed command. I have therefore directed the development of several key strategies for the development of professional mastery. This Reading List is one of them, and it is the first of its kind in the history of the Royal Australian Air Force. It is part of our collective endeavor to ensure that all of us achieve the level of professional mastery commensurate with our roles and responsibilities in the generation of air power for Australia's security.

² Binskin, Air Marshal Mark, AM, 4 July 2008, *Commander's Intent: Air Force: One Team*, Air Power Development Centre, Canberra, pp 6–7.

³ *ibid*, p 11.



This year's list has a certain orientation towards the subject of irregular warfare and air power's role in contributing to it. We have been engaged in the Middle East since 2003 in an irregular conflict, after a short conventional campaign, and this is the conflict of our immediate future. As such, we must endeavour to understand what air power can and cannot do in such conflicts so that we may participate even more effectively in the joint team so as to achieve Australia's military objectives. It is important for Royal Australian Air Force personnel to be the nation's professional masters of air power, for that is what the nation expects of us. This is the difference between professionals and amateurs.

I do not expect you to read each of these books immediately. But as the list is fairly broad, there should be something in it for every member of the Air Force, whether you are interested in strategy, concepts and doctrine or our 89 years of history as an independent military Service.

I commend the books in this list to you.

M.D. Binskin, AM

Air Marshal

Chief of Air Force

March 2010



HISTORY, CONTEXT AND THE PROFESSIONAL READING LIST

Dr Alan Stephens, OAM

The German philosopher and revolutionary Karl Marx once wrote that history repeats itself, first as tragedy, then as farce. A similar sort of perspective was provided by the Anglo-Irish statesman and author, Edmund Burke, who suggested that those who don't know history are destined to repeat it. Presumably neither viewpoint impressed the American industrialist Henry Ford, for whom history was 'more or less bunk'.

Marx and Burke were towering intellects and Ford was a managerial genius. It is proper, therefore, that we should be interested in their dramatically differing interpretations of the merit of one of the principal fields of human enquiry.

On the one hand, Marx and Burke are representative of the widely-held belief that we must study the past in order to prepare for the future; on the other hand, Ford is representative of those for whom the well-known challenges of historiography—inadequate sources, the selective use of material, self-serving witnesses, biased authors, etc—too often make its 'lessons' misleading. Ironically, either belief could be used to support the common criticism that too many generals prepare for the next war by studying the last one.

Perhaps one final aphorism might help to resolve this clash of opinions.

Another common criticism of history is that it is rewritten by every generation. The implication here is that because history apparently is based on 'facts', its authors should get the story right the first time—so why should it be necessary constantly to rewrite it? Again ironically, and notwithstanding their fundamental difference over the value of history, Marx, Burke and Ford all presumably would have agreed with this axiom, the first two because they understood intellectual process, and Ford because it seems to offer evidence of his belief that we cannot trust 'history'.

It is indeed the case that each generation rewrites history, but there is a very good reason for this. Antony Beevor's masterful examination of the Spanish civil war can be used to provide the answer.

When Beevor first published *The Spanish Civil War* in 1982 it was widely acknowledged as the 'best, and fairest and most accurate' account of the conflict available. His use of the available sources was exhaustive, his scholarship exemplary, and his judgments astute. Anyone wanting to understand the context of the war, in addition to learning



about what happened to whom, when and how, could have done no better than to have started with Beevor's book.

But over the next two decades important new sources emerged as previously closed archival records were released in Spain, Russia, and Germany. Beevor eventually felt he had to revise his work, and in 2006 published a new version titled *The Battle for Spain*, which incorporated significant changes from the original, and which was again acknowledged as the definitive study of its kind.

This leads to the point about history and context that Marx and Burke understood, and that Ford didn't.

Change is constant, a truism that includes our interpretation of history. The challenge is to accept that, and to respond accordingly, whether as writer or reader. That's why Beevor's 1982 book was essential reading at the time for anyone trying to understand what had happened in Spain; it's why he needed to return to the subject, and it's why his 2006 book should be recommended reading for today's military professionals. Intellectual process, like history, never stops.

This episode also explains, incidentally, why history books have the author's name on the cover. Any historical study almost certainly will reflect to a greater or lesser extent the selective use of sources, cultural influences, the writer's background, and the like. First-rate historians tend to be scholars who not only can tell a good story, but who also who strive for objectivity, to the extent that it exists (noting that there's nothing wrong with a strong opinion piece, as long as we know enough to recognise it for what it is).

It would be fair to conclude from the preceding discussion that the books recommended by a professional reading list, without exception, should be high quality; that is, their authors should be respected for their writing, research skills, analysis, and judgment. It would also fair to conclude that the pedestrian nature of some professional reading lists is a factor in the unenthusiastic response they sometimes attract.

Senior commanders have a responsibility to ensure that their recommendations are both informative and enjoyable. Official histories, for example, tend to be strong on detail and factual narrative; but their impersonal style and cautious judgments explain why they are rarely bestsellers. People are more likely to pick up a book if it's a good read.

Military professionals plainly need to acquire a certain amount of technical knowledge, which is one of the purposes of a reading list. What were the issues in the RAF's 'Big Wing' debate at the start of World War II? How was the air campaign for Operation



Desert Storm planned? Does the RAAF's present organisation reflect sound warfighting principles? And so on.

But while technical knowledge is necessary, it is not sufficient. Military professionals must appreciate context: they must be able to examine issues from a perspective that transcends mere detail. We are more likely to become wise, as opposed to technically competent, if we read high-quality books about great people, great campaigns (regardless of their era or setting) and great strategy.

Without context, nothing we say or do has any meaning; without understanding the setting in which events took place or ideas were developed, we are unlikely to understand anything fully.

Commanders who don't appreciate context risk making ill-informed decisions, which in turn can set a course for disaster: think of Gallipoli, the West's post-World War II confusion of communism with nationalism, the American invasion of Vietnam, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and so on. Examples of military catastrophes arising from ignorance of context are legion.

It is the context that history provides, more than the presentation of detail or of (possibly disputed) facts, that gives the subject its innate power, and which makes it the centrepiece of professional mastery. People who don't read good history can't achieve professional mastery in the full meaning of the term. It's as simple as that.

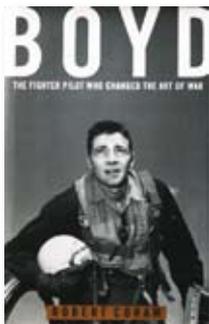


SECTION ONE

THE 2010 LIST



AIR POWER CONCEPTS, STRATEGY AND DOCTRINE



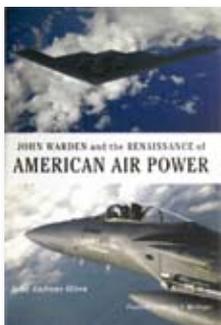
Boyd – The Fighter Pilot Who Changed the Art of War

Robert Coram

Back Bay Books, Little, Brown and Company, New York, 2002

449 pp, photographs, appendix, bibliography, index, soft cover

Most people who have heard of John Boyd will associate him with the idea of the OODA (Observe, Orient, Decide and Act) Loop. In this sympathetic biographical work, Robert Coram sets out to add ‘flesh’ to the man whose ideas have proved very influential in American military thinking from the 1970s. Tracing Boyd’s life, career and profoundly eclectic thinking, Coram provides a readable and insightful portrait not only of Boyd the individual but also the essence of his work and the impact of his ideas on the US military establishment. While a most significant thesis in Boyd’s work, the OODA Loop is not the sum of his creative and synthetic endeavours, and is more often misunderstood or misrepresented than fully appreciated. By tracing the development of his intellectual life, Coram provides context for Boyd’s big ideas of OODA loop, his synthesis of Patterns of Conflict and his notions of creativity and adaptivity, thus affording the reader a better understanding of this complex set of ideas.



John Warden and the Renaissance of American Air Power

John Andreas Olsen

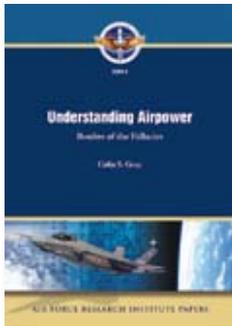
Potomac Books, Inc, Washington, D.C., 2007

xvi + 297 pp, photographs, index, notes, appendices, hard cover

This book is a remarkably honest biography of retired US Air Force Colonel John A. Warden III. Warden is a brilliant, and at times controversial, air power theorist and practitioner whose radical ideas about the application of air power sparked what can only be called a revolution in the conduct of war. Colonel Warden explained his theories in his book *The Air Campaign: Planning for Combat* (republished by Brassey’s Inc, in 1989). The importance of John Olsen’s book for students of contemporary air power theory and strategy rests in the author’s ability to connect important developments in



the application of air power to the life story of this remarkable thinker. While detailing the individual's life, John Olsen manages to enunciate the change that Warden brought about in the way air power was perceived and applied. This well-researched book provides an extraordinary example of how one individual can influence and shape strategic level thinking and explains Warden's ideas and theories in a cogent manner. This book is a 'must read' for all serious students of air power.



Understanding Airpower – Bonfire of the Fallacies

Colin S. Gray

Air Force Research Institute, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, 2009
xii + 68 pp, photographs, index, notes, soft cover

Download at: http://aupress.maxwell.af.mil/ARI_Papers/GrayAFRI2009-3.pdf

This paper is a well-constructed argument regarding nine fallacies surrounding the role of air power in contemporary conflict. Gray, a widely published professor of international politics and strategic studies, and a former presidential adviser, aims to 'correct for 90 years of poor and shoddy history' relating to the application of air power. The focus of the paper is to 'tell the truth' about contemporary air power rather than to promote the aerial instrument as an end in itself. The conclusion the author reaches is that air power is the US' 'sharpest sword' in regular conventional warfare and when it chooses to wage war against enemies who fight irregularly, it is choosing to fight in a context wherein its most deadly weapon will have limited utility. At a time when Air Force is undergoing its largest capability transition since World War II, this paper will help junior to mid level officers to contextualise Air Force's transformation into a 21st century force.



Learning Large Lessons – The Evolving Roles of Ground Power and Air Power in the Post-Cold War Era

David E. Johnson

The RAND Corporation, 2006

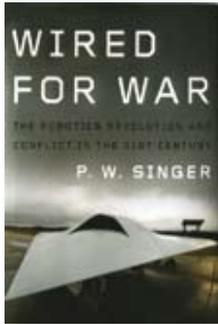
xxvii + 232 pp, illustrations, bibliography, index, soft cover

Download at: http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2007/RAND_MG405-1.pdf

This is a sophisticated study of the employment of air power in both the strategic and battlefield applications. The author, a retired U.S Army artillery officer, argues that an analysis of post-Cold War conflicts highlighted the domination of air power at the strategic and operational levels of war against large, conventional forces. The book perceives the exploitation of air power at the tactical level as a function of the ground forces. The focus of the study is on inter-Service friction caused by the ownership of the battlespace and the assets required to dominate it. Johnson concludes that air power is a force projection capability that can be optimally employed to shape the theatre both strategically and operationally. It argues that, as a consequence, joint doctrine should be altered to incorporate this paradigm. *Learning Large Lessons* is published by RAND's Project Air Force and, therefore, analyses US operations in Iraq (1991), Bosnia (1995), Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003). The book reiterates that the US is not realising the full potential that can be derived from harmoniously synchronising the application of its ground and air forces. The author highlights the differences in the perceived 'lessons learned' between the ground and air forces in the campaigns analysed. This book will be of interest to all persons dealing with the strategic and operational levels of war, since it examines the perennial issues that arise when ground and air forces are employed jointly.



CONTEMPORARY AIR POWER ISSUES



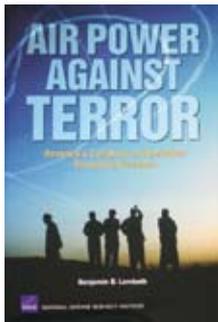
Wired For War – The Robotics Revolution and Conflict in the 21st Century

P.W. Singer

The Penguin Press, New York, 2009

438 pp, photographs, index, notes, hard cover

W*ired for War* is, as many have described it, a wild ride and an excellent read. P.W. Singer from the Brookings Institute provides a background of robotics in war and then an analysis of the current situation with a view to the future. The book raises a myriad of ethical and moral issues regarding the use of robotics in war, such as issue of rules of engagement and war crimes. Singer also debates the issue of whether a nation that uses robotics in warfare is more likely to resort to war in the first place due to the psychological and physical distance it creates between them and their adversaries. With the RAAF now operating unmanned aerial systems on operations in the Middle East, this is a book that offers insights on a subject about which all professional military personnel need to be cognisant.



Air Power Against Terror – America's Conduct of Operation Enduring Freedom

Benjamin S. Lambeth

The RAND Corporation, 2005

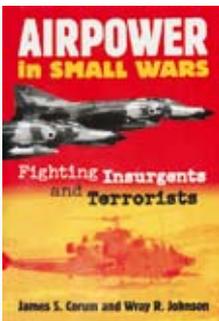
xliii + 411 pp, photographs, maps, bibliography, index, soft cover

Download at: http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2006/RAND_MG166-1.pdf

This book describes the way air power was employed in the first counteroffensive that the United States launched after the attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon in September 2001. The author has captured the core essence of the American approach to warfare and identifies concepts of how air power will be



employed in the 21st century against irregular forces. The book is a rare combination of clear understanding of the strategic context in which air power was applied in Operation *Enduring Freedom* and explanation of the technical sophistication that epitomised its operational employment. The employment of air power in Afghanistan was, and continues to be, an immensely complex endeavour and Ben Lambeth has been able to provide a remarkably lucid account of the events, along with a clear and remarkable analysis of the initial campaign in the global war on terror. In chronological order the book covers the start of the campaign and how the Taliban was eventually routed in combination with the help of the Northern Alliance. It looks at the lessons that came out of Operation *Anaconda* and explains distinctive achievements like the improvements in some important force-employment trends. The book also enumerates the problems that were faced in the execution of the overall plan and finishes with an overall assessment of the campaign. This book is a study that anyone interested in the employment of air power in current operations and against irregular forces can ill afford to ignore.



Airpower in Small Wars – Fighting Insurgents and Terrorists

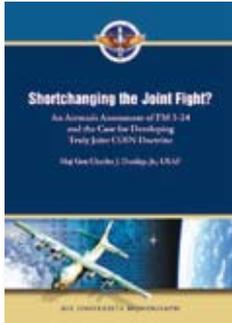
James S. Corum and Wray R. Johnson

University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, 2003

xiv + 439 pp, maps, photographs, notes, bibliographical essay, index, soft cover

The topic of small and irregular wars is one that has, quite reasonably, captured the attention of many military professionals in recent years. The use of air power in such conflicts has become something of a 'hot topic'. Corum and Johnson's examination of the use of air power, in a variety of forms, across a range of small wars in the 20th Century is a particularly useful addition to available information in this field. At the time of writing, Corum was a professor of military history at Fort Leavenworth and Johnson a professor at the US Marine Corps University. Their intention in writing this book was to provide military professionals with a comprehensive history of air power in small wars and a commentary on the utility of air power in each conflict examined. The breadth of coverage of this work is impressive and, although each conflict is dealt with in admittedly little depth, the broad sweep of analysis serves to illustrate not only

the utility of air power across a spectrum of conflicts but also the vital importance of comprehending the context in which it was applied.



Shortchanging the Joint Fight? An Airman's Assessment of FM 3-24 and the Case for Developing Truly Joint COIN Doctrine

Major General Charles J. Dunlap, Jr, USAF

Air Force Research Institute, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, 2008

iv + 111 pp, notes, index, soft cover.

Download at: http://aupress.maxwell.af.mil/ARI_Papers/DunlapARI1.pdf

This controversial paper on COIN (counterinsurgency) doctrine analyses the pitfalls of accepting US Army and Marine tactical doctrine as the *joint* solution. Dunlap, a United States Air Force Major General, argues that the 'airmindedness' point of view is missing from current US COIN doctrine, the FM 3-24. Because of this shortfall, Dunlap contends, US COIN doctrine has reverted to massing the troops and engaging in the close fight with the adversary, irrespective of their nature. Moreover, this massing of counterinsurgency troops is a significant part of the problem as they are located within the nation enduring the insurgency and thereby providing additional fuel for the insurgents. In constructing his argument, Dunlap corrects some of the myths and fallacies associated with the role of air power in COIN operations and offers some insights and ideas (not all of which may be palatable) from an airman's perspective for developing unbiased joint COIN doctrine in order to better inform national decision makers.

AIR POWER HISTORY AND ANALYSIS



Why Air Forces Fail – The Anatomy of Defeat

Edited by Robin Higham and Stephen J. Harris

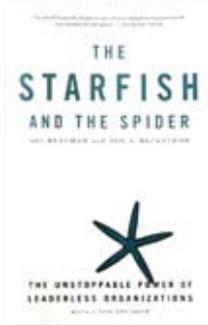
The University Press of Kentucky, 2006

355 pp, photographs, index, notes, hard cover

Air power is a systemic product that relies on the integration of a wide range of elements—military and non-military. *Why Air Forces Fail* illustrates the breadth of effective air power, from the need for skilled military personnel through to the essential components of national infrastructure and political will. Through a series of examinations of nations' air power in conflicts, the book highlights the impact of a failure to develop any one of these components. This book provides a sound foundation for any student of air power seeking to develop an appreciation of its national strategic dimensions and is immensely readable.



AIR POWER COMMAND, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT



The Starfish and the Spider – The Unstoppable Power of Leaderless Organizations

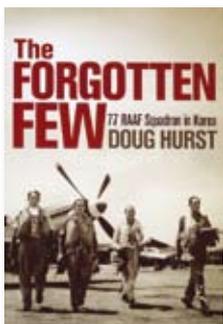
Ori Brafman and Rod A. Beckstrom

Penguin, New York, USA, 2006

vii + 232 pp, illustrations, sources, acknowledgments, soft cover

This is a very interesting book that takes a look at organisations using the analogies of a starfish and a spider. If you cut off a spider's head, it dies; if you cut off a starfish's leg it grows a new one, and that leg can grow into an entirely new starfish. The book uses the analogy to describe traditional top-down organisations that are like spiders but opines that starfish organisations are now changing the face of business and the world. The analogy is used through a variety of examples to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of each type of organisation but of key interest to Defence readers is the positioning of Al Qaeda as a starfish organisation being hunted by spider organisations. This is a short book but a very easy read. It does get a little repetitious through the middle but the outcome challenges some thinking.

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE HISTORY



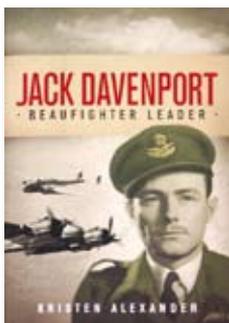
The Forgotten Few – 77 RAAF Squadron in Korea

Doug Hurst

Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2008

xiv + 253 pp, illustrations, maps, bibliography, index, soft cover

This is the first account published in 15 years that focuses on the performance of Australia's only air combat squadron committed to the Korean War. It is the fourth book on RAAF history by Hurst, who was a RAAF navigator for 33 years and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to his writing. Considering that Korea was the last time that Australian pilots found themselves in aerial combat and sustaining significant losses through death or capture, and that it was during this war that the RAAF made the transition from piston to jet-engined fighters, there is good reason why a modern readership should ensure the lessons of that conflict are not consigned to the 'forgotten' category. Changing technology may have dated many specific combat-related lessons, but Hurst's observations about preparedness, leadership and administration have a disturbingly familiar ring about them.



Jack Davenport – Beaufighter Leader

Kristen Alexander

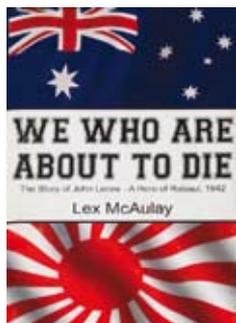
Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2009

xxv + 306 pp, illustrations, maps, bibliography, index, soft cover

Following her well-received 2006 biography of RAAF ace Clive Caldwell, Alexander has turned her attention to the life of another courageous and inspiring Australian pilot of World War II. An early entrant to the Empire Air Training Scheme, Davenport became a pilot in Australia's first squadron in RAF Bomber Command—No 455, flying Hampdens. The unit transferred to Coastal Command in April 1942, still with Hampdens until re-equipped with Beaufighters in December 1943. Davenport became Commanding Officer at this point, and led 455 Squadron on a succession of strike operations against shipping targets off the Norwegian and



Dutch coasts. Blending sound research and enlightening anecdotes, the author explores the personal qualities that underpinned Davenport's leadership—the same qualities which, postwar, helped make him a successful Sydney businessman with a commitment to community service.



[We Who Are About To Die – The Story of John Lerew – A Hero of Rabaul, 1942](#)

Lex McAulay

Banner Books, Maryborough, Qld, 2007

iv + 344 pp, illustrations, maps, bibliography, index, hard cover

McAulay is well known as the author of a range of popular military history books in the late 1980s and early 1990s, which include several titles of RAAF interest such as *Battle of the Bismarck Sea* (1991). Since then, he has become publisher of a great many more titles focusing on air warfare, including some written by himself—like this one. John Lerew made his mark in history for a cheeky message to superiors at the height of the defence of Rabaul in January 1942. Told to continue attacks against a Japanese naval landing force with a diminishing number of Wirraway trainers, Lerew sent the gladiator's salute in Latin. McAulay gets the identity of the Air Officer Commanding North-Eastern Area who was the signal's recipient incorrect (Lukis not Bladin) but this does not detract from the story. On leaving the RAAF, Group Captain Lerew had a significant career with the International Civil Aviation Organization.



[The Flying Grocer](#)

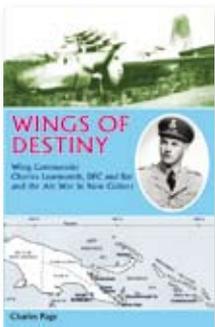
Rupert Guinness

Random House, Sydney, 2007

xvi + 258 pp, illustrations, soft cover

This is the story of Flying Officer Keith Bennett, DFC, who is described in a foreword by the current Chief of the Defence Force as 'one of the staunchly courageous men of 460 Squadron' during World War II. As told by Bennett's son-in-law, it focuses on a little-known episode during April and May 1945 called Operation

Manna, when allied bombers—including from the Australian 460 Squadron—were used in a humanitarian enterprise to rescue millions of civilians in western Holland from starvation. Bennett included his name and address with one of the food parcels dropped from his Lancaster, and had the rewarding experience of receiving a letter of thanks from a grateful Dutch teenage girl. Drawing on letters, interviews and diary extracts, the narrative is as much about tracing the intertwining stories of Bennett and Jannie Van Splunder (later Verstigen) as the conduct of offensive bombing operations.



Wings of Destiny – Wing Commander Charles Learmonth, DFC and Bar and the Air War in New Guinea

Charles Page

Rosenberg Publishing, Dural, NSW, 2008

416 pp, illustrations, maps, bibliography, index, soft cover

The place of Charles Learmonth in RAAF history is cemented by the naming of a base at Exmouth Gulf, Western Australia, in his honour. Retired international airline pilot Charles Page has produced a ‘life and times style’ biography of Learmonth’s relatively short Air Force career—he was 26 years of age when killed in a Beaufort accident near Perth in January 1944. The book follows Learmonth through the 1941 search for HMAS *Sydney*, his part in the air war in New Guinea (including the Battle of the Bismarck Sea) with No 22 Squadron, and the tragedy of the mysterious accidents that kept claiming Beaufort bombers up until the crash that took him while Commanding Officer of No 14 Squadron. The author has drawn heavily on ‘a shoebox full of aerogrammes held together with rubber bands,’ which were the letters Learmonth wrote to his wife from New Guinea almost every day.

SECTION TWO

THE TIMELESS BOOKS OF AIR POWER PROFESSIONAL MASTERY



AIR POWER STRATEGY AND DOCTRINE

On War

Carl Von Clausewitz

The Command of the Air

Giulio Douhet

http://www.airforcehistory.hq.af.mil/Publications/fulltext/command_of_the_air.pdf

The Influence of Sea Power upon History 1660–1785

A.T. Mahan

The Paths of Heaven: The Evolution of Airpower Theory

edited by Colonel Phillip S. Meilinger, USAF

<http://aupress.maxwell.af.mil/Books/Meil-Paths/Paths.pdf>

10 Propositions Regarding Air Power

Colonel Phillip S. Meilinger, USAF

http://www.airforcehistory.hq.af.mil/Publications/fulltext/10_propositions_regarding_air_power.pdf

Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age

edited by Peter Paret

The Art of War

Sun Tzu

The Air Campaign – Planning for Combat

Colonel John A. Warden III

<http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/warden/warden-all.htm>



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE HISTORY

The RAAF in Vietnam: Australian Air Involvement in the Vietnam War 1962–1975

Chris Coulthard-Clark

The Third Brother: The Royal Australian Air Force 1921–39

C.D. Coulthard-Clark

General Kenney Reports – A Personal History of the Pacific War

George C. Kenney

http://www.airforcehistory.hq.af.mil/Publications/fulltext/gen_kenney_reports.pdf

The Decisive Factor: Air Power Doctrine by Air Vice-Marshal H.N. Wrigley

edited by Alan Stephens and Brendan O’Loughlin

<http://airpower.airforce.gov.au/publications/Details/212/The-Decisive-Factor-Air-Power-Doctrine-by-Air-Vice-Marshal-H.N.-Wrigley.aspx>

Going Solo: The Royal Australian Air Force 1946–1971

Alan Stephens

The Australian Centenary History of Defence – Volume II – The Royal Australian Air Force

Alan Stephens

Power Plus Attitude: Ideas, Strategy and Doctrine in the Royal Australian Air Force, 1921-1991

Alan Stephens

<http://airpower.airforce.gov.au/Publications/Details/213/Power-Plus-Attitude-Ideas-Strategy-and-Doctrine-in-the-Royal-Australian-Air-Force-1921-1991.aspx>





www.raaf.gov.au/airpower