

The RAF Museum Avro Anson identity mix-up



This Anson Mk.1 fuselage is displayed at the RAF Museum at Hendon mounted on a RAF Queen Mary transporter. It is painted in RAF wartime camouflage as W2068. The museum's signage and listings quote this Anson as W2068 ex VH-ASM.

However it is in fact a different Anson LT773 ex VH-AZU. Despite the error being brought to the museum's attention for some years, it has not been corrected. This paper presents the histories of both Ansons.

AVRO ANSON Mk.1 VH-ASM

.41	Built by A.V.Roe & Company Ltd at Manchester. Two 350hp Armstrong Siddeley Cheetah IX engines.
	Built to British Air Ministry order for 1,000 Anson 1s for RAF, serial range W1505 to W2665 with black-out blocks. The main deliveries of this order were shipped direct to Australia and Canada under the Empire Air Training Scheme
	Allocated RAF serial W2068
	Shipped in wooden packing crates to Australia
10.5.41	Taken on RAAF charge as W2068 .
12.5.41	Received No.1 Aircraft Depot, Laverton ex UK awaiting erection
17.5.41	Serviceable in 14 days at 1D
27.5.41	Issued to No.4 Service Flying Training School, Geraldton WA ex 1AD
12.6.41	Forced landing at 4SFTS, undercarriage and under surfaces of fuselage damaged
19.12.41	4SFTS report: W2068 is fitted with gun turret
4.6.42	Taxying accident at 4SFTS, port side of tailplane damaged
4.3.43	Forced landing at 4SFTS, on cross-country flight, damage not stated
18.10.43	Issued to Australian National Airways, Maylands ex 4SFTS for complete overhaul
5.6.44	Issued to 4SFTS Geraldton ex ANA
22.1.45	Transferred to 4SFTS Storage, Geraldton ex 4SFTS unit strength. Taken over by No.87 Operational Base Unit, Geraldton
25.7.45	Received Care & Maintenance Unit, Evans Head ex No.87 OBU Geraldton.
29.3.46	Received Care & Maintenance Unit, Narrandera ex CMU Evans Head, for storage under cover pending disposal
14.11.46	Ansons W2068 & W2598 sold through Commonwealth Disposals Commission, for £250 each to Mr. E. Wilkinson, 48 Byron Street, Inverell NSW.

13.12.46	Both issued to purchaser ex CMU Narrandera
	Edward Wilkinson was lead member of the Anson Holding Syndicate, Inverell which purchased 4 Ansons from disposals for a proposed airline to connect northern NSW with Sydney. The syndicate's first Anson was VH-AYI (ex RAAF DJ322) ferried Sydney-Narrabri 16.11.46 by Archie J. Smith after CofA by Marshall Airways, Mascot.
12.46	Arch Smith flew VH-AYI Narrabri-Sydney-Narrandera, carrying Anson Holding Syndicate members and volunteers to work on two Ansons purchased at Narrandera. After 4 days and nights of maintenance, the two were fit for a ferry flight
12.46	W2068 & W2598 flown by Keith Robey of Sydney and Reg Jones of Inverell were ferried Narrandera-Tamworth, in company with VH-AYI pilot Arch Smith
	Ansons stored in former RAAF hangars at the old Tamworth aerodrome while the planned air service, named East West Airlines was established and applications made for an airline licence on the Tamworth-Sydney route. Ted Wilkinson was a foundation director, and all assets of Anson Holding Syndicate were turned over to East West.
.47	W2068 ferried Tamworth-Mascot for civil conversion by Marshall Airways
11.2.47	DCA Civil Registration application: East West Airlines Ltd, Tamworth NSW . Identity quoted as frame number 72960, but form includes "previous RAAF W2068" Application signed by Basil S. Brown
7.5.47	Registered VH-ASM
7.5.47	CofA issued at Mascot
26.5.47	VH-ASM delivered Mascot-Tamworth.
7.6.47	Flew the first trial East West Airlines service Tamworth-Sydney, Captain John Rentell, 7 passengers. Returned to Tamworth next day.
23.6.47	Flew the inaugural East West Airlines scheduled service Tamworth-Sydney, Captain John Rentell, 7 passengers
6.9.47	Official ceremony to launch East West Airlines held at Tamworth by the Director-General of Civil Aviation Air Marshall Richard Williams. During the ceremony, VH-ASM was named <i>Hinkler</i> by Mrs. D. Shand, wife of the Managing Director of the company Don M. Shand, and Anson VH-AYI was named <i>Smithy</i> by Mrs. Williams, wife of Richard Williams.
19.8.48	Minor damage, no details in DCA file
16.8.50	CofA expired, not renewed
6.8.51	Cancelled from the Civil Register by DCA in their 1951 Census of unairworthy aircraft
	Stored in hangar at Tamworth. The East West Airlines fleet of Ansons was replaced by Lockheed Hudsons, then the first of the DC-3s. The remaining Ansons were sold to other operators
6.55	Photograph shows VH-ASM in good condition in line-up of East West fleet at the original Tamworth Airport: 3 DC-3s, 2 Hudsons and VH-ASM <i>Hinkler</i> . The new Tamworth Airport opened later that year.
7.55	DCA Director's meeting minutes state "VH-ASM was recently sold to Marshall Airways"
13.9.55	VH-ASM noted at Bankstown Airport, Sydney parked outside at Sid Marshall's Marshall Airways hangar, still painted with East West Airlines titles and name <i>Hinkler</i>
22.6.56	Restored to Civil Register: Marshall Airways, Bankstown Aerodrome, Sydney
	Operated on charter and airwork, also regular weekend joyriding at Bankstown.
6.61	DCA announced restrictions on all Australian Avro Anson Mk.1s due to poor single engined performance and deterioration of glued joints in the wooden mainplane and tailplane. Effective 1.1.62 the type was prohibited from carrying passengers or over-water flights. Effective midnight 30.6.62 CofAs would be suspended for all Anson 1s.
	Sid Marshall of Marshall Airways protested the ruling, having personally maintained his fleet of Avro Ansons and offered his aircraft for any structural airworthiness test that DCA wished to carry out. Offered refused.
30.6.62	CofA suspended due DCA policy
18.7.62	Cancelled from Civil Register "At Direction of Director General of Civil Aviation"
1.63	Parked in Marshall Airways hangar Bankstown, with Marshall Anson VH-AZX
5.63	Parked outside hangar, with VH-AZX and unconverted W2599
1.64	The three Marshall Airways Ansons now parked on grass opposite Marshall hangar, showing signs of weather exposure
6.65	VH-ASM's wings were chopped off by axe and the aircraft moved by truck to Sid Marshall's storage yard on the Bankstown Airport boundary.
	In Marshall's yard the fuselage of VH-ASM was placed alongside dismantled Anson VH-AZU which had been stored here for some years. In the yard were two ex RAAF DC-2s, two Spitfires, a Nakajima Oscar and many aircraft parts, all exposed to the weather. A sheep was kept in the yard to keep the grass down.
71	Aviation Historical Society of Australia (NSW Branch) advised EWA executives Don

	M.Shand and John G.Riley that VH-ASM was deteriorating badly. The suggestion that EWA restore the aircraft was enthusiastically endorsed by EWA Engineering Manager C.E.McCrohon.
.72	Acquired "as is" by East West Airlines Pty Ltd, Tamworth from Sid Marshall
29.3.72	VH-ASM fuselage, mainplane, Cheetah engines and collection of parts moved by truck to Tamworth from Marshall's yard at Bankstown
72	Airframe stripped in one of the EWA hangars at Tamworth for restoration by EWA engineering apprentices, for display as a memorial to the airline's first services.
21.5.73	EWA Engineering Manager C.E.McCrohon died suddenly from a heart attack. Priority for the Anson restoration was subsequently lowered and soon the project lapsed.
74-79	Dismantled Anson stored in EWA hangar Tamworth
	Management changes in East West Airlines resulted in renewed interest in completing the Anson, but decided to out-source the rebuild project. Restoration proposal and costing submitted by vintage aircraft enthusiast John G. Gallagher, Loftus, Sydney was accepted.
11.79	VH-ASM's components moved by road from Tamworth to Gallagher's home at 11 Spur Crescent, Loftus and moved into a large back garden shed.
82	Fuselage restoration completed at Loftus. All silver with red "East West Airlines" titles above cabin windows, "Hinkler" in red on nose, and registration in back.
17.11.82	VH-ASM restored fuselage moved by road back to Tamworth for storage by EWA to provide space in Gallagher's shed for the restoration of the mainplane
.87	Fuselage moved back to Sydney for re-assembly with the restored mainplane and engines. VH-ASM completed at John Gallagher's hangar at Wedderburn airfield
22.6.87	VH-ASM unveiled in East West Airlines ceremony at Sydney Airport.
.87	Moved to Tamworth and re-assembled inside a new purpose built display building at Tamworth Airport.
27.2.88	Ceremony to officially open the Avro Anson Museum, Tamworth Airport
	<i>Currently displayed at Tamworth Airport</i>



Over Tamworth June 1947, VH-ASM Hinkler



Bankstown September 1958 with Marshall Airways.

Photo by Peter R. Keating



Retired and out on the grass at Bankstown January 1964

Photo Dave Eyre



In Sid Marshall's storage yard at Bankstown, February 1967.

Photo by Dave Thollar



VH-ASM on arrival Tamworth, March 1972

John Riley, EWA



VH-ASM on arrival Tamworth, March 1972

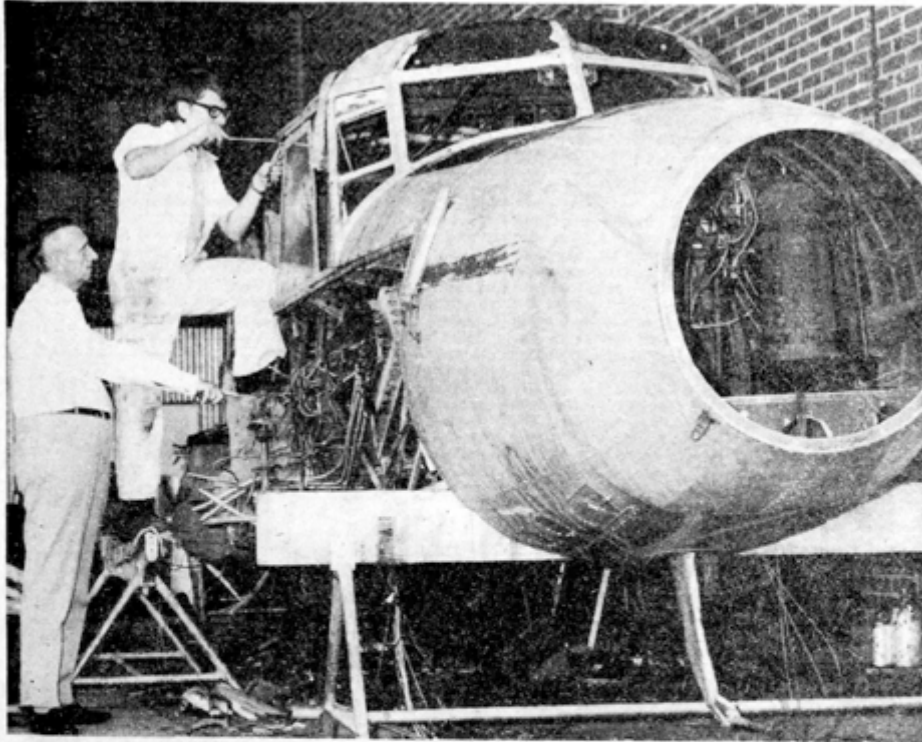
John Riley, EWA



Restoration commenced, Tamworth June 1972.

Photo by Roger McDonald

Old Avro Anson is back with EWA



One of the last hand-built wooden aircraft used in civil service is to be pieced together by East-West Airlines at Tamworth.

Failure of glue in the spans caused VHASM Avro Anson, ex-RAAF, to be withdrawn from service.

The plane was the first aircraft owned by EWA and it had its first passenger flight from Tamworth to Sydney on June 23, 1947.

The company's engineering manager in Tamworth, Mr C. McCrohon, said the Avro was the first of six owned by EWA.

This particular Avro remained in service until 1955 when it was sold to Marshall Airways at Bankstown, operated by Mr Sid Marshall, one of the pioneer pilots for Ansett.

Some time later it was stored in the backyard of Mr Marshall's home, with the intention of going into his museum.

"For something like 15 years, it has been rusting away until the Australian Aviation Historical Society notified us six months ago of its condition," said Mr McCrohon.

"It thought we would be interested in restoring the plane back to its former condition since it was the first the company used.

"And now comes the long and arduous task of

restoration. Everything has to be restored," Mr McCrohon said.

"The wings need replacing and we're virtually going to have to re-build her from scratch." He estimates there's 12 month's work in all this.

"The 15 apprentices currently articulated to EWA will be put on the job. They'll get to know a lot of the basic aircraft principles in this way.

"Modern planes might appear complicated, but they are fundamentally the same once all the gadgets are removed.

"This means the Avro Anson will be a tremendous help in aiding these apprentices on the elementary structural and mechanical side of aircraft construction."

Cost is going to be about \$1000 and Mr McCrohon envisages the finished product being placed in a hangar near the head office at Tamworth Airport.

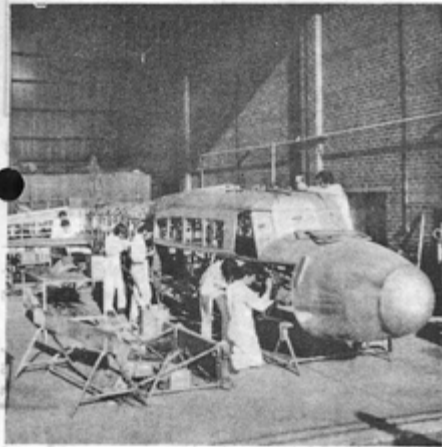
"But the biggest disappointment of all is that there isn't a chance we'll be able to fly her again.

"The Department of Civil Aviation has withdrawn her from use, so VHASM will only be a showpiece."

• Pictured above is the nose of the rusted Avro Anson being taken apart by EWA apprentice Mr W. Howard under the supervision of Mr McCrohon.

FIRST OF THE FLEET

EAST-WEST NEWS JUNE 1973



Avro Anson VH - ASM

Work is progressing favourably on Avro Anson VH-ASM, East-West's first aircraft. Reconstruction of the aircraft is being carried out by seven apprentice engineers under the supervision of engineer Gordon Farr.

The apprentice engineers were selected from 72 applicants and began their careers with East-West early this year.

They have now almost completed work on the main structure of fuselage and tail assembly and will soon commence the next stage of interior trim, chairs, etc.

The apprentices will also be building a new mainplane for the aircraft from drawings to be forwarded from the original manufacturers in the U.K.



Gordon Farr pictured with six of the apprentice engineers. They are from left: (standing) Chris Mills, Tony Summers, Steven Swan and Peter Barnier, Nev Holley, Doug Clarke.

East West News magazine June 1973

Courtesy Roger McDonald



Excellent progress at Tamworth, seen in February 1974.

Photo by Greg Banfield



Partially restored at John Gallagher's home in Loftus, February 1981. Photo by John Gallagher



The restored fuselage at Loftus in November 1981. Photo by John Gallagher



East West Airlines' 40th Anniversary celebration at Mascot, June 1987. Photo by Roger McDonald

AVRO ANSON Mk.1 VH-AZU

.41	Built by A.V.Roe & Company Ltd at Yeadon. Two 350hp Armstrong Siddeley Cheetah IX engines.
	Built to British Air Ministry order for 750 Anson 1s for RAF, serial range LS978 to LV332 with black-out blocks. The main deliveries of this order were shipped direct to Australia and South Africa under the Empire Air Training Scheme
	Allocated RAF serial LT773
2.5.43	Log book: first flight
.43	Shipped in wooden packing crates to Australia
16.8.43	Taken on RAAF charge as LT773 .
16.8.43	Received No.1 Service Flying Training School, Point Cook ex UK
30.8.43	Received No.3 Bombing and Gunnery School, West Sale ex 1SFTS
11.10.43	Received General Reconnaissance School, Bairnsdale ex 3BAGS
29.11.43	Returned to 3BAGS ex GRS
12.12.43	Received AGS West Sale ex 3BAGS
6.8.45	Received AGS Storage, West Sale for storage Category D ex AGS unit equipment
14.5.46	Offered to Commonwealth Disposals Commission
20.8.46	Sold through CDC for £300 to J. Blomberg, 354 Clovelly Road, Clovelly, Sydney . Anson LT737 also at West Sale sold to him for £270 on the same date
27.9.46	LT773 & LT737 issued to purchaser ex Care & Maintenance Unit West Sale
11.46	LT773 undergoing civil conversion at Mascot by Marshall Airways
12.12.46	Registered VH-AZU Kenneth Harold Johnson, c/- Airflite, Mascot Aerodrome
12.12.46	CofA issued, 2 crew and 7 passenger seats
	Johnson operated as Air Taxi Services of Australia, Sydney , using VH-AZU and a second Anson VH-AZX (ex LT737) which received its CofA 30.1.47
10.47	Johnson sold both Ansons to Brown & Dureau Ltd who were acting as agents for Far Eastern Flying Training School, Hong Kong. B&D had sold three ex RAAF Ryan STMs to FEFTS
10.47	Change of ownership: Far Eastern Flying Training School Ltd, Kai Tak, Hong Kong c/- Brown & Dureau Ltd, Melbourne
11.47	DCA were advised that both Ansons would be flown to Hong Kong
11.12.47	CofA expired
12.47	VH-AZU and AZX parked in a hangar at Bankstown, pending export
19.12.48	Cancelled from Register as Sold Abroad
6.1.48	Restored to Register: Far Eastern Flying Training School Ltd, Kai Tak, Hong Kong

7.1.48	Brown & Dureau advise DCA that CofA renewal overhauls for VH-AZU & AZX will be carried out at Mascot by Marshall Airways, prior to their departure to Hong Kong
2.2.48	VH-AZU ferried Bankstown-Mascot by Sid Marshall for CofA renewal inspection.
3.48	DCA advised Brown & Dureau Ltd that VH-AZU & AZX would have to be submitted for mandatory Anson wingspar wood glue adhesion tests. B&D wrote to DCA complaining about the cost of these separate tests for AZX within weeks of it completing its CofA renewal.
	It appears that VH-AZU failed the glue adhesion test. No specific reference in the DCA file.
	Sale to Hong Kong cancelled
26.8.48	Change of ownership: Marshall Airways, Mascot Aerodrome, Sydney Purchase included unairworthy VH-AZU and VH-AZX with current CofA
	Marshall installed the civil Anson individual cabin windows modification and repainted the aircraft silver.
3.4.50	Registration application: Sidney David Marshall, Marshall Airways, Mascot
51	Work on the aircraft to renew CofA has not yet commenced
6.8.51	Cancelled from the Civil Register by DCA in their 1951 Census of unairworthy
	Marshall Airways moved from Mascot to Bankstown. VH-AZU stored at Bankstown
circa 1962	VH-AZU moved to Sid Marshall's storage yard on boundary of Bankstown Airport
9.2.64	noted in storage yard, complete fuselage but fabric torn from weather exposure
6.65	Dismantled VH-AZU in storage yard joined by Anson VH-ASM moved from the airport, which was placed alongside. In the yard were two ex RAAF DC-2s, two Spitfires, a Nakajima Oscar and many aircraft parts, all exposed to the weather.
8.1.77	Fuselage still in yard
.77	VH-AZU fuselage acquired by Ralph Cusack, Brisbane Qld . Sid Marshall had died and his aircraft collection was being disposed of by his long-time chief engineer and friend Jack Davidson.
.77	Fuselage collected from the storage yard
	Reported that the original plan was to have the fuselage transported to RAAF Museum, Point Cook to be mated with a spare Anson mainplane found in RAAF Stores stock. However the plan did not proceed
80	Fuselage VH-AZU was under restoration in a hangar at Archerfield Airport, Brisbane by experienced aircraft woodwork restorer Ken Beard. Using tubing and components salvaged from ex RAAF Ansons on farms.
	Fuselage VH-AZU traded by Cusack to RAF Museum, Hendon . Probably an exchange deal for Bristol Beaufort parts needed for Cusack's airworthy restoration project of Beaufort A9-141.
By 02	Fuselage displayed at RAF Museum, Hendon on a RAF Queen Mary transporter, painted in RAF camouflage as "W2068" code "68" on right, cut away on left side to show construction
	<i>W2068 was VH-ASM which had been in Marshall's yard with VH-AZU</i>



Mascot 1947, before individual cabin windows were installed.

Ed Coates Collection



VH-AZU in Sid Marshall's yard at Bankstown in February 1964.

Photo by Peter Limon



VH-AZU in Sid Marshall's yard at Bankstown in February 1964.

Photo by Dave Eyre



VH-AZU still languishing in Marshall's yard in January 1977.

Photo by Greg Banfield