



Two photos of No. 13 Squadron Hudsons circa June/July 1942. At left, an unidentified Mk III landing at heavily-timbered Hughes, whilst immediately below, this photo, from Bob Dalkin's collection, is most likely of A16-233, a Hudson he delivered to Hughes from Laverton over 22nd/23rd June 1942 and flew more often than any other until it was declared unserviceable at the end of August. It was allotted to No. 5 AD at Forest Hill for a 240 hour service, received there on 7th September and returned to No. 13 Squadron in October. It remained in North Western Area, was later transferred to No. 2 Squadron, accounted for a Japanese floatplane on 9th April 1943 but was lost on 8th September 1943. These incidents are described later in this chapter. (left, Department of Information photo via Mrs Gwen Crowe and RAAF Official photo, Bob Dalkin collection courtesy Peter Dalkin)

connection with any evacuation plans and to provide cover if and when an evacuation eventuated, but would develop into much more than that. Land forces were responsible for supplying and equipping the men on Timor and naval forces were to provide the means of transport.

It was also agreed that in addition to normal supplies, amenities such as tobacco and cigarettes would be despatched. Although their means of delivery are not mentioned, it is clear that despite the lack of direction this remained the job of the two Hudson squadrons.

On 19th June Badger flew a reconnaissance flight at 22,000 feet over Ambon; "Puss" McDonell recalls that it was freezing cold in the turret at such an altitude but warm and sunny in the Hudson's nose and cockpit (Hudsons were neither sealed nor heated). Six ships were sighted at anchor, but perhaps due to the engine checks the Mk IIIs were then undergoing, a follow-up attack was not mounted. Dilli, however, was bombed in an early evening raid on 25th June, but another strike against shipping there, detailed for three days later, was subsequently cancelled. FO Badger and crew made an offensive sweep of the Dilli area the following day, but no shipping was sighted. On the escarpment overlooking Dilli airfield a group of men, considered to be part of Sparrow Force, was seen. Dilli at that time was something of an unknown quantity, defended, according to the "Plan for Timor Force", by only a small Japanese force, approximately 400 men, whilst the strength of Sparrow Force, scattered around Portugese Timor was around 500 men. It had been reported, but not confirmed, that it was the Japanese intention to reinforce the area, no doubt a direct result of a successful attack on the town by Sparrow Force in May.

The continued presence of the Hudsons over Timor remained a contributing factor in maintaining Sparrow Force's



high morale, but just how effective the aircraft were in their bombing attacks the RAAF had yet to discover. After Hudsons of both Nos. 2 and 13 Squadrons bombed Dilli on the nights of 1st and 2nd July, word was received from Sparrow Force that 60 of the enemy had been killed. No. 13 Squadron claimed the credit from their raid on the night of the 2nd, but John McDonell considered that the credit should have gone to No. 2 Squadron for their attack the night before. McDonell recalled that Badger, flying A16-172 in bright moonlit conditions, flew below the scant cloud cover and dropped his four 250 lb bombs in a stick. For each bomb dropped there was a violent explosion and the third bomb was seen by Alan Crowe, positioned in the turret, to hit the building known as the "Chinese School", which had been occupied by the Japanese. In typical Crowe humour he later described how the entire building rose up - intact - after the bomb hit, and only then fell apart.

Confirmation of Badger's success came in an unusual way some 10-12 years later. McDonell recalled:

Whilst living at Bombala in about 1953/4, [I] became acquainted with the mail contractor who plied between Cann River and the railhead