

F-111C Pigs' Tales by Wally Walters, PLT 'the very early days, 1968 & 73'

I was involved in F-111C Operations; both in 1968 when we came back from the USA "empty-handed, and again on the first Ferry in 1973.



Receiving F111 Model presents after first Flight, Nellis AFB, 22 Jul 68



Mac (Errol McCormack) and Wally Walters, Base Ops, Nellis AFB, Jul 68

I was on the first Ferry in 1968 when, after training in the US, we came back empty-handed when the Government elected not to accept our aircraft until the problems were solved.

The 'First' Ferry Crews - 1968

Departure Australia For F111 Training, USA, 11Feb 1968.

The First F111 Ferry Team comprising 6 Crews departed for Mather AFB, near Sacramento, California, 11Feb1968.

The Crews were:

Pilots

Wg Cdr Henry A Hughes (Bill)
Sqn Ldr John I Thomson (Jock)
Flt Lt Peter J.O. Hackett
Flt Lt Errol J McCormack (Mac)
Flt Lt Robert J Montgomery (Bob)
Flt Lt Walter F Walters (Wal)

Navs.

Sqn Ldr David R Marks
Sqn Ldr Thomas D Wright
Flt Lt Leonard R O'Neill (Blue)
Flt Off Christopher J T Lake (Chris)
Flt Lt Frank E Burtt
Flt Lt Lancelot J Halvorson (Halvo)



Standing L-R: Tom Wright, Dave Marks, Pete Hackett, Bill Hughes, Jock Thomson, Wal Walters, Lance Halvorson, Bob Montgomery.
Kneeling: Blue O'Neill, Errol McCormack, Chris Lake, Frank Burtt.

First Ferry F111 Crews, Nellis AFB, 22Jul 1968.



Pilots, L-R: Bob Montgomery, Wally Walters, Errol McCormack, Bill Hughes, Jock Thomson, Pete Hackett



The "Supersonic" Navigators; L-R: Lance Halvorson, Frank Burtt, Blue O'Neill, Dave Marks, Tom Wright, Chris Lake, Nellis AFB, 22Jul 1968.

First Australian Crews to fly the F-111 in 1968



F111 Flight Line during Aussie first Flights, Nellis AFB, 22 Jul 68



USAF welcome after First F111 Flight, Nellis AFB, 22 Jul 1968. L-R: Col Bartholomew, Col Shook, Kev Merrigan, Bob Bruce, Ivan Skipworth, Jim Hannigan, Charlie Furlonger, Brian Frost, Ron Biddell, Wally and Marcia Walters, Pete Ekins, Bill Hughes, Bob Montgomery, Fay and Errol McCormack, Jock Thomson, Pete Hackett. Kneeling L-R: Jules Wills, Trevor Noblet, Neil Pollock, Col Noble, Brian (Gus) Gribble, Chris Lake, Ian Westmore, Frank Burtt, Bob Waring, Blue O'Neill.

USAF Welcome Aussies after First F111 Flight – 22 Jul 68



This photograph relates to RADAR Training at Mather AFB (near Sacramento, California), before proceeding over to Cannon AFB in New Mexico where we completed Weapon Systems Training.



Celebrating completion of RADAR Training, Mather AFB, Sacramento, California, Early Mar 1968. We had presented Capt. Bernie Broske (Our USAF Liaison Officer) with a bunch of pseudo Wings/ribbons for a job well done!



We arrived at Clovis in New Mexico to begin Weapons Systems Training (WST — R Seat) at Cannon AFB, Mar 68, only to be Snowed in. Cannon is about 4,200ft high anyway, so the climate was a little cool.

Of course we accomplished our Flying Training at Nellis AFB, Nevada in 1968.

F111 Training, Nellis AFB, Nevada, 1968.

September 12, 1968 CONTINUED

INSTRUCTIONS — Capt. Donald D. Henry (center) explains the F-111 simulator to two other pilots. Henry is a flight instructor pilot, briefs members of the Royal Australian Air Force on the instrument panel of the aircraft.

TO AIRCRAFT — after pre-flight briefing, Flight Lieutenants Carlo Nodiga and Brian Bullock (see caption) head for aircraft.

Australians Prepare For New Plane

Australians, a United States ally, are the only other nation presently engaged in equipping the Air Force with the revolutionary F-111.

Maintenance and aircrew to man the first production squadron of F-111s are trained here, since receive their instruction at Cannon AFB, N.M.

There are 42 members of the Royal Australian Air Force currently engaged in the F-111 training program here. They are in training to be either navigators or pilots. Two are scheduled to arrive on the F-111 communications system and the remaining four are exchange pilots in the instructor pilot program.

The 48 pilots and navigators complete four classes, the last of which is scheduled to be graduated in November. Pilots train for approximately nine weeks and navigator training lasts about 14. All of the current students are assigned to the 427th Combat Crew Training Squadron, pilot to this graduation will be transferred to the 427th.

The Australians are being trained under the Foreign Military Sales program. Under this program, the United States offers training packages which is completely paid for by the recipient.

CHECK — Flight Lieutenant Ron Beach checks electronic system of F-111. Checking the self system is part of the ground check pilots make before takeoff.

BRIEFING — Capt. Donald D. Henry (center) briefs members of the Royal Australian Air Force on the instrument panel of the aircraft.

Rick Thompson and W/Cdr. Heithaus (right) go to flight.

First Ferry Crews - 1973

I was again fortunate to be selected to be part of the first Ferry crews in 1973 when we did bring the Aircraft home on 1 Jun 73

F111 Training Nellis AFB, Feb 1973

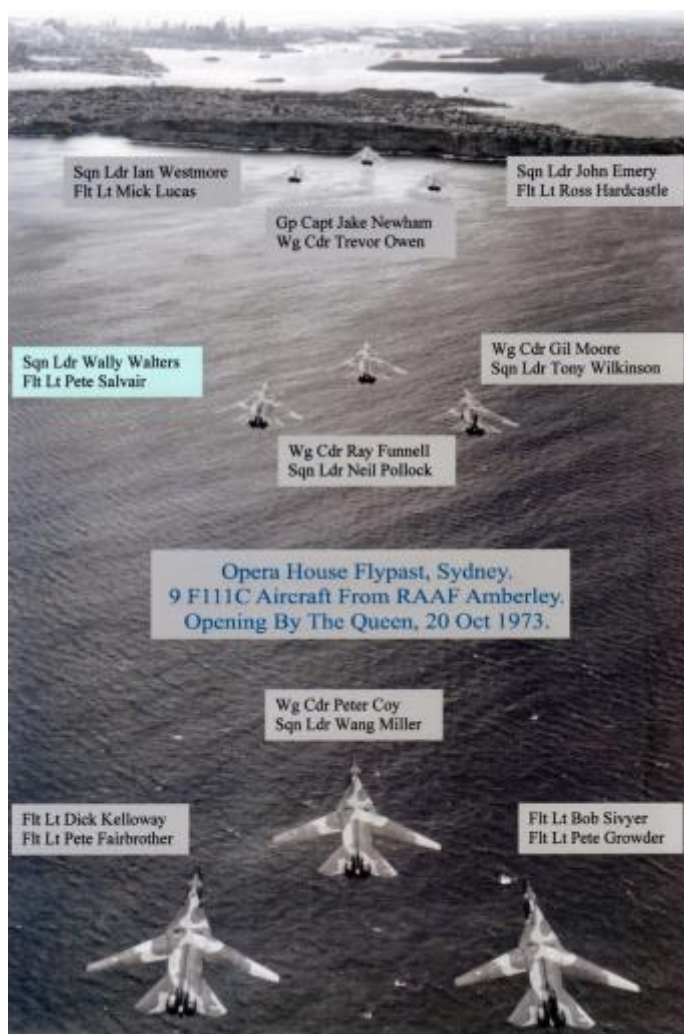


First Ferry Crews, L-R: Jake Newham, Ross Hardcastle, Peter Growder, Ray Funnell, Ian Westmore, John Bushell, Neil Pollock, Bob Sivyer, Trevor Owen, Phil McDonald, John Emery, Wally Walters.



I flew A8-129, No.5 in the first Ferry of 6, on 1 Jun 73. This aircraft is now in the museum at Caloundra. I brought it out to Australia and this aircraft also flew on the last day at Amberley, 3 Dec 10, crewed by Steve Clarke and Ray Seville.

A8-125	GPCAPT J.W. Newham	WGCDR T.C. Owen
A8-126	WGCDR R.G. Funnell	SQNLDR N. Pollock
A8-127	SQNLDR I.M. Westmore	FLTLT J.A. Bushell
A8-128	SQNLDR W.J. Emery	FLTLT R.D. Hardcastle
A8-129	SQNLDR W.F. Walters	FLGOFF P.J. McDonald
A8-130	FLTLT R.T. Sivyer	FLTLT P.W. Growder



My last F111 sortie with John Bushell (Bushy) on Dec 1975; our CO was Gil Moore, and managed to catch up with Bushy again at the decommissioning on 3 Dec 10



With Steve Clarke at the QLD Air Museum, Caloundra, on 28 Jun 13; the Pilot who flew A8-129 last on the day, 3 Dec 10, with myself who flew 129 out to Australia on 1 Jun 73

