

ARTHUR SIBTHORPE

Born 1st April 1927

Sibthorpe enlisted in the RAAF in 1945 in the mustering of General Hand. Later he re-mustered to DMT (Driver Motor Transport) and served in remote areas such as Rabaul with No7 ACS (Airfield Construction Squadron), Port Moresby with Base Squadron and No 2 ACS Pimba, South Australia (the Rocket Range).

In 1952, Sibthorpe was posted to No 10 Pilots Course and trained on Tiger Moths and Wirraways at Archerfield, Uranquinty and Point Cook graduating with wings in 1954.

After graduation Sibthorpe was posted to Williamtown NSW for conversion to Vampires before being posted to Japan, where at Iwakuni, he was checked out on Meteors before flying to K8 in Korea.

Late in 1954, No 77 Squadron flew out of Korea back to Japan for shipment back to Australia. This project required the wings to be removed from the aircraft and all the pieces strapped securely to the flight deck of the HMAS Vengeance for the trip back to Australia. Sibthorpe and the rest of 77 Squadron pilots accompanied the Meteors for the 13 day trip back to Australia. The aircraft were rebuilt at Richmond airbase west of Sydney after which 77 Squadron flew formation flypasts over all capital cities (but not Darwin), whereupon the squadron re-formed at Williamtown.



Japan 1954 – En route
to Korea

In 1956 Sibthorpe was posted to East Sale to undergo No 15 Instructors' Course. At the completion of the course he was posted to No 1 BFTS (Basic Flying Training School) to instruct on Wirraways and Winjeels. In 1958, this period of instruction was interrupted as Sibthorpe was posted to No 2 OTU (Operational Training Unit) to undergo No 5 FCI (Fighter Combat Instructor) course, then back to Uranquinty.

Sibthorpe's next posting was to the instructional staff at CFS (Central Flying School) East Sale.

In 1962, Sibthorpe was again stationed at Williamtown for duties with No 2 OCU (Operational Conversion Unit) in the Weapons Introductory Training Flight.

In 1964, as an Acting Squadron Leader, Sibthorpe took over as Chief Instructor PTF (Parachute Training Flight) at Williamtown.



End of a Mission

In 1968, Sibthorpe completed a FAC (Forward Air Controller) before being posted to the 7th USAF in Vietnam. After a check out in country, his first appointment was with 1st Division US Army (The "Big Red One") at Lai Khe.

The second appointment was with the 82 Airborne Division at Tan Son Nhut, followed by duties with the 25th Division at Dautieng, and finally with the 9th Division at Dong Tam. All missions were flown in the 01 Bird Dog.



Sibthorpe returned to Williamtown in 1969.

In 1970, Sibthorpe was appointed CO (Commanding Officer) No 4 Flight (the FAC Flight).

Squadron Leader Arthur Sibthorpe retired from the RAAF in 1974, aged 47.