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# XF 887 A25 Airspeed Oxford

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## Location

2 MILES SW OF POINT COOK, Wyndham City

## Municipality

WYNDHAM CITY

## Level of significance

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## Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

D7822-0317

## Heritage Listing

Vic. War Heritage Inventory

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Other Names      Former Shiplist ID 826,

Hermes Number    125381

Property Number

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## Veterans Description for Public

The XF 887 A25 Airspeed Oxford was lost on May 11th 1942, 2 miles south west of Point Cook. Designed for all aspects of aircrew training, the prototype Oxford first flew in 1937, and was the military version of the Airspeed Envoy. The latter aircraft had tragic memories for Australians, for it was whilst flying an Envoy that Charles Ulm (an honorary RAAF Flight Lieutenant) disappeared between Oakland and Honolulu during his 1934 Pacific flight attempt. On the outbreak of the Second World War, Oxfords were selected as trainers for the Empire Air Training Scheme (EATS), and a total of 8,751 Oxfords served in Britain, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Rhodesia, and the Middle East.

In Australia, the prefix A25 was allocated for RAAF use but, as was the case with the Fairey Battles, the imported Oxfords retained their RAF serials. Altogether 391 Oxfords were shipped to Australia and the first aircraft, P6878, was received on October 28 1940 and the last, LW999 on March 20th, 1944. These aircraft included the Mk I with an Armstrong Whitworth dorsal turret, and the Mk II which had the turret removed and was employed mainly for pilot and navigation training. Known to trainees as the "Ox Box", the Oxfords were used at EATS schools for instruction in flying, navigation, gunnery, radio and bombing. In addition Mk II versions operated with Nos 1, 2 and 5 Communication Units.

In the years after the Second World War, Oxfords remained with the RAAF as trainers and communication aircraft until they were finally withdrawn from service in 1953. Together with the Avro Anson, the Airspeed Oxford was responsible for all initial multi-engined training in the RAAF for over a decade.

The XF 887 A25 Airspeed Oxford Mk II was a three-seat advanced trainer, with a wooden structure and plywood covering. It was powered by two 370 hp Armstrong Siddley Cheetah X. It spanned 53 ft 4 inches; length, 34 ft 6 inches; height, 11 ft 1 inch. When empty it weighed 5,380 lb; or when loaded, 7,600 lb. Its maximum performance speed was 188 mph; its climb, 960 ft/min; service ceiling, 19,500 ft.

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