

## CURRICULM VITAE

### **GROUP CAPTAIN M. COTTRELL, DFC**

(aka Mac the FAC)

Group Captain Macaulay (Mac) Cottrell was born on 23 May 1945 and educated in Launceston, Tasmania. After a ten-month period in the Department of Civil Aviation at Launceston Airport, he joined the Royal Australian Air Force on 25 October 1963 to undergo No. 52 Pilots' Course at No. 1 Basic Flying Training School, RAAF Base Point Cook.

On graduation from No. 1 Applied Flying Training School, RAAF Base Pearce in March 1965, he was posted to RAAF Base Williamtown, NSW for conversion to Sabre fighter aircraft at No. 2 Operational Conversion Unit. For the next six years he flew Sabres in Nos. 76, 3, 79 and 77 Squadrons and Mirages in Nos. 76 and 75 Squadrons operating from RAAF Bases at Williamtown, Darwin and Butterworth and the Royal Thai Air Force Base Ubon in Thailand. From late 1970 to June 1972, he was Mess Manager of the Officers' Mess at RAAF Butterworth and Base Flying Safety Officer at RAAF Williamtown

During the period 9 April to 24 October 1968, Group Captain Cottrell was assigned to the United States 7<sup>th</sup> Air Force in the Republic of South Vietnam as a Forward Air Controller serving in III Corps with the 19<sup>th</sup> Tactical Air Support Squadron. After completing an in-country conversion on the Cessna O-1E Bird-Dog at the 504<sup>th</sup> Theatre Indoctrination School at Phan Rang, RVN, he was assigned to the US Army 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division at Lai Khe, RVN. During this tour, he received an immediate award of the Distinguished Flying Cross in recognition of his gallantry and professional skill in operations against the enemy near Lai Khe on 10 June 1968. In 1969, he was tasked with the development of the inaugural airborne Forward Air Controller Course at, the then, Air Support Unit at RAAF Williamtown.

In mid 1972, Group Captain Cottrell was posted to RAAF Base Richmond and flew the Caribou with No. 35 Squadron in Australia and Nos. 35 and 38 Squadron Detachments A in Papua New Guinea. This was followed in 1975 by a posting to Air Movements Training and Development Unit, RAAF Base Richmond as Support Flight Commander. After completing a Physiological Training Officer Course in the United States in September 1975, he was posted to Headquarters Richmond as Base Flying Safety Officer and Life Support Training Officer. During this period, he completed a Lockheed C-130A Hercules conversion at No. 36 Squadron. A posting to No. 38 Squadron as a Flight Commander again flying the Caribou followed in February 1979 until January 1981.

Graduating from RAAF Staff College in December 1981, Group Captain Cottrell was posted to Chief of Air Force Material Division, Air Force Office. Initially he was Project Manager for New Projects and in 1983 was appointed Project Manager of Project Air 5050 - Mirage Refurbishment Program. He was seconded to Headquarters, Papua New Guinea Defence Force, Port Moresby from May 1984 to January 1987 as Director Air Operations.

After graduating from Joint Services Staff College in June 1987, he was appointed Officer Commanding Base Support Wing, Richmond. During this tenure, he was the Military Logistics Coordinator for the 1988 Australian Bicentennial Air Show and completed the New South Wales section of the Industrial Mobilisation Course in 1989. A posting as Director Support Services at Headquarters Logistic Command, Melbourne followed in January 1991.

In August 1992, Group Captain Cottrell was appointed Officer Commanding Base Support Wing Darwin, Commander RAAF Northern Area and Aide-de Camp to the Governor-General at RAAF Base Darwin. On 1 July 1994, his appointment changed to Officer Commanding 321 Air Base Wing. A posting as Director Jindalee Project Requirements in the Defence Material Division followed in January 1995. He transferred to the RAAF General Reserve (Reserve Staff Group) in January 1998 and worked part-time until December 2006 as a Project Manager in the Jindalee Operational Radar Network and Australian Defence Air Traffic System Projects for the Defence Materiel Organisation. He was an Oral History Officer and researcher with

the Office of Air Force History until he transferred to the Retired List on 23 May 2011 after serving 47.5 years with the Royal Australian Air Force.

Prior to joining the RAAF, Group Captain Cottrell was a member of the Air Training Corps where he was awarded a RAAF Flying Scholarship in 1962 and qualified as a Private Pilot on the de Havilland Chipmunk in May 1963.

With over 4600 hours flying experience, he maintained a Commercial Pilot's Licence with a Command Instrument Rating on five light twin-engine aircraft through the Aircrew Flying Currency Scheme until his transfer to the Reserve Staff Group. He ceased flying in 1998.

Group Captain Cottrell has been a member of the Returned Services League of Australia since 1968 and RAAF Association since 1975. He was President of RAAF Association Victoria Division in 1992/1993 and served, until recently, as a committee member of the Australian Capital Territory Division. Joining Legacy in 1988, Group Captain Cottrell has been a member of Canberra Legacy since 1996. He has been Chairman of the Fund-Raising Committee, President from 2003 to 2005, Immediate Past-President and Vice President, a member of the Finance and Fundraising Committees and currently Chairman of the Functions Committee. From 2008 to 2013, he was Vice-President of the RAAF Staff College Association.

Group Captain Cottrell is a keen golfer, enjoys walking and has a strong interest RAAF history. The publishing of brief histories on RAAF Base Richmond and the Headquarters Logistic Command Officers' Mess were two of his initiatives. Prior to his retirement from the Royal Australian Air Force, he recorded the oral histories of senior RAAF personnel involved in the Middle East Area of Operations (Iraq), UNEF 2, ACMFO (Sinai) and UNTAC (Cambodia) for the Office of Air Force History. He continues his research of Northern Territory airfields during World War II – “Then and Now”.

Group Captain Cottrell and Frances Noel Fogo were married at Kurri-Kurri, NSW on 2 August 1969, lives in Canberra and was widowed on 10 September 2021. They have two children, Lara Jane and Timothy David. Lara resides in Melbourne as an accounts manager and Tim and his wife Phaedra are now domiciled in the United States. Tim is employed as a Clay Modeller with General Motors in Detroit.

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