

## WWII Railway Siding, Stores Depot, Oval and Cricket Pitch, Noonamah

### Background Historical Information



Prepared by the Heritage Branch, April 2010

If you require further information about this background historical information, please contact:

Heritage Branch  
Department of Natural Resources, Environment, the Arts and Sport  
P.O. Box 496  
Palmerston NT 0831  
Phone: 08 8999 8981

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Disclaimer:

The material presented in this report is believed to be correct at the time of writing and is provided for information purposes only.

Cover Photo: Squadron Leader 'Bluey' Truscott and Flight Lieutenant Kerville go to the crease at Strauss, 20 January 1943. Truscott was a noted Melbourne Districts cricketer and is wearing his Melbourne Cricket Club cap. AWM Neg. No. NWA0034.

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## 1. Introduction

This background historical information was compiled in December 2006 as part of a heritage assessment report prepared on a number of sites around Strauss Airstrip, Noonamah, including; a WWII cricket pitch, the Noonamah railway siding, encampment and stores depot for the Heritage Advisory Council, as per the requirements under the *Heritage Conservation Act*.

## 2. Location

The Noonamah railway siding, stores depot and camp are located on Section 418 Hundred of Strangways. The siding is centred on 8598768N 725650E and the Stores Depot is centred on 8598635N 725575 E.

The cricket pitch and oval are located on Section 423 Hundred of Strangways and centred on 8598046N 725508E. Figure 1 shows the approximate location of these sites.

## 3. Historical Overview

### Background to Strauss Airstrip

Originally known as the 27-Mile (actually 28 miles from Darwin), the area occupied by Strauss Airstrip was included in the 1869 surveys of Port Darwin and its hinterland by George Goyder's men. In 1907-08, Oscar and Evan Herbert took up Agricultural Leases in the area named 'Koolpinyah' by the local Aboriginal people after a large waterhole. Another Herbert brothers' property to the west was named Humpty Doo.

The site for a roadside fighter strip at the 28-Mile peg was selected during the *Aerodrome Development Program* in early 1942 to construct a number of roadside strips south of Darwin when a R.A.A.F. Instruction proposed that five major aerodromes were to be located between Adelaide River and Birdum, with as many roadside strips as possible for the dispersal of aircraft from R.A.A.F. Darwin in the event of sudden Japanese raids.

Working from pastoral and other maps available through the Department of Lands, the team of Flight Lieutenants Yeaman and Brogan selected a number of sites, including those that later became Strauss and Livingstone airstrips, and Hughes airfield among others.

Initial works at the 28-Mile were undertaken by the US Army's 808<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion (Aviation), with some assistance by Australian personnel of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Field Company Royal Australian Engineers, then based at the Noonamah railway siding, and the US Army's 147<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment. Some work was carried out by hand - including the use of earth filled drums as rollers - until the arrival of heavy engineering equipment by rail in late March.

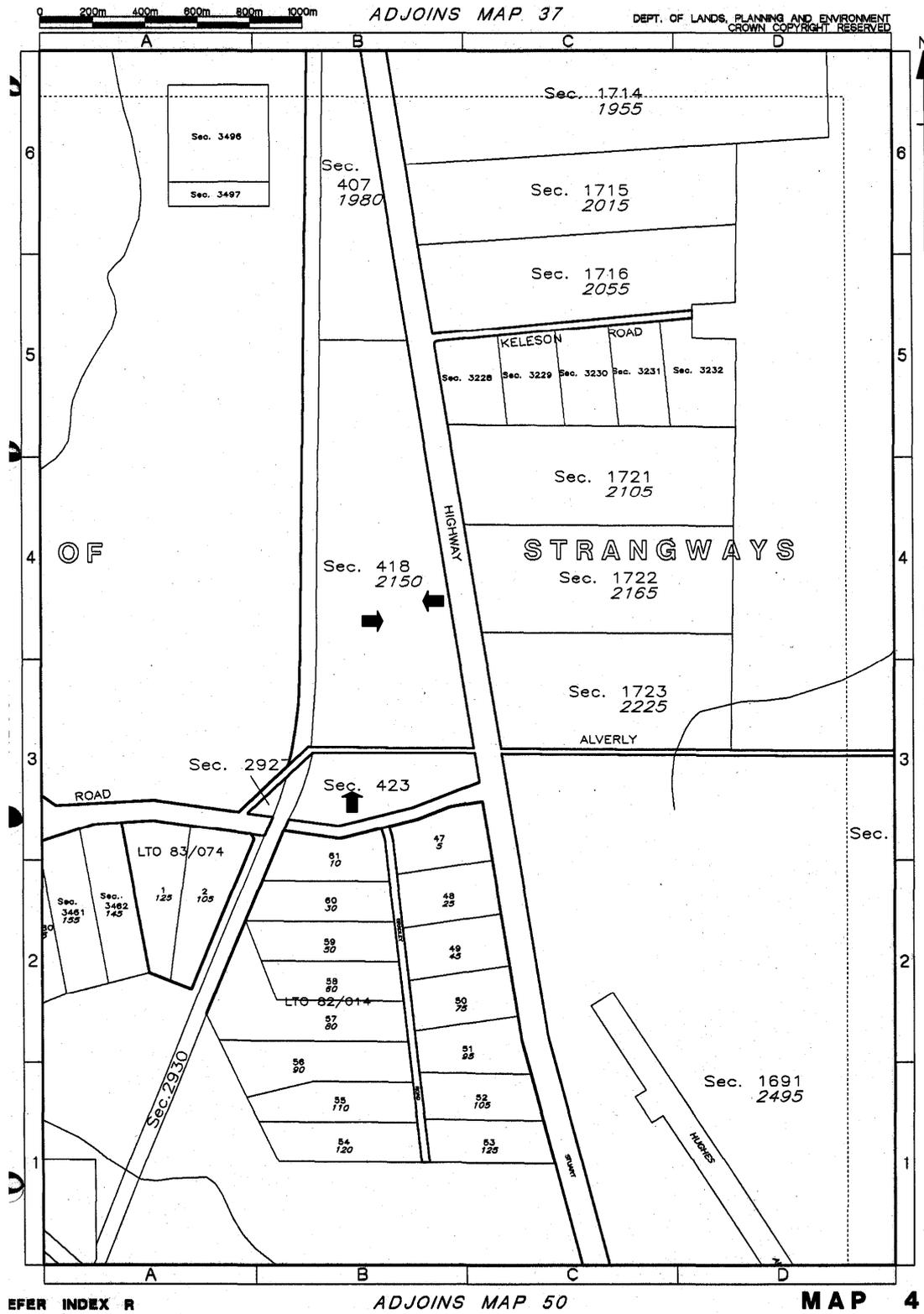


Figure 1. Locations of the Noonamah Siding and Stores Depot on Sec. 418 and the Cricket pitch and oval on Sec. 423. Note. Positions are approximate – GPS coordinates are detailed above.

A runway 5,000 feet and 100 feet wide along with 2,000 feet of taxiways and inserts for twelve fighters was developed at a cost of £62,151 in American funds. Later the site was expanded to accommodate 46 aircraft. By April 1942 the site, by then known as the Humpty Doo, or 28-Mile 'strip, was considered ready for occupation.

Personnel and P-40E (Kittyhawk) aircraft of the 8<sup>th</sup> Squadron 49<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Group USAAF moved into their new home on 11 May 1942, in what Lt. Jim Morehead described as a strip bulldozed alongside the highway south of Darwin...Taxiways were built that led from the end of the runway into the woods to revetments covered in camouflage netting. They informally named it Strauss in honour of their former Commander, Captain Allison W. Strauss, a veteran of the Philippines campaign, who was killed in aerial combat over Darwin on 27 April.

Over the following months the 8<sup>th</sup> Squadron intercepted Japanese aircraft over Darwin. Despite the primitive conditions for servicing aircraft, the unit scored a large number of the 70 kills credited to the Group and its sister squadrons, the 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, in its seven months in the Darwin area.

In September 1942 the three squadrons were ordered to New Guinea, and by the 30<sup>th</sup> most American personnel had departed. Australian Kittyhawk squadrons filled the gap left by the Americans. The P-40 Kittyhawks of No. 76 Squadron, commanded by Squadron Leader Keith 'Bluey' Truscott, arrived on 9 October, and No. 77 Squadron established itself at Livingstone airstrip further south.

Anti-Aircraft defences also arrived during September and 1 Aust. Light A-A (LAA) Battery set up its 40mm Bofors guns around the airfield perimeter. Earlier defences had comprised .50" machine guns of the 102<sup>nd</sup> Coastal Artillery Battery US Army, and those set up on homemade mounts and manned by American 8<sup>th</sup> Squadron personnel. The defences were later bolstered at various times by the 2/1<sup>st</sup>, 149<sup>th</sup>, 159<sup>th</sup> 161<sup>st</sup> and 160<sup>th</sup> LAA Batteries. Heavy anti-aircraft defences were provided by 22 and 135 HAA Batteries north and west of Hughes Airfield.

During the changeover period from USAAF to RAAF units the opportunity was taken to seal the runway and to oil and gravel the taxiways and aircraft inserts. Personnel of No. 1 Airfield Construction Squadron RAAF took only six days from 30 October to complete the task.

Despite continuous Japanese night raids over Darwin, and one over Strauss on the night of 26 November, No. 76 Squadron saw little action. Squadron Leader Truscott was credited with the downing of a Japanese 'Betty' bomber on the night of 21 January 1943, and on the 29<sup>th</sup> the unit moved to Onslow in West Australia.

In mid-January 1943 the personnel and Spitfires of No. 1 Fighter Wing comprising Nos. 452 and 457 Squadrons RAAF and No. 54 (RAF) Squadron

under group Captain A. L. Walters arrived in the Darwin area to maintain the aerial defences.

Number 452 Squadron RAAF under Squadron Leader Ray Thorold-Smith moved into Strauss on 1 February. In its first major action against the Japanese on 15 March, Thorold-Smith was shot down and killed. Squadron Leader Ron McDonald took command a fortnight later.

Over the following months the Spitfires scrambled from Strauss to intercept incoming raids over the Darwin and Fenton Airfield areas, accounting for thirteen enemy aircraft confirmed. The last recorded raid was on 12 November when a No. 457 Squadron pilot, Flying Officer J. H. Smithson, claimed two 'Betty' bombers and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Reconnaissance flights by the enemy continued into 1944 and No. 452 Squadron was credited with a 'Dinah' on 12 June, though by that time the unit had moved north to Sattler Airstrip at the 20-Mile.

Strauss was not vacant for long. One of two new RAF Spitfire squadrons, No. 549 (RAF) Squadron, moved in with its Mk VIII aircraft on 15 June but despite some uneventful 'scrambles' the unit was relegated to what was essentially a training role. The squadron did, however, participate in a ground attack mission to Timor on 27 November in concert with its sister unit No. 548 Squadron.

Both 548 and 549 Squadrons also deployed to Truscott Airfield in the Kimberleys along with No. 54 (RAF) Squadron. In late 1944 it was discovered that engine coolant pipes in the Spitfires were corroding and No. 549 Squadron reluctantly handed its aircraft over to No. 54 Squadron while the problem was rectified. Most of the aircraft sat on the ground well into 1945.

The RAF units moved up to Darwin Civil 'Drome at Parap and apart from a brief deployment to Truscott in July saw no action before the Japanese surrendered on 15 August.

Following war's end, Strauss was abandoned but for some Allied Works Council employees and disposal of the airstrip dragged on for a number of years. It was not until 13 July 1953 that the Secretary, Department of Air, confirmed that a number of airstrips held in the category 'to be retained but not maintained', including Strauss, were no longer required,

Official approval for the disposal of the remaining RAAF assets was recommended in February 1955 and a request that the reservation of Strauss be cancelled was made on 23 September two years later. It took a further year for a response confirming that the property had reverted to the Northern Territory Administration with effect 17 October 1957. Any compensation to the Herbert brothers from whom, the land had been acquired was not recorded.

It appeared that the bureaucratic struggle to dispose of a site that was instrumental in the defence of Darwin during the Japanese air raids of 1942 and 1943 was over. Strauss was abandoned to the occasional visitor and souvenir hunters.

In 1965 a group of local businessmen proposed using the airstrip for light aircraft. In a letter to the Northern Territory Administrator, R. L. Dean, the group put forward its proposals. A rather quicker response than normal outlined a number of restrictions in the use of Strauss airstrip, including the need for Air Traffic Control, the width of the strip, and appropriate radio equipment. The bottom line, however, was that, We are of the opinion that the establishment of an aerodrome at Strauss should not be encouraged.

### **Noonamah Siding**

On the morning of 19 February 1942, the same force that had attacked Pearl Harbour 75 days previously raided Darwin, leaving it devastated. A noon raid by 54 bombers from Ambon and the Celebes targeted the RAAF Station causing more deaths and damage. In all 252 deaths are accounted for, and damage to infrastructure and materiel was considerable.

With the raids on Darwin came a degree of confusion and this has been widely documented. Importantly, however, the Japanese failed to take advantage of the initial raids to a degree; they were more a cover for the invasion of Timor on 20 February and a neutralisation of Darwin as a strategic base from which the Allies could mount offensive operations. Whilst the Japanese continued to push aggressively across a wide front throughout the NEI, the Allies were given a breathing space, which allowed a short period of consolidation - notwithstanding a perceived threat of imminent invasion.

A Darwin Defence Plan had been initiated a year earlier, on 8 April 1941, when Army HQ issued an *Operational Instruction, No 13*, setting out the basis for area commanders to develop their district defence plans. Headquarters '...anticipated that Japanese aggression would commence with operations to isolate Australia and maybe landings at New Guinea, Papua, Thursday Island and/or Darwin.', according to Graham McKenzie Smith in Volume 2 of his work *Australia's Forgotten Army*. The Plan was later implemented and refined as the situation in the Pacific deteriorated.

From as early as November 1941 the military commenced its occupation of the area in the vicinity of the future airstrip at the 27-Mile. The site was officially known as Firdan, named by 2/2 Railway Construction Company who built it for their previous posting in the Middle East. Firdan became more commonly known during the war years as Noonamah - an Aboriginal word meaning 'plenty of tucker and good things'.

It is not known for certain when the Aboriginal meaning may have been applied, however it was timely - Noonamah became a huge depot supplied by road convoys and a railway siding complex constructed at the 27-Mile by 2/2 Aust Railway Construction Coy., AIF. Two miles south, another siding, known

as Noonamah Siding, was also constructed in early 1942 on a spur line leading east from the main line.

The Noonamah spur line was constructed in early 1942 as a part of the military activity in the area of the roadside airstrips and Hughes Airfield and to the north at Firdan (now Noonamah). This is in part confirmed by Howard Pearce in his 1983 report, *Alice Springs - Darwin Railway. Heritage Sites Impact Statement*, that it was constructed to supply the nearby airfields identified as a component of the Aerodrome Development Programme.

According to J. Y. Harvey in his *The Never Never Line*, the siding was built in the form of a triangle with a vehicle unloading ramp at its far end. Constructed at the 29 miles, 16 chains mark from Darwin it also served as a RAAF depot. The spur line was 776ft (236.5m) in length with an end loading ramp and a side loading ramp.

The site developed into one comprising three Sidney Williams huts, mess and associated facilities and accommodation and ablutions, latrines, and a range of facilities. A small stores depot was also constructed on the western perimeter of Strauss Airstrip adjacent to the North Australia Railway to service the resident squadrons.

Shortly after acquisition of the 28-Mile site, work began using troop labour to clear the airstrip as the unit designated to undertake the works, the US Army's 808th Engineer Battalion (Aviation) was held up in the Katherine area due to the incapacity of the North Australia Railway to transport its heavy equipment.

By March increasing Japanese raids on Darwin, the lack of air defence and the delay in constructing the roadside strips became of such concern to Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Burnett that on 14 March 1942 he wrote in a Memo relating that,

*8. (10) Road Strips. There appears to be a great delay in regard to these, and it should be looked upon as a priority project.*

(File 36/501/279 (W19). *NWA Intelligence Summaries, NWA Interviews*. File 3, folio 329. Held RAAF Historical Section, Canberra)

However, the 808th Engineers had arrived by rail and road convoy shortly prior to this and had begun work, though without the use of their heavy equipment, which eventually arrived by rail at Noonamah Siding immediately to the south of the new airstrip site. A detachment of the 23rd Field Company RAE whose personnel were erecting water storage stands and tanks at the junction with the main line greeted the arrival. Harry Geary, a former member of the 23rd Fd. Coy. recalled that at

*...the Noonamah Rail Spur Line. (in) early March 1942 Two Platoon 23rd Fld Coy Engineers welcomed the USA Army 808 Battalion Engineers...on that well laden train. However...we had no brass bands to welcome them GIs only 'good day' Yanks. Our shirts and shorts were wet on clothes lines. Most of our blokes had lap laps on. Yanks must have thought we were a wild lot with no uniforms on... (our) visitors did arrive with Camel cigs for their new found Aussie mates.*

(Harry Geary to author, 12 June 1998, with accompanying photo of arrival of train and American vehicles and troops)



Plate 1. *The American 808<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion arriving at Noonamah Siding and being greeted by Australian troops, March 1942. (Geary)*

In his work *The Army and the defence of Fortress Darwin*, Robert Rayner records that

*...the 23rd Field Company was now operating in both Darwin and Noonamah...the Noonamah group was engaged in the construction of a watering point to service troop arrivals to the area...the movement of the 7 Infantry Battalion A.M.F. to the area was part of the attempt by the AHQ Melbourne to rush troops to the combat area. The last flight of the Battalion had arrived at Noonamah siding on 28 February 1942.*

(Rayner:242)

The detachment of the 23rd Fd Coy RAE constructed some of the facilities there and as Harry Geary recalled in erecting the water storage tank stands, that

*...when my friends from Two Platoon and I poured the wet concrete in we did discuss putting markings in the newly laid (cement) '23 Fld Coy RAE AIF'. But one officer said no...(but I) did mark out in concrete B-H, S-G, H-B-A-K, G-G, H-G 2P 23rd RAE 1942. We did see some US troops with their cameras after the watertower was completed and filled with 2000 gallons of water and the big load on the platform tested. One of the blokes said I hope the Yanks don't flatten all that hard work for us with one of their planes - they sure passed by very close. 56*

(Correspondence, Harry Geary to author, 10 October 1993 and 8 July 2000)

Meanwhile, the 808th Engineers continued their work on preparing the airstrips at the 27-Mile and 34-Mile sites, along with a number of other airfields throughout the region. By 15 July when they were ready to leave for

Port Moresby they had cleared, graded and gravelled airstrips at Katherine, Pine Creek, Burkholder (later McDonald), Fenton, the 34-Mile, Hughes, and the 27-Mile or Humpty Doo, though none were sealed due to an acute shortage of bitumen.

The RAAF's No. 1 Mobile Works Squadron was also involved in the construction and maintenance of the 27-Mile airstrip and some of the facilities there. The unit arrived in Darwin on 14 March 1942 and were allocated a variety of tasks in Darwin, at the RAAF Station and at the roadside strips and other airfields in the region.

Personnel of No. 1 Mobile Works Squadron carried out some works to the airfield including treating the runway and taxiways with oil sprayed from a homemade spray assembly to keep down dust. The unit also erected revetments for fighter aircraft, using mainly bush timbers and salvaged corrugated iron with wire netting strung over the revetments and inserts for camouflage.

There is some evidence that the runway was later partly bitumised, along with Hughes and Livingstone. The bitumen was transported to Noonamah Siding from where it was distributed to the works units. Many of the used, and some partially emptied, 44-gallon (200 l) drums remain at the siding and are thought to have been used by the Allied Works Council in 1944 and 1945.

In September 1942 the army proposed building a five mile (eight km) branch line to serve an alternative port site at Middle Arm near the old Southport township site. The line was to lead from a point south of Noonamah Siding and was expected to transport some 6 000 tonnes of materiel each month. However, the plan was later modified to 3 miles (six km) leading in a seven chain curve from the southern loop of Noonamah Siding. (Harvey:166-7, 318)

Initial construction works on the branch line commenced in June 1943. Some line was cleared and earthworks completed however no rails (salvaged from the stockpile intended for the proposed Daly Waters extension from Birdum) were laid. In August the Commonwealth Railways were officially informed that the project would not proceed. (Harvey:318)

The siding was used extensively throughout the war as a point for embarking and disembarking military personnel and equipment as a satellite to the complex at Firdan, which served to service the huge supply depot and ancillary units there. There are numerous references to Noonamah Siding in published works associated with military activities in the area during World War II, and in Rayner (*The Army and the Defence of Fortress Darwin and Darwin and Northern Territory Force*) in particular.

Noonamah Siding remained in use throughout the war and was an important stop for trains bringing in personnel and materials for the resident units in the area and troops bound for the nearby 108 Convalescent Unit at Berry Springs. Post war the buildings and other materiel were disposed of in the disposal sales and the siding and spur line fell into disuse.

### **Strauss cricket pitch**

Recreation has been an important part of military life and the Australian serviceman in particular has a reputation for being able to organise an impromptu game of football, cricket or other sport at a moment's notice – with or without official sanction.

During World War II the situation was no different, however it took on a more official status as the war moved north and the tedium of military life in the Territory reduced units, and in particular army units, to little more than sources of labour and participation in seemingly never ending exercises.

Officially sanctioned formal sporting events were arranged at locations throughout the Territory and held at major camp areas, with high ranking officers attending and in many cases officiating. Race meetings were also held and proceeds forwarded to the Australian Comforts Fund and other charitable organisations. Betting was not restricted to horse or donkey racing but was also a part of the athletics carnivals and other sporting contests, with the proceeds again going to charities or service organisations.

With the large number of units established in the Top End of the Territory and in the Darwin area in particular, sporting contests held an important place in maintaining morale and fitness in personnel. In the area south of Darwin from Noonamah extending to the 38-Mile roadside camps, some 160 units, predominately Australian but with some US Army and air force units, were resident over the war years.

One unit, 27 Infantry Battalion AMF, along with 43 Infantry Battalion and other units, was responsible for establishing a number of sporting facilities in the area to the south of Strauss Airstrip, and the Berry Springs rest camp in particular.

Personnel of 27 Battalion arrived at the Winnellie Camp on Darwin's outskirts on 15 December 1941. By the time the move was completed the unit strength was 34 officers and 1,085 other ranks. The unit was assigned defensive duties around the Lee Point Sector south to Ludmilla Creek, McMillans and the RAAF Station.

During the 19 February 1942 Japanese morning air raid personnel of 27 Battalion were engaged in firing on the enemy aircraft. In the noon raid they were restricted to watching the RAAF Station being bombed by 54 Japanese bombers. Following the raids personnel were engaged in recovery operations and maintaining their defensive positions around the coast in expectation of possible enemy landings by sea or by parachute.

On 23 February the pioneer platoon of 27 Battalion was sent to the 20-Mile peg to begin construction of a new camp site, however the order was reversed as they arrived at the site. In mid-April the unit instead moved from its headquarters at Winnellie to McMillans Farm site on the northern perimeter of the RAAF Station.

On 2 May 1942, 27 Battalion moved from the Darwin defensive area to the 49-Mile peg, as part of 3 Infantry Brigade along with 'M' Anti-Tank Battery who camped opposite them on the western side of the main north-south road.

From the new camp 27 Battalion personnel commenced what was one of a number of exercises in the area, this one to Rum Jungle, whilst others were as far afield as Adelaide River, Berry Springs, Lucy Mine, Charlotte River, Tumbling Waters and the 3 Brigade HQ at the 17-Mile.

In July an administrative change came into effect whereby all AMF and AIF units were to use 'Aust' after their prefix numbers. Accordingly 27 Battalion became 27 Aust Infantry Battalion AMF, however the exercises continued whilst personnel were also called on to assist with other works in the area.

In August 27 Battalion provided personnel to assist in the construction of a new Vehicle Depot and a Decontamination Unit. In late October D Company personnel were involved in construction works associated with the Berry Springs Rest Camp (later 108 Aust Convalescent Depot from 16 August 1943 to 15 May 1945) under Capt. B. A. Magarey, along with 43 Battalion personnel. (Background notes above generally from Rayner and Alford notes)

It was also around this time that a more formal cricket pitch was proposed for unit sports contests in the area. With personnel engaged in either unending exercises or construction works, the task was assigned to a small group of 27 Battalion personnel as punishment for some minor indiscretion according to one of the group, former Private, Vic Borowicki, of A Company. (*Litchfield Times* 11 September 2002 and *NT News* 1 May 2005)



Plate 7. Personnel of 27 Aust. Infantry Battalion undertaking construction work at the Berry Springs Rest Camp, November 1942. Photo: AWM Neg. 027818.

The working party cleared the area for the pitch immediately south of Strauss Airstrip, with the proposed railway line to its north and the track to Berry Springs to its south. Vic and his working party constructed it using concrete mixed from cement 'acquired' from Darwin or an Allied Works Council party in the area. Vic recalled that there was a small group of three or four men working on the pitch and that the conditions were very unpleasant. Whilst they were working on the pitch, Vic also recalled that a number of other personnel had been sent to Adelaide River to break brumbies for use in New Guinea. (Pers. Comm. Borowicki/Alford, 6 December 2006)

On 25 March 1943 27 Battalion was advised by Warning Order of a move south to the South Australia L of C Area and preparations were made at the 49½- Mile camp. The first group of 300 personnel moved out for Adelaide by train from Noonamah Siding four days later. They were followed shortly after by the remaining personnel and after a period of leave the unit was posted to Queensland and on to New Guinea.

The cricket pitch constructed by Vic Borowicki and his party remained in use by various units including the RAAF and RAF squadrons at Strauss and nearby airstrips over the remaining war years. Following the war it was abandoned along with most of the camps in the area.

There are no indications it was revealed in the post war years, even with the development of the Cox Peninsula Road along the old Berry Springs track in the 1950s. It was not until 2002 that the pitch was 'discovered' and the area cleared for an Anzac Day cricket match involving local clubs and Darwin based military units.

The cricket matches have become a traditional Anzac Day activity since and in 2004 the family of Captain Allison W. Strauss, after whom the airstrip was named, visited from America and unveiled a plaque at the cricket pitch.

### **Extraneous sites**

A number of fragmented sites are located within the area bounded by the Stuart Highway, Cox Peninsula Road, the western extremity of the cricket oval site and the southern extremity of the declared heritage place.

These sites are small with artefact scatters confirming occupation during World War II but are not considered as being diagnostic over existing scatters within the declared heritage place.

A number of sites were also located on the eastern aspect of the Stuart Highway prior to the highway duplication project. These were documented in a report, *Strauss Airstrip Duplication of the Stuart Highway from Noonamah to Cox Peninsula Road Documentation of WWII Sites* (Alford, May 2004)

## 4. Site Description

### **Noonamah Siding and Stores Depot site**

The siding and stores depot sites are relatively intact examples of WWII sites not previously assessed. The siding features the platform and buffers and railway alignment, which includes the earthen foundations to the spur line and a number of artefacts. Included among these are the suggested foundations to the water tank stand detailed by Harry Geary.

(Correspondence, Harry Geary to author, 10 October 1993 and 8 July 2000:Assessment page 8)

The railway siding comprises a formed concrete platform approximately 45 metres in length, terminating at a formed concrete stop fitted with a buffer assembly of railway line originally faced with heavy timber and faced with local rock.

Adjacent to and south of the siding are a number of concrete foundation slabs including those for the technical and domestic activities associated with the railway siding and stores depot.

Those slabs associated with the technical site include power generating and distribution, workshop, latrine and a small kitchen facility. The domestic area includes foundation slabs to accommodation, kitchen and messing facilities, ablutions and latrines.

A line of empty and part emptied 44-gallon bitumen drums some 65 metres in length extends in a line generally E-W south of the technical area and west of the domestic camp site.

The stores depot site is accessed via an oiled gravel roadway terminating in a loop that contains three concrete foundation slabs to stores buildings each 20' x 65' (6.1m x 19.81m), which are indicative of Sidney Williams huts. However, the corners to each display circular indents confirming the use of bush timber uprights. It is contended that these buildings were of timber construction with c.g.i. roofing, and this is in part confirmed by artefact scatters of nails and window hinges.

Artefact material previously noted at the overall site included metal strapping of the type used on packaging, small hinges, building fittings, domestic refuse and some personal items. Wartime beer bottles are prevalent throughout the site at random concentrations. During initial inspections of the site in the mid-1980s a number of bricks associated with early settlement and probably used as ships' ballast were noted and suggested to have been used as dunnage to raise stores above the ground. These have since disappeared.

The siding, spur line and stores depot sites provide an almost intact assemblage of remains that collectively depict the use of the site and its importance during World War II.

Figure 1 and Plates 2-6 refer.

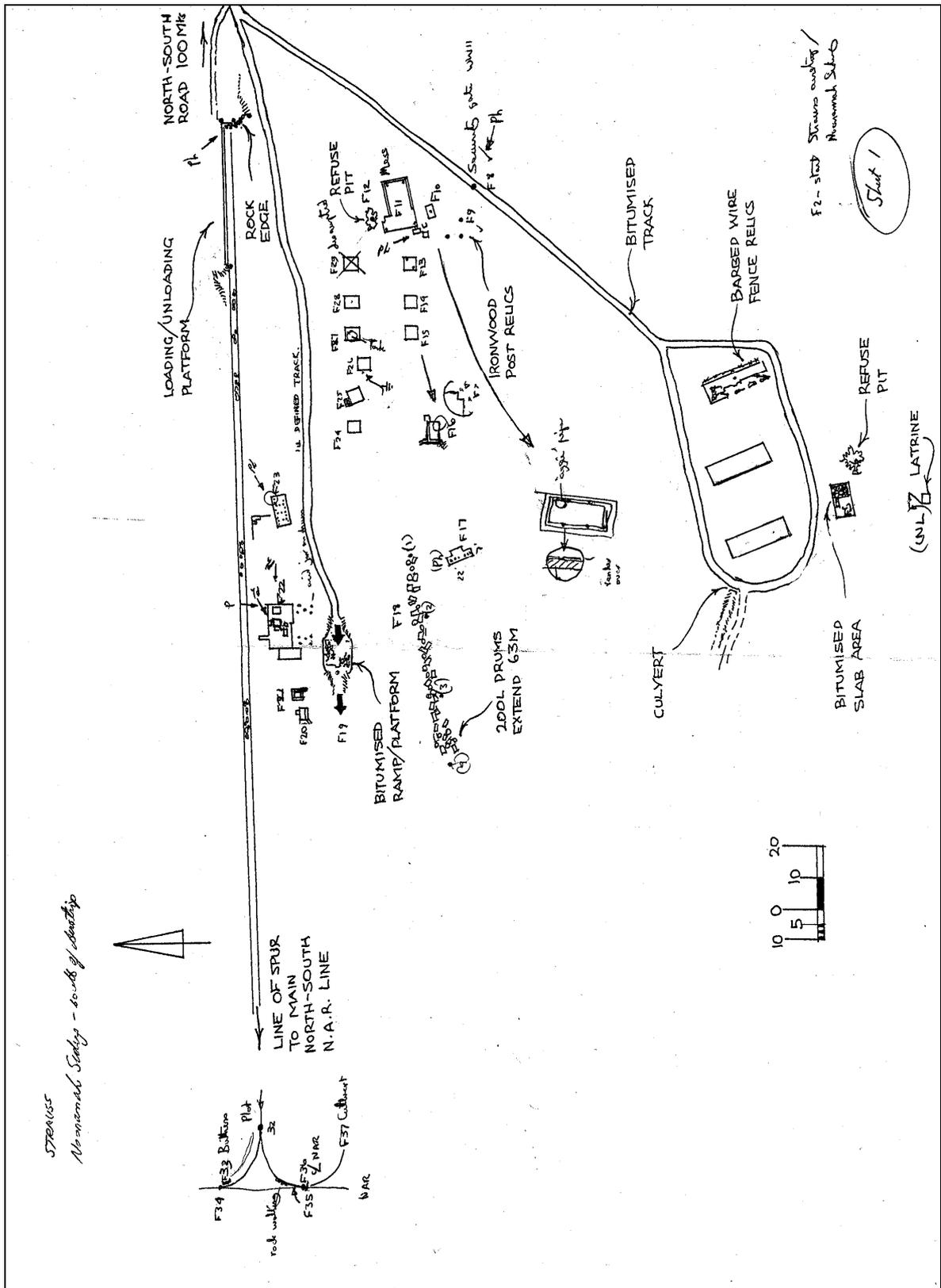


Figure 2. Site plan of Noonamah Siding and Stores Depot site (Alford 1987. Confirmed Guse/Alford 2003, Alford 2006)



Plate 2. Noonamah Siding viewed E-W along the platform and former line.



Plate 3. Detail of the buffer assembly at the platform end.



Plate 4. Concrete slab to the site of the Stores Depot viewed N-S.



Plate 5. Foundation slab to an accommodation block. The concrete pillars indicate the building was elevated with timber bearers and joists forming the base.



Plate 6. Power generating and distribution building with stand for generating set in foreground and c. 19<sup>th</sup> Century ship's tank at centre rear.

### **Cricket pitch**

The cricket pitch is located on an oval formed by the clearance of the surrounding vegetation of the open tropical woodland. The pitch itself is a standard 22 yards (20.1168m) formed with cement with laterite aggregate and is in very good condition with only minor faults appearing through slight subsidence.

A pair of flagpoles was installed as part of an organised visit by members of the family of Captain Allison W. Strauss, the Commander of the USAAF 8<sup>th</sup> Squadron 49<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group, who was killed in combat over Darwin on 27 April 1942. A large rock lies between the poles and into this is set a plaque dedicated by the Strauss family members on 25 April 2004.



Plate 8. Overview of oval and cricket pitch, viewed SW-NE.



Plate 9. Flagpoles and rock installed for plaque dedication ceremony, April 2004.



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