

FRANKLIN ROUNDUP

Living Legend Gus Winckel Honoured At Pukekohe RSA



Doug McNally President RSA Pukekohe welcomes Capt Gus Winckel (ret) to the hand-over ceremony



Captain Gus Winckel officially gifting his Bronze Lion (BL) and Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) to Lt. Col. Caro Lefevre, Defence Attaché Netherlands. A combination of these medals is rarely seen.

Some of the items gifted By Gus Winckel to the Dutch Military Museum including his flying bag and log books that survived two front line tours, many battles and over 5,000 military hours.



(right) A part of world history - One of the many amazing items gifted, Gus's NZ Commercial Flying Licence No#:137, also gifted his Dutch Licence which is No#:35 issued in 1937.

An International Historic Event For Pukekohe RSA

One thing is getting to nearly 97 years of age but another is being able to fit into your uniform after 60 years! So what did entice Captain Gus Winckel back into his 'blues'? An incredibly auspicious event, that left even the hardest edged military man with a tear in their eye. The event? To witness an honoured returned serviceman Captain Gus Winckel gift his medals and other military artefacts to an international museum.

How did this come about? A request came through one of Yvonne and Gus's sons from the Military Attaché Lt Col Caro Lefevre that Gus and family might consider gifting his military items to a museum in the Netherlands. Gus and Yvonne were born in Indonesia, a former Dutch colony and Gus gained his military flying license in 1937 - number 35! In the history of the world... Yes number 35. He went on to fight the Japanese invasion in Java and then on to command the 18 squadron in Australia based south of Darwin. He clocked up over 5,000 military hours from 1937 to 1951 when he and his wife Yvonne and first son (Shayne) immigrated to New Zealand.

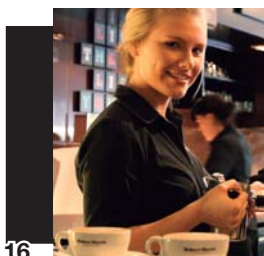
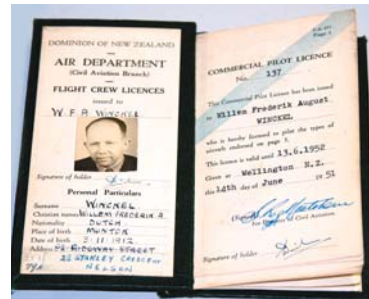
In Gus's military career he put his life and his crews' lives on line day after day and received many commendations and medals which are priceless in their combination and as a family heirloom. Doug McNally, RSA President Pukekohe, comments "I am in awe that Gus parted with his medals knowing that he won't get them back. A lot went into getting those as he put his life on the line many times. Also, to round up so many people to witness such an auspicious occasion is a great example of how Franklin supports their own".

The hand over event commenced with a spine chilling bagpipe opening with speeches from RSA President Doug McNally. An array of speakers took the podium, including international military guests (see the group photo below). The sentiment was spellbinding and to see Gus in his uniform saluting his peers made you realise the military family and honour is still strong.

Artefacts gifted included a priceless collection of medals and other items that remain in perfect condition like his NZ uniform, silk maps, telegraph orders, letters, flight log books, navigation aids and

the list goes on. His family are proud that these items will go on display instead of sitting in a drawer as this will keep this heroic man, a living legend, to live on and on and on.

Lt. Col. James Heard (retired) comments: "Gus' gift of medals honouring his enduring courage is



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