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R.A.A.F. SQUADRON'S SECOND CATERPILLAR CLUB MEMBERKITTYHAWK PILOT BALES OUT OVER SICILY

Sergeant A. MacDonald of Waitara (N.S.W.), who recently baled out over Sicily because of engine trouble and landed within the Allied lines, is the second member of the Australian Kittyhawk squadron based in Sicily to join the famous Caterpillar Club.

MacDonald was flying on a late evening sortie five miles from Modeca in South Eastern Sicily, and at an altitude of about 5000 feet his engine began to splutter, causing his aircraft to lose height.

"Alternating streams of black and white smoke poured from my engine", he said on return to his unit. "My aircraft continued to lose height in spite of my efforts to make the motor pick up, and I decided to get down to earth pronto.

"The countryside was too hilly and too closely terraced for a crash landing, so I decided to jump at 1000 feet. I pushed the stick smartly forward and felt myself catapulted from the cockpit.

"I pulled the rip cord and my parachute opened with a slight jerk. After a short fall I landed with a heavy bump in a sitting position.

"Sicilian peasants came from all directions and soon a crowd of over 200 had gathered. They were very friendly, expressing some concern, but my only injury was a bleeding nose. They led me to a dying donkey hit by my aircraft - fortunately the only casualty in the crash.

"When I asked the way to the nearest road, everyone answered at once, speaking with a volubility far beyond my recently acquired knowledge of Italian. After some time six of them guided me to the roadway where a passing cyclist loaded my flying kit on his machine and walked with me to a military post seven miles away.

"On the way the cyclist took me to his home where he and his wife were hospitality itself. They served a welcome meal of spaghetti, eggs and bread, and showed a desire to help in every possible way.

MacDonald spend the night at a military camp and returned to his unit next day.

MacDonald was married shortly before leaving Australia and his wife resides at Darwell Street, St. Leonards (N.S.W.). His parents live at Balmoral Street, Waitara (N.S.W.).

Authorised by \_\_\_\_\_  
D.P.R.