

159 Squadron

Place	Date	Summary of Events
		Month of June 1944.
Digri.	1.6.44.	The newly constructed "A" Flight Crew Room was opened for use.
	"	No.3 Hill Party consisting of 5 senior N.C.O's and 46 airmen left Digri by train for Chakrata Hill Depot.
	16.6.44.	S/Ldr. J. Blackburn D.S.O., D.F.C., arrived at R.A.F. Digri on posting to take over the duties of Flight Commander of "A" Flight, 159 Squadron.
	16.6.44.	No.4 Hill Party consisting of 6 Senior N.C.O's and 55 airmen left Digri by train for Chakrata Hill Depot.
	18.6.44.	Owing to the recent high mid-day temperatures and the difficulty of working on aircraft during the heat of the day, the following new working hours were brought into force for all personnel other than aircrews w.e.f. 18.6.44. Commence work 06.00 hrs. Breakfast 05.00 – 05.45 hrs. Cease work: 10.00 hrs. Commence work 17.00 hrs. Cease work 19.00 hrs.
	21.6.44	After try out the above times it was found that the lack of daylight early in the morning was a great inconvenience and in view of the sudden drop in temperatures, working hours were amended as follows. Commence work: 07.30 hrs. Cease work:- 12.30 hrs. Commence work: 17.00 hrs. Cease work:- 19.00 hrs.
	24.6.44	Captain R.G. Porter A.D.C. to the Governor of Bengal visited R.A.F. Digri by air. During his brief stay he was able to hold an informal interview with the Australian aircrew personnel on the Squadron.
	25.6.44	No.3 Hill Party returned to Digri from Chakrata.
	26.6.44.	A very heavy thunderstorm was experienced during the morning and lightning struck the two telephone exchanges on the Station, completely burning out the cables to 159 Squadron exchange. The two switchboard operators and many personnel using phones at the time were subjected to a considerable electrical shock. F/O. Farden and F/Lt. M. Carson who were sitting in the Squadron Navigation Office but not touching a telephone both suffered from severe shock and burns for which they were treated at Station Sick quarters. All damaged telephones and lines were repaired the same day.
		During the month, three airmen's billets collapsed owing to heavy rain. The personnel were rehoused in one wing of the dining hall, a portion of the recreation room and on the Wing Domestic Site.
		Welfare and Sports Notes.
		The most outstanding item of interest during the month was a drive to raise the standard of messing for the airmen. This was not due to complaints from the men but to a desire on the part of the cooks and the Officer i/c Airmen's Messing to raise the standard to as high a level as possible. The result was highly successful and mail censoring officers report that when writing home, airmen are making numerous reference to the good quality of the food now being served.
		S/Ldr. J. Blackburn D.S.O. D.F.C., has offered to take an active interest in the welfare of the airmen and it is proposed to call a meeting early in July when a number of officers will each be given the task of supervising one particular aspect of welfare. It has been found that owing to the Squadron being continuously on operational duties, no one officer could devote sufficient time to the duties of Welfare Officer to ensure that all aspects of welfare were supervised adequately.
		With the move of the Squadron from Dhubalia and the approach of the hottest period before the monsoon there has been no great sporting activity. A General Sports meeting was well attended and plans for the coming season were discussed. A new soccer pitch has been marked out the new goals and nets erected. A hockey pitch is under construction. Hockey, soccer, and soft ball are the only games being played this season, rugby football having being disallowed by the Medical Officer. Soft ball, introduced by the Canadian personnel is becoming very popular amongst aircrew. Wing Commander Hopkins, D.F.C. has presented a cup to be played for in a knockout soccer competition.

Place	Date	Summary of Events
		In the final of the W/Cdr. Boffee Cup Darts Tournament the Instrument Repairers beat the Cooks by 5 games to 3.
		Photographic Section Report.
		Only four night camera sorties were carried out by 159 Squadron during the month of June and out of these only one result was secured owing to the ground being obscured by cloud. Daylight sorties numbered 17 including the use of one oblique camera. Successful results were obtained in all cases except one when no ground detail was recorded due to cloud.
		Medical Notes.
		During the month of June, there were 15 cases of effects of heat. All occurred between the 16/6 and 22/6 (inclusive). Three were of the hyperpyneclial type the remainder were of the mild pyneclial type with symptoms of exhaustion. One of the former group ended fatally.
		On 25.6. during a local thunderstorm, 2 officers were struck by lightning. Both were superficially burned on the legs and both experienced numbness of the lower extremities. In one, the left leg was primarily affected and on examination showed intense blanching indicative of a degree of vaso motor spasm. The other showed signs only in his toes which were cold and white – pulsation in both feet was normal. Full power in both cases was recovered in 2 hours.
		(For Promotions & Posting of Officers See Appendix).
		(J. Blackburn) Squadron Leader Commanding No. 159 Squadron, R.A.F.