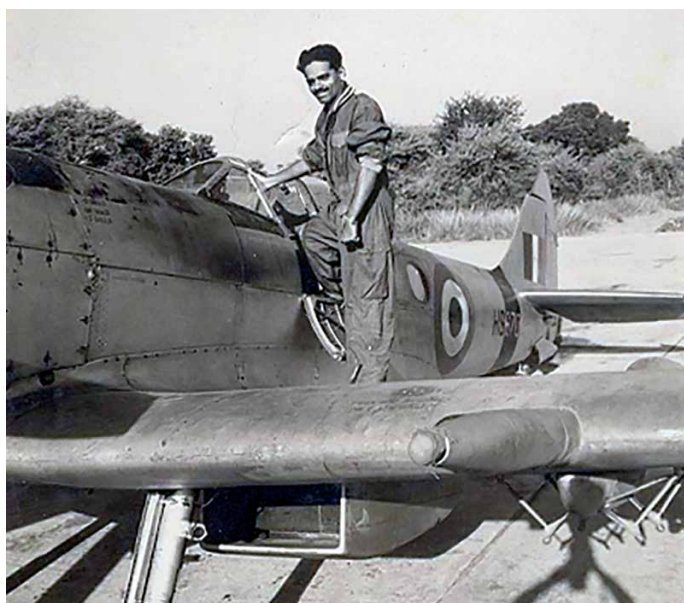
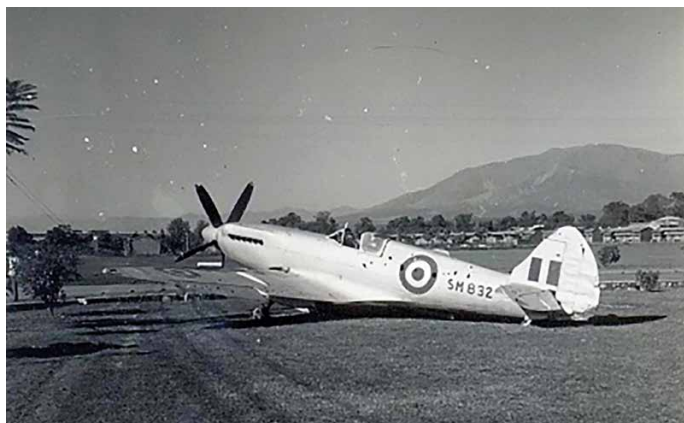


Interview with IAF's No. 14 Squadron

VAYU: *When and why was No.14 Squadron formed?*

No. 14 Squadron was formed on 15 August 1951 at Ambala, India. The squadron was initially equipped with the Spitfire aircraft. The role of Spitfire aircraft used by the Indian Air Force was primarily as follows: For air defence, Spitfires were used to provide Air defence for Indian cities and vital installations, protecting them from potential aerial threats. They were employed as interceptors, tasked with detecting and destroying enemy aircraft that entered Indian airspace. Spitfires were also used for ground attack missions, providing close air support to the Indian Army during various operations.

They were also used for reconnaissance missions, to gain intelligence on enemy dispositions and movements. Additionally, the Spitfire was used as a trainer to develop the skills of IAF pilots to execute the above mentioned role. The Spitfire played a significant role in the early years of the Indian Air Force. The Squadron was raised to strengthen India's air power and to provide a deterrent against potential threats in the post-Independence era.



VAYU: *Which aircraft did the squadron operate during the 1965 and 1971 wars, and what were its key missions?*

No. 14 Squadron operated the Hawker Hunter aircraft during the 1965 and 1971 wars. The squadron's key missions included providing close air support to the Indian Army, attacking enemy troop concentrations, artillery positions and bunkers. For air-to-air combat, it was to engage and destroy enemy aircraft, including F104 Starfighters and F-86 Sabres, to establish air superiority. The Hunters conducted reconnaissance missions to gather intelligence on enemy troop movements and installations. In 1965, tensions were rising on the western border, and the Indian Air Force was on high alert.



14 Squadron, under the command of Wg Cdr DA LaFontaine, who later became the Chief of Air Staff, was stationed at Dumdum airfield. As the situation escalated, the Bulls were tasked with maintaining a high state of vigilance and conducting armed patrols. On 7 Sep 1965, six Pakistani Sabres launched a surprise attack on Kalaikunda, targeting loaded Canberras and Vampires.



The Bulls were ready to defend their territory. That's when two brave pilots, Flt Lt Alfred Cooke and Fg Offr SC Mamgain, came into action. They were the first to engage the enemy Sabres, and their bravery will be