

QAM AIRCRAFT PROFILES
FAIREY GANNET
XA331
“NAVAL GUARDIAN”

XA331 is a **GANNET AS1** anti-submarine patrol and strike aircraft, built in 1955 by the Fairey Aviation Co at Hayes, Middlesex, England. (C/N F9223)

This iconic aircraft was powered by an Armstrong Siddeley Double Mamba ASMD1 Mk100 turboprop engine developing 2950 shp. (plus 800 lb exhaust thrust). Other details were:

Wing Span = 16.56m
 Length O/A = 13.6m
 Max Weight = 8.9t

Flying with the Royal Australian Navy Fleet Air Arm, XA331 was withdrawn from active service in August 1967. Some 25 years later, in 1992, the Queensland Air Museum recovered the airframe from Sydney after obtaining it from collector Gary Volkers as part of a larger exchange deal. Other contacts led to the acquisition of an engine, propellers, canopies (Nos 1 & 2 only), wheels and some cockpit internals.

Over the next 7 years, substantial restoration work was carried out to return the aircraft to display standard. This included reattachment of the severed tail section, fabrication of new engine bay panels, re-skinning of damaged areas and re-painting.

MISSING ITEMS: rear canopy, many internal fittings such as instruments, seats etc.

COLOUR PROFILES:

The following profiles show the four known marking schemes carried during its service life from 1955 to 1967:

- | | | | |
|----|--------|-------|------------------------|
| 1. | Page 2 | 422/B | – RNAS Culdrose, 1955 |
| 2. | Page 3 | 301/Y | – HMAS Melbourne, 1956 |
| 3. | Page 4 | 824/M | – HMAS Melbourne, 1961 |
| 4. | Page 5 | 859/M | – HMAS Melbourne, 1965 |

MARKING UNCERTAINTIES: due to a lack of clear photographic evidence:

- 816 Sqn crest shown on profiles 1, 2 & 4 was drawn from incomplete example recorded on 4 at QAM. This shade of the background blue (?) is uncertain, while the design may have been different in 1955 and 1956.
- Kangaroo emblem on tails of profiles 1 & 2 is a generic image only
- Crew names on starboard nose of profile 3 are not decipherable

For a more detailed history of the aircraft, refer to www.qam.com.au/aircraft/gannet/XA331.htm

FAIREY GANNET AS1 XA331



UNIT CREST
816 SQN



TAIL EMBLEM

B

TAIL CODE

COLOURS/CONFIGURATION:

- Uppers – extra dark sea grey.
- Lower – sky (std FAA).
- Unit crest on port side only.

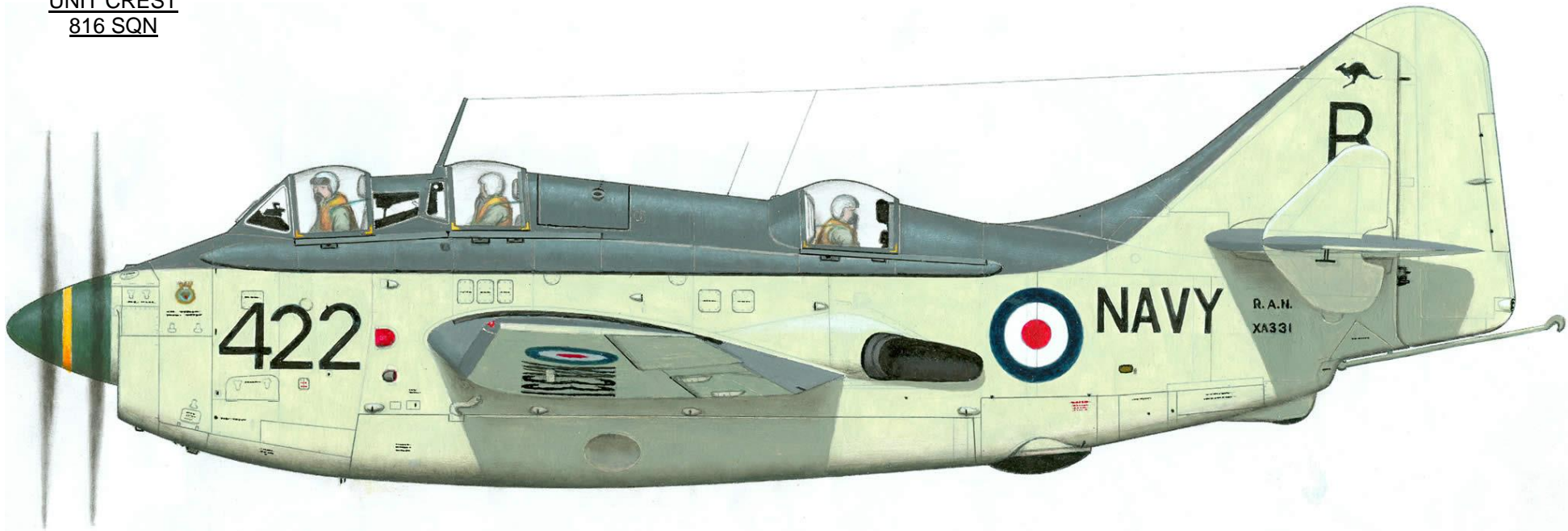


PHOTO REFERENCES:

- "Australian Aviation" Sept 95 p44.
- "Fairey Gannet" Mark I Ltd, 4+Pub, p8.
- "Gannet – From the Cockpit", Ad Hoc Pub. p120.
- "Submarine Hunter", Mushroom Model Pub. p22, 27, 33.

SERVICE DETAILS:

Shown in October 1955 during its "working up" period while flying from RNAS Culdrose, Cornwall, soon after the reforming of 816 Squadron Royal Australian Navy Fleet Air Arm.
It's proposed aircraft carrier, HMAS Melbourne will begin acceptance trials in November 1955.

FAIREY GANNET AS1 XA331



UNIT CREST
816 SQN



TAIL EMBLEM



TAIL CODE

COLOURS/CONFIGURATION:

- Standard FAA colours.
- Unit crest on port side only.
- Rocket rails & underwing carriers fitted.
- These markings were applied while still stationed at RNAS Culdrose.



PHOTO REFERENCES:

- "Flypast", Parnel & Broughton p250.
- "Submarine Hunter", Mushroom Model Pub. p122.

SERVICE DETAILS:

Shown in August 1956 flying from HMAS Melbourne (816 Sqn RAN FAA), 3 months after arrival in Australia. When not embarked, Gannets were stationed at HMAS Albatross RANAS, Nowra. Aircraft is in patrol mode with starboard motor stopped, rear propeller braked & feathered, & search radar extended.

FAIREY GANNET AS1 XA331



NOSE GEAR



TAIL CODE

COLOURS/CONFIGURATION:

- Standard FAA colours.
- Rocket rails & underwing carriers fitted.



PHOTO REFERENCES:

- "Maritime Patrol Aircraft", Vol 2, p88.
- "ModelArt Australia" No 35, F.Morgan p38.
- "FlightPath" Vol 19 No 4, p49.
- "Submarine Hunter", Mushroom Model Pub. p204.

SERVICE DETAILS:

Shown in February 1961 flying from HMAS Melbourne with 816 Sqn RAN FAA. It is depicted in landing configuration with landing gear and tail hook extended, flaps lowered, radome retracted and tailplane set to maximum -ve incidence.

FAIREY GANNET AS1 XA331



UNIT CREST
816 SQN



NOSE GEAR



TAIL CODE

COLOURS/CONFIGURATION:

- Standard FAA colours.
- Unit crest on starboard side only.
- UHF blade antenna fitted.

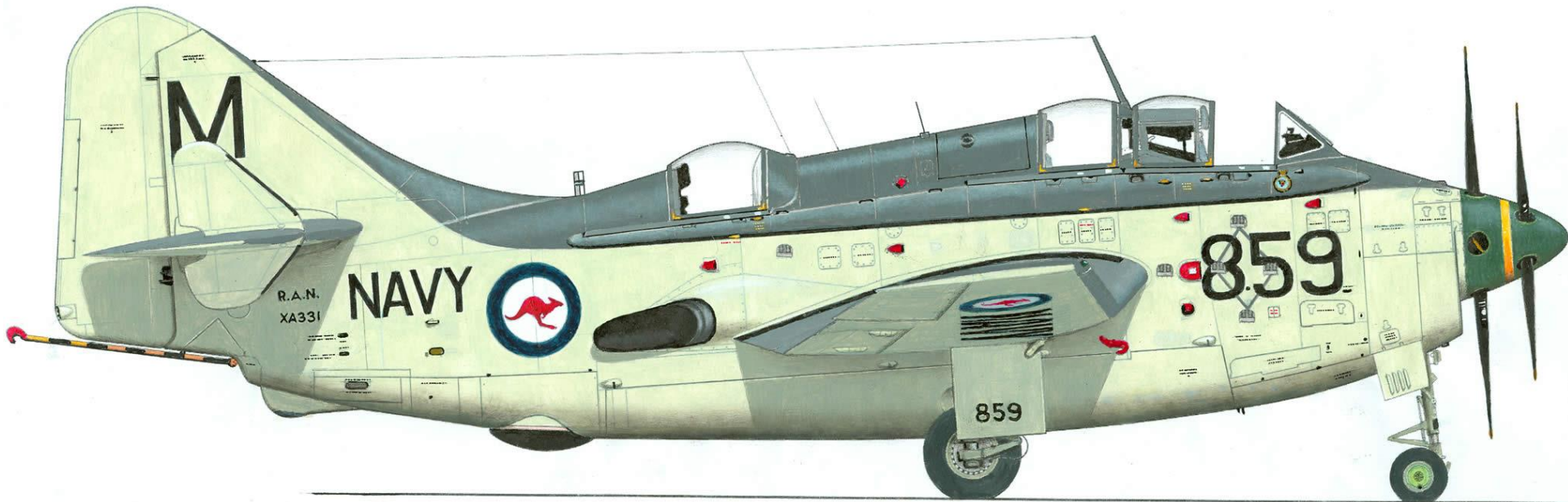


PHOTO REFERENCES:

- "Warpaint, No 23, Fairey Gannet", p23.
- "ModelArt Australia" No 35, F.Morgan, p38.
- "Submarine Hunter", Mushroom Model Pub. p2.
- "Gannet – From the Cockpit", Ad Hoc Pub. p22.

SERVICE DETAILS:

Shown in 1965 flying in the markings of 816 Sqn RAN FAA, based on HMAS Melbourne (or at RNAS Nowra when not embarked).
It will carry these markings until withdrawn from service in August 1967.