

SLIPSTREAM



Squirrel Pairs Display Team in action at Wings Over Illawarra 2017.

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The RAN Centenary of Aviation was celebrated on 20th May with a dinner dance at the Fleet Air Arm Museum. Those who could attend thoroughly enjoyed the event, which featured a lovely meal sitting under the wings of old aircraft, and listening to the address given by Chief of Navy and COMFAA. WO Ben Sime, the FAA's highest decorated member, was there to view an unveiling of his portrait, and Guy Sherborne (the son of CMDR Fred Sherborne) told us something of his father's remarkable story before opening a display of his artefacts, kindly sponsored by Northrop-Grumman Australia. All in all it was a truly memorable night.

Speaking of reunions, there are two coming up later this year. In October we will commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the deployment of the first RAN Helicopter Flight to Vietnam. The RANHFV was to become the highest decorated of any RAN unit in that war. Details of the reunion can be found on the website or later in this publication. Towards the end of the year we will also be commemorating the retirement of two stalwart aircraft of the FAA: the AS350 Squirrel and the Seahawk S70B2. Both are remarkable, but the Seahawk has the distinction of being the only aircraft on the FAA inventory that has been involved in continuous warlike operations throughout its entire life. Watch out for more information on this one too.

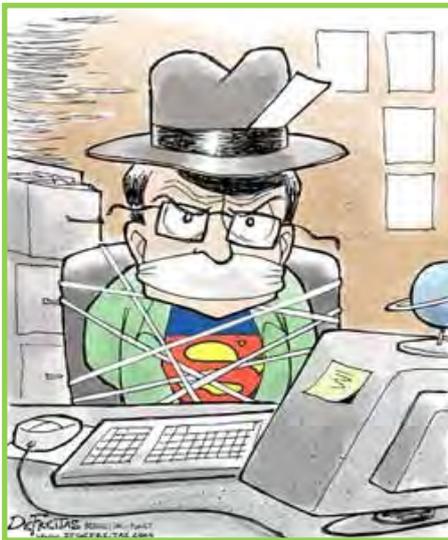
We have recently made two important submissions to various bodies. The first was to the Minister for Defence Personnel concerning the recent findings of the Defence Honours and Awards Appeal Tribunal (DHAAT) in the matter of two FAA personnel of the RANHFV who conducted an extraordinary rescue in Vietnam in 1969. We strongly disagreed with the findings of the Tribunal and have made a submission to that effect in support of our members. Separately, the DHAAT has requested the FAAAA to make a submission on the Association's views as to a unit award for the RANHFV. We are in the final stages of completing this submission which will strongly suggest that the Flight should, without question, receive a Meritorious Unit Citation, and that a Unit Citation for Gallantry would be an entirely reasonable outcome of the Tribunal's considerations. I would like to pay tribute to the outstanding efforts of Marcus Peake in generating much of the work required for these submissions.

You'll be aware also that we have for some months been trying to obtain a copy of a report by the Inspector General ADF, regarding the death of a FAA member who had served on HS817 Squadron. The report apparently found the cause of his death was likely caused by exposure to various materials whilst serving on HS817 Squadron. I hasten to add that this doesn't necessarily mean there was a general threat to all personnel on that Squadron, we are keen to get a copy of the report to further understand the circumstances. Regrettably that request has just been denied, so we will now take the matter to the next stage. I will keep you informed.

At this time of year we invariably lose some members who, for whatever reason, decide not to renew their memberships. Despite our recruiting effort it looks as if we will go backwards by about 30 people, which is of course an unsustainable situation. I urge every single one of you to talk to your old mates and recruit just one person during the year. We all know mates who are not yet members of the Association, so have a beer/coffee with them and point out the advantages of joining! It's easy to sign up: a 5 minute form on the website or write to your Division or National Secretary.

In closing, I wish all of you the very best. Thank you for your continued support of this great organisation. My sense is that we have made real progress over the last few months in particular, with submissions on behalf of members, a bigger and better website, wider communications and an improved Slipstream. We will continue to work for you and look forward to telling you about that next time.

Mark Campbell
National President.



FROM THE EDITOR

I was asked (I was not told) to pull my report from the January issue of Slipstream as it contained some material that might have done some damaged to the Association because of my strong views on a certain subject.

I still have those views but now understand I have to except that the Navy today is very different from the one you and I joined many many years ago. I will be able to insert jokes into Slipstream but they will be a lot milder than the ones we are used to. But that is all behind me now and I can get on with making Slipstream an enjoyable magazine.

I have been very pleased with the stories or “waries” that have been sent for inclusion into Slipstream so please keep it up as they have proved a ‘winner’ with all. I have tried to place items that the younger generation could relate to , but I am afraid I do not get a huge response from that part of the ship. But I will keep trying.

I am down sizing at the present moment but will be staying in the Nowra area and will pass on my new address for those who send me their info by snail mail direct. It seems that a few people miss my Email address on the front page when they want to send me a story so I will incorporate it in my column each issue. So until then enjoy life to the fullest.

Ed.

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Front Page Story

The aircraft, capabilities and people of the Fleet Air Arm were in full flight before a 30,000 strong crowd at Illawarra Regional Airport near Wollongong, New South Wales for Wings Over Illawarra on 6-7 May.

Navy’s Squirrel Pairs Helicopter Display Team made what is expected to be their final performance at the annual air show, impressing spectators on both days with precision flying and heart-stopping aerobatics.

Soon after attendees farewelled the long-serving ‘Battle Budgie’, they greeted the Fleet Air Arm’s newest acquisition: a Seahawk Romeo naval combat helicopter from 725 Squadron, which conducted an impressive handling display while commentators described its many warfighting capabilities and sophisticated armaments.

On the ground, Navy personnel proudly showed off their aircraft and talked about Navy careers as they welcomed visitors to the Bell 429 from 723 Squadron, the S-70B-2 Seahawk from 816 Squadron and the MRH-90 Taipan from 808 Squadron.

Taipan pilot Lieutenant Lachlan Badger, said the pilots, aircrew and maintainers from all three squadrons were kept busy over the weekend answering questions about their aircraft from curious members of the public.

“We’ve had hundreds of people through the aircraft today,” he said. “Most ask about the role of the aircraft, what ships it operates on, what they’re like to fly and why the MRH90 isn’t painted grey.”

The exciting airborne action and close up views of Navy’s aircraft inspired many would-be pilots over the weekend, with Navy’s flight simulators and the Defence Force Recruiting stall both proving popular.

Navy personnel also played crucial public roles, with midshipmen from the Australian Defence Force Academy serving as VIP hosts alongside Army and Air Force officer cadets while Navy cadets from TS *Albatross* performed a range of event support tasks alongside their Army and Air Force cadet counterparts.

Aircraft and personnel from the Royal Australian Air Force and the Australian Army were also on show. The program featured flying displays by the Roulettes, F/A-18 Hornet fighters, C-130 Hercules and C-17 Globemaster transport aircraft, and a parachute display by the Army Red Beret Parachute Display Team, which is based at HMAS *Albatross*. An Army S70A-9 Blackhawk was on static display alongside the Navy helicopters and the RAAF Balloon conducted tethered flights.

Wings Over Illawarra is supported under the Public Events of Significance program that sees Australian Defence Force assets participate in major sporting and community events across Australia.



LETTERS

G'Day Ron,

It concerns me that the article I wrote about Frank Neilsen and the loss of Sea Venom WZ900 contained incorrect information. I rely on my memory for most of the pieces I write but do check supposed history for some of the facts. The Fleet Air Arm association site at www.faaaa.asn.au/sea-venom-wz900/ has the crash happening on 29/04/1966.

On further investigation, I found another site, www.adf-serials.com.au/n4.htm which dates the crash as 28/04/1966. John DaCosta's log book would certainly show which was correct.

My taste for music and songs extends from the war years, when I listened to my Grandmother's 78 speed records, to some of today's tunes and most songs will place me back in the period when I first heard them. Most memories are good and pleasing but some cause hurt and discomfort, as does The Theme From Doctor Zhivago. That song takes me back to 1966 and Sea Venom WZ900.

What happened on that day is embedded in my mind but what happened after April 28th. is a bit confusing. I remember coming home but not much of the rest of the deployment; but I do remember wandering around the flight deck watching the ME's inspecting and adjusting the arrestor gear and wondering why such a thing had to happen. Was there some Deity in the sky who arranged all this or was it just chance or could it have been my mistake after all. Shorty and I were warned about manslaughter charges.

I recall speaking with a Chief who was inspecting the arrestor gear and he told me that modifications had been scheduled for the equipment, while the ship was in dry dock but had to be rescheduled because of work restrictions placed by the Dockyard Workers Union.

Ron Smith.

LETTERS

The First R.A.N. Sea Venom Aircraft Ejection.

In June 2017 it will be 57 years since an aircraft accident in 1960, when Sblt. (P) B. A. Dutch and Leut. (O), E.D. (Sandy) Sandberg successfully ejected at night from a Sea Venom FAW 53 Jet Aircraft at HMAS Albatross. I was told that this was the first ejection in the RAN and the first night ejection from a Sea Venom in the "world" (the RN and RAN?).

I am sure that I am not the first one to have issues with the investigation of an accident by a Board of Inquiry. The questions of the Board seemed to concentrate on my reading of the instruments for a normal night conditions and in a normal turn. This seemed to lead them to the conclusion that I had misread the instruments and flew into the ground. It also could have led to their conclusion that I showed; "Poor airmanship and ability." I never received any feedback on their reasoning.

For my part, certainly I was using the instruments but the night was dark, the wind was turbulent and the sequence was: **"turn, undercarriage down, uncontrolled roll to port, full right aileron, full right rudder, impact, full power, EJECT!"... and all in a matter of a few seconds"**. I felt that there had to be some contributing factors, at least, due to the strong wind conditions so I took my frustration to Captain T.K. Morrison, then Captain of the Air Station. He convinced me that it was important for me to continue flying.

I re-lived the accident many times immediately after it occurred and for many years. I spent many hours trying to find answers as to the cause. Most of the actions of that night are still vividly imprinted on my mind.

724 Training Squadron at RANAS Nowra NSW was under considerable pressure to complete an All Weather Fighter Course on the Sea Venom (FAW 53) Aircraft to provide replacement pilots for 805 Squadron, which was the Front Line Squadron. 805 Squadron was due to commence a work up for embarkation on HMAS Melbourne for the Short Cruise of 1960.

The air intercept exercises consisted of a Sea Venom "target", simulating a Bomber type of aircraft by limiting its speed and turn rates to those of a Bomber aircraft. They would also turn off their navigation lights once radar contact was established in night sorties.

The Observer was responsible for the Navigation and Radar control. He could detect the target on radar and by a variety of orders position the Pilot into a gun firing position at about 200ft below the target and 200 Yards astern. The Pilot then had to pull up and fire the 20mm cannons. This could be done in all weathers and at night! I often wondered just what would happen in a real attack should one manage to hit the target. It would be challenging to avoid the debris!

During the night exercises I had had problems in trusting the Radar System and the Observer in the final stages of an intercept at night when I could not see the target and felt that the closing speed was too fast or there was insufficient height separation. In the correct firing position the Pilot could look up and see the jet pipe of the target. On my final night exercise I failed to sight a "Jet Pipe" and it was necessary to repeat the exercise by flying another sortie.

While I do not think that fatigue was a factor in the accident, I had already flown two day sorties and due to the failed night exercise, my Observer for the trip, Lieutenant E.D (Sandy) Sandberg and I manned aircraft for a second night sortie. As we settled into the climb for the exercise Sandy found that the radar was not working correctly so we had to land again and find a serviceable aircraft for the fifth sortie of the day.

An important point at this stage was that during the evening the wind strength had been strongly increasing from the North West.

I put all my effort into passing the final test and was rewarded by spotting a glowing jet pipe which I must say looked dangerously close but worth the effort. I then descended for a landing.

In 1960 the Tactical thinking was that, to avoid giving away the position of the Aircraft carrier to enemy radar we flew the day circuit for landing at 200 feet above sea level. At night the circuit was flown at 400 feet. It was also normal practice at the airfield to fly the circuits at similar heights above the airfield datum height.

The 26/08 runway dipped slightly lower in the centre than the thresholds of the runway. The 26 runway threshold was on the edge of a gully which in some wind condition could cause a dangerous down draft of the air mass, causing aircraft to undershoot the runway with some fatalities. I also found that at the approximate position where aircraft would turn for the downwind leg of the landing circuit and the pilot lowered the undercarriage that the ground was slightly higher than the runway datum with trees adding to the height. This therefore reduced the height available for the low circuit.

continued

I joined the upwind leg at 400 feet above the runway datum and was advised by the Control Tower that the wind had now strengthened and was **22 knots gusting to 58 knots and varying from 280 degrees to 320 degrees in the gusts**. This meant that during a gust the wind could exceed the cross wind limits of the aircraft undercarriage for landing. The Tower advised that they would report the wind conditions on my final approach.

I was at 240 knots to join the landing circuit and commenced the turn for the downwind leg in a tightly banked turn to wash off speed before I could lower the undercarriage at 220 knots. This was the limiting speed for having the undercarriage down.

I saw that my Observer, Sandy was stowing his Navigation gear and **I was satisfied that I was established in a level turn**.

When I selected the undercarriage down at 220 knots the aircraft rolled rapidly to port and slightly over the vertical so I had to apply full aileron to the right and then full right rudder to try to arrest the roll. The Sea Venom with its high twin tail boom and tail plane design did not roll directly around the longitudinal axis of the aircraft and it tended to “dish” or “barrel” in the rolling plane. By the time the aircraft was responding to my control movements and just as I had got it back to about 10 to 15 degrees of bank there was a violent crashing.

The windscreen went opaque and the aircraft was yawing violently so I applied full power to gain height. I realised that the radar dome was probably damaged and as the undercarriage lights were not showing locked, there was more than likely damage to the wheel system. The aircraft was juddering violently so I decided that it was therefore not possible to fly or land the aircraft safely. Photographs later showed that the aircraft had mowed the top off a tree! I am reminded of that aviator saying that; “Fuel Burned, Runway behind you and height above you, are all useless.”

Our only option was to eject! I knew that I had to gain as much height as possible and applied full power in a steep climb as the Martin Baker Mark 4B ejection seat required 200 knots of forward speed and 200 feet of height above ground level to ensure the safe operation of the seat.

The canopy of the aircraft had a solid beam down its centre axis for strength so it was not possible to eject through it. As the ejection seats were sloped slightly towards one another it was necessary for the Observer to eject first. The procedure for ejection was that the Pilot gave the order “Eject, eject” and the Observer had to pull the canopy ejection handle to blast off the canopy.

I called, “**Eject, Eject!**” but there was no re-action from Sandy! It was obvious that we had also lost our inter communications system so I had to change hands on the controls so that I could eject the canopy with my right hand. This made Sandy realise that he would have to eject. I recall the widening of Sandy’s eyes as he realised he had to go and he immediately ejected. The Air speed was slowing rapidly in the climb. I stayed with the aircraft to just under 120knots and before the stalling speed, I ejected.

During my parachute descent I had heard Sandy shouting and felt that he might be injured. When I got to him he was trying to light a cigarette due to the wind and his reaction to the accident. He had seen my parachute drift and was shouting to warn me of the danger of the fire. We sat in the darkness and waited while a rescue helicopter approached. It was a notable flight by the Sycamore Helicopter Pilot as the Sycamore did not have the instrumentation for night hovering but the Pilot managed to safely winch down Dr Tommy Thompson, an aviation specialist to check us out.

After a night in the Sick Bay for Observation by the Doctors, Sandy and I were granted a week of Survivors Leave. At the end of the week I re-joined the squadron to continue the workup and joined 805 Squadron for the embarkation on HMAS Melbourne.

I consider that from my subsequent aviation experience I have a reasonable knowledge of many aspects of aviation, having flown Piston aircraft, jet aircraft and helicopters. I completed deck landings in ASW helicopters as well as some 508 successful arrested landings in jet aircraft on HMAS Melbourne. I flew in aerobatics teams and I also completed an advanced flying course, qualifying as an Air Warfare Instructor with the Royal Navy at RNAS Lossiemouth in the UK.

So I now present the questions which had troubled me for some years;

Why did the aircraft start to roll rapidly over the vertical when I lowered the undercarriage?

Were there any other factors which could have contributed to the accident?

Had I really shown “poor airmanship and ability

Continued

When I discussed the wind conditions with the Senior Naval Meteorological Officer soon after the accident he advised that when the accident occurred there were extremely gusty and strong winds over the mountains of the Dividing Range on the western side of the airfield. The wind had stabilised in to "Standing Waves". This means that the whole air mass followed up and down over the mountainous terrain. This was a similar condition to the downdraft of the air mas on the threshold of 26 landing area.

Many years later I discussed the accident in detail with a RAAF Accident Investigation Officer from their specialist unit at the RAAF Base at Williamtown.

After the RAAF Officer heard my story he suggested that the wind conditions could contribute as follows;

The aircraft when turning downwind would have the underside of the fuselage facing the gusts which could have varied the relative air speed over the wings during the strong gusts of changing wind speed and direction.

When lowering the undercarriage the main wheels would have momentarily blanketed the lower wing to some degree. This could cause a reduction of lift on the port wing as the wheel went down. The normal main wheel sequence when lowering the undercarriage was for one wheel to lower ahead of the other wheel. This usually caused the need for minor control adjustments.

Any downward movement of the air mass around the aircraft during the turn downwind would have some effect on its flight path.

Over the few seconds, time and height were not available to me.

Factors of;

the circuit height,

the raised ground and trees at the downwind position,

the roll effect of the Sea Venom, and

the possibility that the aircraft could have been dropping in the downward movement of a standing wave air mass as I lowered the undercarriage, could all be relevant to the accident.

It is of particular note that by the time I got back from my Survivors Leave the circuit height had been raised to 1000 feet above ground level and trees were being cleared around the airfield!!

Some years ago Sandy contributed an article to the Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia magazine, "Slipstream", which reflected his consideration of the accident. It included much of the Board of Inquiry text. As it was the first time I had seen the Board Report I was satisfied with my interpretation of the accident and I did not feel that it was appropriate for me to respond.

I am simply grateful that I was able to enjoy a wonderful career in the RAN as an Aviator in the Fleet Air Arm and as a Seaman Officer in ships. I always remained confident in the knowledge that in a "life and death" situation, I would not "freeze" and die, but that I would take action to save my life.

The bottom line is that Sandy and I survived, thanks to the successful operation of the Martin Baker Mark 4B Ejection seat, even well below the safe limits for operation of the seat.

I recently presented some small items of memorabilia of the accident to the Fleet Air Arm Museum at HMAS Albatross, Nowra.

As the RAN no longer has the capability for fixed wing carrier operations (at the moment??), my story is of interest only. However it might give rise to serious consideration of the importance of expert accident investigations.

My story does tell of survival on a dark, turbulent and very exciting night!

Brian Dutch

CMDR.(P). R.A.N. (Retd.)

April 2017.



Hi Ron,

KOREA REVISITED AND THE PEACE MEDAL

Last time I wrote to you it was about the fitting of ejection sweats in Sea Venoms, this time it's rather different prompted by the article on the Korean Ambassador for Peace Medal on page 29 of the March 2017 edition of Slipstream.

I was fortunate to be one of the eight Korean War Veterans who returned there in October 2016 with the final government sponsored commemorative mission, my first visit back since 1953. The mission organised by DVA, was principally to commemorate the 65th of the two major land battles fought by 3 RAR ("Old Faithful") during the conflict—Kapyong and Maryang San. We also visited the United Nations War Cemetery at Busan (the only such cemetery) to lay wreaths in the Australian section containing 281 headstones and to join in the celebrations of the 71st anniversary of the formation of the United Nations Organisations. As well we participated in ceremonies at other significant locations, particularly in and near DMZ.

The participating veterans included one RAAF pilot, Taffy Hughes, RAN Observer who served first with the RN in World War 2, four members of 3 RAR (including myself who joined the RAN and qualified as an Observer soon after leaving the Army in 1953) and two other army members of 1 and 2 RAR. We were supported by a highly efficient group of DVA staff, 14 members of the Federation Guard for ceremonial duties, the Minister for Veterans Affairs and the Shadow Minister (both for part of the visit) and eight serving members of 3 RAR as a reward for outstanding service of some sort. These 'Diggers' presented each of the former members of 3 RAR with a slouch hat—mine now adorns a living room wall.

Before leaving Australia, at a farewell dinner, the eight of us were presented with the Ambassador for Peace Medal by the Korean Military Attache to Australia who also , on behalf of his Ambassador , gave each of us a very solid walking stick. Mine stands just inside the front door ready for use when required.

It was an unforgettable experience and was followed in March by a follow-up 'reunion' of a couple of days in Canberra to attend Parliament and listen to the Minister deliver his mission statement in the House of Representatives and the Shadow Minister's response. Both spoke eloquently and with genuine feeling. We also laid wreaths, at the War Memorial and at the Korean Memorial on Anzac Parade, visited the Federation Guard who showed off their parade ground skills and concluded with an end of mission formal dinner.

The whole event showed another side of DVA and they couldn't have been more supportive and helpful to us "oldies"

And to conclude Ron, it's hard to believe that this final mission of eight veterans included two retired FAA Phot Officers - Taffy (4th from left) and myself far right.

Les Powell

CABOOLTURE AIR SHOW



Hi Marcus

Attached are some photos taken at the Caboolture Air Show on Sunday 23Apr17.

The cake cutting was arranged by 'TAVAS' The Australian Vintage Aircraft Society to commemorate 100th Anniversary of Australian Naval Aviation. Quite a good air show.

The 816 Romeo was very impressive. Roger Scovell was also there.

I can send some photos of WW1 and earlier a/c if you think they might be of use.

Could you please pass a copy of this email to Chris Smallhorn & Anthony Savage.

Ron could you add them to the next Slipstream.

Cheers Beachball

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION'S ANZAC DINNER



Mike Stubbington, Moira Saywell, Mike's grandson, Ken Adams, Anne Adams, Henry Young, Loraine Thompson, Roger Harrison, Bob Scobie, Derelie Laidler, Michael Cain, Kathleen Cain, Eve Gray, Gordon Gray, Garry and Sharron Reid. Seated Ian Laidler, Junice Cooper, Madge Young, Pat (Scobie)



Pat (Scobie), Moira Saywell, Kay Daley, Derelie Laidler, Anne Adams Loraine Thompson, Kathleen Cain, Sharon Reid, Eve Gray.



Ian Laidler, Bob Scobie, Henry Young, Michael Cain, Roger Harrison, Richard Daley, Ken Adams, Gordon Gray, Mike Stubbington, Garry Reid.

LETTERS

Jim

I run your letter past an old sailor at my R.S.L. Club and he confirms your memories of ration tickets for sailors going on leave as being correct. But he can't comment on the butter side of things as he done all his service on the Troop ship "Westralia" from 1943 till wars end, and can't recall a butter situation as you seen it. Perhaps a troop ship had different victualling arrangements??

An interesting note here on my informant Gordon Graham who joined the navy legally as a 16 year old in 1942 and went to sea as a 17 year old. Gordon was onboard for all of the "Westralia's" landings through the islands, and at the wars end was only 19 years old. Gordon was a guest of the government when a group of veterans were invited to return to the islands for an 75th anniversary tour recently.

When I asked Gordon to read Jim's letter, he was taken back with Slipstream and Insisted on reading the whole magazine and he admired it very much.

Regards
"Mick" Tattersell

The Missing Ladle

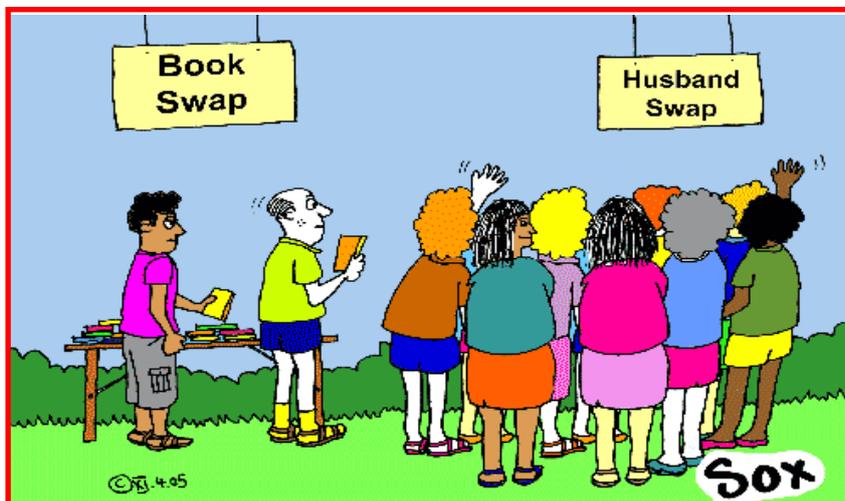
John invited his mother over for dinner. During the meal, his mother couldn't help noticing how beautiful John's roommate was. She had long been suspicious of a relationship between John and his roommate and this only made her more curious. Over the course of the evening, while watching the two interact, she started to wonder if there was more between the two than met the eye. Reading his mother's thoughts, John volunteered, "I know what you must be thinking, but I assure you, Julie and I are just roommates".

About a week later, Julie came to John and said, "Ever since your mother came to dinner, I have been unable to find the beautiful silver gravy ladle. You don't suppose she took it do you?"

"Well I doubt it" he responded, but I shall write her a letter to be sure". He wrote,

"Dear Mother, I am not saying you did take a gravy ladle from my house, and I am not saying you did not take a gravy ladle. However the fact remains, a gravy ladle has been missing ever since you were here for dinner." Several days passed and John received the eagerly awaited reply.

"Dear Son, I am not saying that you do sleep with Julie and I am not saying you do not sleep with Julie, however the fact remains that if she was sleeping in her own bed, she would have found the ladle by now. Love, Mum."



LETTERS

Fwd: Change of National Membership Registrar For the Naval Association

Below find details for newly elected National Membership Registrar.

Hi all,

Today I hand over the NAA National Membership Register to George Mock.

George is an experienced database operator and since May 2016 he and I have worked together to bring the National Membership Register up to a level where it is more user friendly and further assists in the collation of information held in the database. His takeover also coincides with his appointment as Webmaster of the new NAA Website which is in draft form at present and will be trialled in June this year. The website will connect to the National Membership Register and enable an accurate membership database of the entire membership to be kept in a place where the NAA administrators and members may access information relevant to their position in the NAA.

George's contacts are:

Phone **0412 847 852 or 07 5493 3857**

Email gfmock@netspace.net.au

Snail mail address for membership reports and other hard copy correspondence for the National Membership Registrar remains as:

**National Membership Registrar
PO Box 3362
BELCONNEN DC ACT 2617**

Snail mail received will be immediately copied electronically and forwarded directly to George on receipt. Banking of cheques received will continue to be done in the Canberra branch of the Australian Military Bank located in Duntroon.

It has been a pleasure being the National Membership Registrar for the past 16 years and I thank George for volunteering to take it on at this point during a very important stage of its development.

Please circulate this email to all your sub-sections ASAP.

Best Wishes

Peter Cooke-Russell
National Secretary



ANZAC DAY QUEENSLAND



*John Stewart Barry Lister
Trevor Tite*



*Ron Marsh
and
James Buchanan*



*Cam Barnes
And
Ray Murrell*

REST IN ETERNAL PEACE

LESLIE DAVID MATTERSON

(JUKIE)

Leslie David Matterson known generally as "JUKIE" entered the RAN on the 8th January 1948 at the age of 18. He was rated Recruit Naval Airman and given the official number of R35669.

Les was amongst the very first to be recruited for the Australian Fleet Air Arm and following basic training at Flinders Naval Depot he and 59 other sailors were posted to HMAS Kanimbla for passage to the UK. Arriving on the 31st July 1948 and was posted to the RNAS Bramcote where he commenced training on Aircraft engines and was rated Naval Airman 11. He remained at "Bramcote" until May 1949 from there he went to RANAS Yeovilton for training on Aircraft Airframes and was subsequently rate Naval Airman 1. From there further training occurred at RANS Lee-On-Solent, and RANS St Merryn.

On the 29th August 1950 Les joined the carrier HMAS Sydney with the 21st CAG at Plymouth for passage to Jervis Bay arriving there on 8th December being away from home for 2.5yrs. He remained with the 21st CAG until July alternating between the carrier and HMAS Albatross. Postings to 805 and 850 squadrons followed and in August 1954 he joined 808 squadron and soon found himself on board HMAS Vengeance arriving back in England for a second time in August 1955. He then joined the carrier Melbourne and returned to Australia in June 1956.

For the next 9 years his drafts alternated between Albatross and Melbourne finally coming ashore in October 1965 to Albatross remaining there until his discharge from the RAN on 7th August 1969 after serving 21.5 years in uniform.

After his discharge he went on to serve another 22 years at the Jervis Bay Range Facility controlling the Air Stores department for the Jindivik Target Aircraft. As well Les spent a great deal of his time assisting at the Fleet Air Museum cataloguing all their spare parts and assisting in many other projects.

In addition to the above Les was Granted Life Membership of the NSW Division of the Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia in 1999 for his exceptional for the Association.

Les passed away quietly at home on the 28th April 2017 and our condolences go out to his son Chris and daughters Sandra and Veronica.

"Rest in peace old shipmate, friend, neighbour and family friend."

Dick Martin

National Secretary.



REST IN ETERNAL PEACE

G' Day Ron,

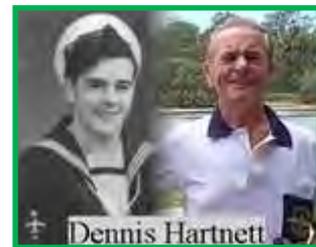
I am saddened to advise that another old armourer has passed away.

LAM (O) Junior Henry Skeats aged 85, passed away 6 April 2017. He served in the 1950's and was well known and liked by his fellow armourers and others.

Jim Parsons

Just received the sad news that our old shipmate Dennis "Tassie" Hartnett passed away in his sleep last night. He and his wife Joanna attended many of the reunions and meetings of the FAAAA Qld Branch. A well liked boke who will be missed by all. He was a member of handlers Class 22 1-10-51 official number A39909 To his wife Jo and family we extend our deepest sympathies.

Glen Hartig,
The expostie



The Christian Funeral Rite for
Lewis Robert Craig
'Bob'

21st October 1930 - 26th March 2017



*"Come, you whom my Father has blessed,
says the Lord; inherit the kingdom prepared for you
since the foundation of the world"... Matthew - 25:3*



REST IN ETERNAL PEACE

LIFE | PEOPLE & PLACES

A talented photographer

TRIBUTE: RON BADGER
BY MICK McDONALD

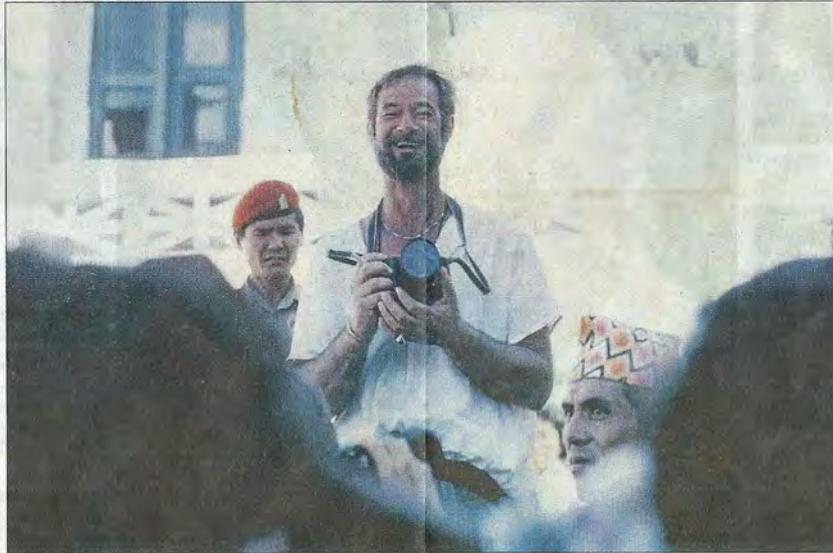
FORMER Manning River Times photographer Ron Badger has died suddenly at his home at Hervey Bay in Queensland.

Ron was 72. He worked with the Times from 1979 to 1992 in the days when all photos in the paper were black and white.

His job not only entailed taking photos, but also processing the photographs in a tiny dark room in the old Times building.

Ron was born in Taree and educated at Taree Primary and Taree High Schools.

He joined the navy when he was 20 and it was here his photographic skills were nurtured. He served as a photographer (known as a PHOT) for 12 years. This included top secret postings during the Vietnam War on the HMAS Melbourne and HMAS Hobart. He served on the Hobart when it was hit by the US aircraft in 1968. Ron took the photos of the damage. He also lost a close mate, Ordinary Seaman RJ Butterworth, in the attack.



Former Manning River Times photographer Ron Badger, who died suddenly at his Hervey Bay home, aged 72.

Ron commuted from Taree to Nowra in the last two years of his service before leaving the navy in 1976.

He returned to Taree and eventually took on the photographer's role at the Times.

His job was hectic - taking news and advertising shots that could have him on assignment anywhere from Bulahdelah to Harrington or west of Wingham. His working day was usually

booked solid.

Ron was a familiar face working at sporting, social or cultural events in the district.

He was equally at home taking shots at a greyhound meeting as he was at a May-

oral Ball.

Ron had the ability to turn the most mundane of subjects into a front page photo. While adept at all forms of the art, sport photography was his forte. Leading up

to the Sydney Olympics the Manning Art Gallery ran an exhibition featuring sport photos taken by the Times. Although he had long left the industry, Ron's work featured prominently.

He was dubbed 'Kamikaze Badger' by Manning A-grade cricketers for his propensity of getting in close to the wicket to take shots. On one occasion he photographed the ball heading towards his head at speed before ducking out of the firing line. The ball missed him by millimetres, he later laughed.

Using the skills from his navy days Ron turned hiding the ball in the popular Times Find the Ball competition into an art form.

After he left Times Ron he moved to Maryborough and then to Harvey Bay.

In recent years Ron toured Australia in a caravan while he also headed overseas, always seeking 'that photo'.

Nepal, Canada, Alaska and the Yukon - where he hoped to photograph a bear in the wild - were among the places he visited.

Ron is survived by his daughters, Jodi and Cara.

PENNY *Peter*

Warrant Officer, RAN (ret'd)

24/7/1937—26/6/2017

Husband of Deirdre for 54 years

Father of Darren

Grandpa to Alyssa, Tiah, Caitlin and Georgia



VALE

Don Eldridge



REST IN ETERNAL PEACE

VALE

Hughie Wells

CPO(SE)

Tuesday 9th May 2017



VALE

David Orr

COMMODORE



To All,

It is with great regret that I pass on the sad news that John Ward ex (WOAVN) aircraft handler passed away this morning

John had been ill for several years and his fight was long and showed great courage.

He was a great supporter of the exhandler group and with his wife attended many of our reunions and I for one will miss his help and comradeship.

To his wife Denice and family goes our deepest sympathy.

He was a member of class 81,31-8-59 official number R55406 He served from 1959 to 1984.

The expostie



TURNER BARRY

He was in Handlers class 24 commenced 26-11-1951.

Sorry I do not have a photo of him.

To his family we extend our deepest sympathy,

Glen

The expostie



ANZAC DAY MARCH SYDNEY 2017



Marcus I have gone cover to cover of the latest Slipstream in order to find an email address for the editor. Is he Ron Christie of Vic Div.

If so could you forward this photo to him (or whoever the editor is) with the following caption.

"NSW members marching in Sydney 2017 led by the indomitable Fred 'Sinbad' Lane."
KJ

WORTH A LOOK

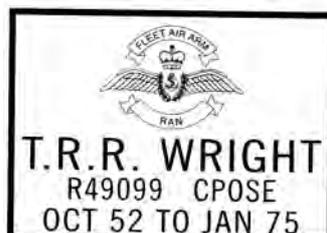
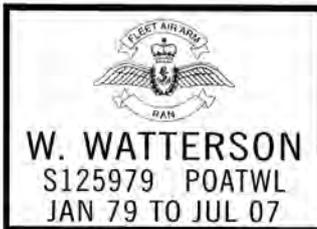
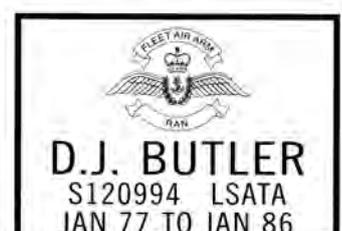
G'DAY RON

NOT SURE IF YOU CAN USE THIS BUT IT IS VERY INTERESTING PARTICULARLY FOR THOSE WHO ARE NOT FAMILIAR WITH RIGID ROTOR TECHNOLOGY

JIM PARSONS

www.chonday.com/Videos/chaohelfast5

ORDER 36 WALL OF SERVICE



LETTERS

My husband Peter McDonald died in June 2015. One of his conditions was Multiple Myeloma (a blood cancer).. I had been refused the war widows pension in 2015. On talking to my friends husband from Adelaide this year I was informed that I would probably be eligible because of changes in the eligibility criteria that occurred last year. He got me in contact with Legacy QLD who handled my second claim. I was informed this morning by Legacy that my claim had been successful.

As the changes involved exposure to aircraft fuel and being on ships that distilled drinking water off the coast of Vietnam, I felt it necessary to try and get this message out to the people who were exposed to these conditions. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Ray Kemp ex submariner and advocate in Adelaide and Legacy QLD.

Thank You,
Sandra McDonald

LETTERS

Dear Ron,

I thought it about time I corrected a story about me and a trip to Vung-Tau in the motor pool truck in 1969 whilst a member of the 3rd Contingent of the R.A.N.H.F.V.

Many history books including GET THE BLOODY JOB DONE, A BLOODY JOB WELL DONE. AUSTRALIAN NAVY IN VIETNAM include the following paragraph: "The risk to the maintenance and support personnel carrying out supply runs to the Australian Army Base at Vung-Tau - already well known - was highlighted in the most forceful way on 23rd December, 1969 when Leading Seaman Errol Shelley's RAN supply truck was ambushed whilst returning to Bearcat. Engaged by mortar and small arms fire, the truck was hit and the driver wounded in the neck which resulted in him making another - this time unplanned - trip to Vung Tau. Here he found himself a patient in the 1st Australian Field Hospital and not fit for duty until 26th January - Australia Day 1970.

This is not entirely true....On 22nd December, Chief Petty Officer Barry Grainger received word his wife Pam had delivered their baby. Much celebrating was had into the early hours of the next morning. Someone during the night had taken up a collection, some eighty something dollars, to send flowers to Barry's wife. Next morning Leading Seaman Peter Ruhle and myself fronted our CO, LT Commander Farthing to get permission for time off to go to Vung Tau to send these through Inter-Flora. The CO agreed as long as it was called a stores run.

The motor pool Sargent William A. McAtire, American Army had said we could use his truck...Now no-one was allowed to drive The Motor Pool Truck except Bill. As it turned out Bill was too hungover to drive so I was elected to drive.

We had an uneventful trip down to Vung Tau. When we went to the Inter-Flora and asked for \$80.00 worth of flowers to be sent to Pam at the Nowra Hospital he said "He had sent \$10.00 worth to his wife last week and they just about needed a semi to carry them.

After that being done, it being pretty thirsty work, we decided we better have a couple of beers for the long trip back to Bearcat.

We were a little late leaving for home and thought we would not make it by curfew time. This turned out to be true. Dead on five o'clock an R.P.G (Rocket Propelled Grenade) landed about 20 metres to the right of the truck. Bill and Peter got down on the floor but I had to keep my head up to drive. Next thing another R.P.G. landed right behind the truck and lifted it up in the air. This is when I felt a jolt at the back of my head and saw stars, then my whole life flashed before my eyes. It must have only been a split second as I woke up and the truck was sideways heading for a ditch. I swung the steering wheel to adjust and get on the straight and narrow. Then the V.C. (Viet Cong) opened up with rifle fire.

We got to a village up the road where there was a South Vietnamese Army Patrol and one of their medics dressed my neck. Bill then took over driving the rest of the way to Bearcat, where they took me to sick-bay. Our S.B.A. John Sitki got some x-rays done, then they called a chopper to medivac me to Long-Bihn where there was an American Hospital. I was parked in a corridor where Dr's were doing minor ops. One soldier had one eye on his cheek and the Dr was working...very gut wrenching.

I joined the long line and slowly made my way to the operating theatre. At this time I had a beard and they only shaved half before I went in. I woke up in the ward with my half beard. I stayed there for a week and in that time the patients got front seats to see THE BOB HOPE XMAS SHOW. Some of the boys came across from Bearcat with an esky full of VB, but I couldn't have any because of the strong antibiotics. But it didn't stop them drinking it in front of me.

After a week in the American Hospital, they flew me to the first Australian Army Hospital at Vung Tau. The day I arrived there the Dr asked for another x-ray to see how things were going.. Low and behold it was the same as the one taken at Bearcat. The shrapnel was still there; it seems the Americans could not find it and sewed me back up.

The Dr said they would have to open me up again, it would take a half hour. It turned out to be a two hour operation as they had trouble finding it, but they got the two pieces out. I remained in hospital for another week then had another week recuperating at the PETER BADCOE CLUB before returning back to Bearcat on light duties.

This is the true version of the story. We were not doing a stores run, but sending flowers to Barry Grainger's wife, Pam. ERROL SHELLEY

LETTERS

Hi Ron,

I was thrilled to read the article on the Sycamore crash at NAS Nowra. I assume it was written by Noel Dennet who did not sign it, but it was a wonderful memory of something that had a good ending. I would like to send a message to Noel in the next Slipstream if that is OK.

Thanks, Mike Astbury.

Dear Noel,

Thanks for a wonderful story about the Sycamore crash which you and I 'ENJOYED!'. It brought back great memories which of course I do remember. There were a couple of extra items. I slightly damaged a knee, and when we arrived back at Albatross they sent down a wheel chair to take me up to sick bay. I fell out of the chair! After being seen by the Doc I was in bed when a couple of friends turned up and the first thing they asked 'was I scratched'. I was, and they stated that the side of the gully was covered in black berry bushes.

I was back in the air in a Sycamore after 10 days and am still going strong. Many thanks for your assistance and for the story.

I am living in Canberra in a Retirement Village with my wife Margaret with the following email address - mjastbury@ozemail.com.au. I would like to get in touch - look after yourself.

Regards, Mike Astbury

LETTERS

My work has continued to find related detail to the events of the 6th March 1962 and 20th May 1963 when ships of the RAN went to Action Stations to force passage through the Sunda Strait, several very important documents have come to me via my research into this subject.

the first details are extracts from 805 Squadron log book with the first detail is as follows: "Monday 5th, we are well and truly in the tropics now and the wind has died away and the Venoms had to remain on deck, instead, everything was readied for the forth coming passage through the Sunda Strait.

Tuesday 6th: the ship went to Defence Stations at 0600 this morning for the passage through the Sunda Straits. The Squadron maintained 4 crews at 15 minutes readiness in the briefing room throughout the day, and four aircraft, fully armed and ready to go, were ranged on the flight deck, the tedium of waiting for something to happen was somewhat relieved by the CBGLO, Maj. P. Mackenzie RAR who gave us a lecture on the Indonesian Army.

Monday 20th May 1963: We sailed through the Sunda Straits early this morning with gun crews closed up & loaded, just in case some KANAKA decided to have a go at us. but the thought of the hail of fire our 17 bofors can throw up must have deterred them & we saw nary a thing." end of quote.

From another National Archive document dated 9th June 1961 says that permission for the events described herein there would have to be permission from the Naval Board, which has never surprised me.

In recent times I received an email from the office of Minister for Defence Personnel that t he reclassification is to Peacetime Service.

It does make me wonder at times that I have found little support from near and far, by this I mean, "Is silence so Golden?"

I have received no correspondence from anyone who at one time or other been involved in this work??

Sadly it has taken its toll on my health so in the coming weeks i will be concentrating on my heath alone.

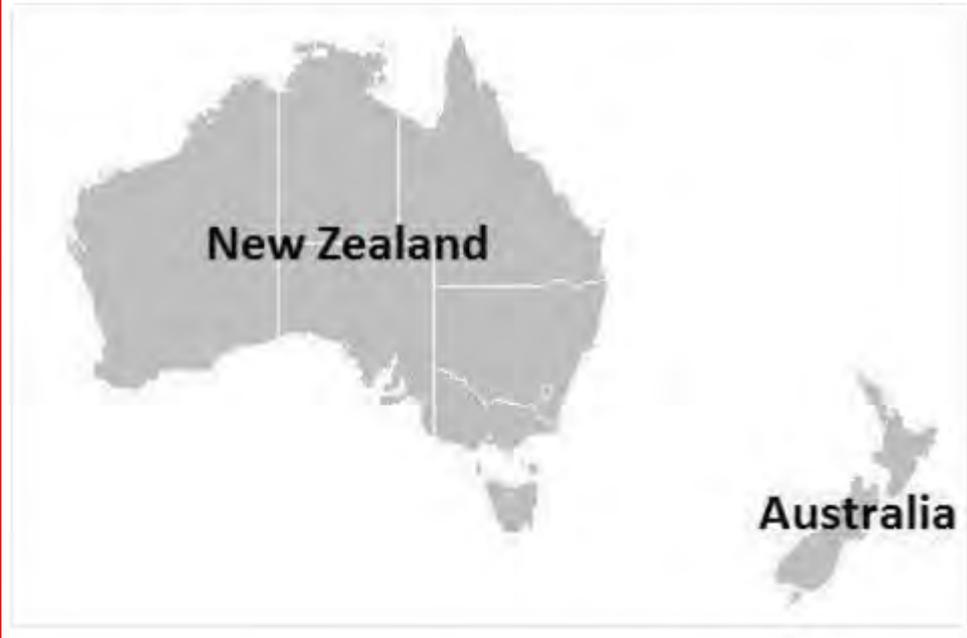
Best Regards

Tas Browning

A Kiwi mate of mine sent me this.

I told him: "All's fair in love and war!"

Bloody Aussies have sent a map to Kim Jong Un in response to his threats to nuke Australia!!



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DEADLINE FOR ARTICLES
FOR NEXT EDITION IS
WEDNESDAY 6th SEPTEMBER
2017
GOING TO PRINT FRIDAY 15th

LETTERS

The Auster.

Someone once told me that, if you can fly an Auster correctly, you can fly anything! Pretty well right on! I remember the 2 Autocars at Nowra in the '50's though I never flew in them. I bought my first Auster, a JIN, from Coventry Airport, UK, in 1971 and flew it to Blackbushe Aerodrome, owned by Wing Commander Don Bennett, of Pathfinder fame. Being another Aussie, he welcomed me with open arms. I flew G-AJUO across the Channel to Cambrais to a full on celebration of Europe's light aircraft scene. I'd painted a large red kangaroo on the rear of the 'plane and the, due to the Aussie reputation from WW1, the welcoming committee made a great fuss of "le Grande Kangaroo!" The whole event was a great one for me in learning to fly the machine. On leaving Blackbushe for Ashford to clear customs and fight plan to Cambrais, we ran into a huge storm which scattered aircraft all over Southern England. I headed south over the sea to do a big loop to get around the storm. We got onto finals at Ashford under wild conditions to find a DC3 running hard behind us and not wanting to go around. I had no radio and could see the flashing red from the tower but I just had to continue and not crash! Anyhow we all got on the ground safely. I recall having to land on one main wheel to balance the x-wind which was fairly severe. My mate had to get out and hold the wing strut so that I could taxi. I decided to refurbish the aircraft completely-new fabric and paint scheme, fit a silencer and 13 gallon belly tank which gave me 28 gallons full fuel. Also fitted alloy heads and new back cover to bring the engine up to 145 HP from 125 hp. The performance now was cruise @ 100mph indicated using 5.9 gallons/hour. Later, with 2 friends, we flew all over France looking to buy anything oldish and flyable. I eventually bought 3 "Grasshopper" Piper cubs, built in 1942 for the US Army Corps in 1942. They were used extensively throughout Europe for spotting etc. aero clubs were selling them off when the engine got to 900 or so hours. After a flight over to UK, the hours went up to 1800 IAW UK CAA regs. Quite a profitable operation. I bought, refurbished ,flew all over and sold 6 Austers of various models. One I'd sold to Lord Richard Cecil and he bent it trying to take off from Heraklion,Crete. so Lloyds of London got me to fly out and repair same ,replacing the engine and undercarriage leg. Lord Richard hired a 737 to take his camera crew and himself off to Rhodesia. He'd fitted a long range fuel tank, it was an Auster 6 which had a single seat up front for the pilot and a single seat aft for an operator of a fair size radio system. To get Crete Customs to release the replacement engine to me was a major exercise in bluff! I finally showed them my gold embossed hard cover CAA Red Licence to let them know I was the BOSS. They gave me the engine under 2 armed guards and a truck (at exorbitant cost) to go direct to the Airport. I was working out in the open with no lifting gear so I managed to get the 2 guards to do a lifting job-with great pride! I was able to tell them how strong they were and could boast to their mates and families of their importance and prowess! Sadly, on the day the job was finished and test flown by me (for fun) Lord Richard was shot point blank by a rebel in the bush at a hot spot in Rhodesia. I was asked to fly the Auster back to UK but, due to tight time frames, declined and the family finally arranged it to be flown to Exeter.

At one stage, I had 3 Varieties of Auster, registrations G-ARLO, G-ARLR and G-ARLP. We refurbished them and it was good to have the three of them doing a flypast at a local air show. Another was done in Camouflage finish-an Auster 3 which was used as a light weight spotter for the UK Military. I sold that to a bloke who brought it out to Melbourne. He was killed during a test flight on an Ultra Light at Berwick.

A memorable flight was from Blackbushe to Belgium in G-AJUO to go to Morsele to look at and buy a Cessna 195. There was a 40knot crosswind blowing for the whole trip. My mate had to get out and hold the wing strut so that I could taxi at Ashford, and then after landing at Ghent to clear customs and then landing at Morsele. The Cessna had a bad reputation for Xwind operations (I found this to be baseless) but the Morsele CFI put me in the hot seat and off we went. I was sweating in the circuit with the rotten wind and bottom muscles nearly cramped but it was a piece of cake -just like a big pussy cat! A heavy night ensued and that wind just kept on blowing for the trip home! I bought the Cessna a bit later.

Blackbushe is where Bin Laden's family got wiped out in recent times. I had a jammed throttle there in the Auster and had to land at 100mph on a long runway and managed to free it at a crucial moment! Another story!

Barry Lister



My Navy

With apologies to Dorothea Mackellar

*The love of beer and women, of wine and song and dance,
Of racehorses and stables just holds you in a trance
Strong love of pints of liquor and dolls with flirty eyes
I know but cannot share it: My love is otherwise.
I love a modern cruiser, with six or eight inch guns
Or even a destroyer, manned by Australia's sons
I love a trip to Hobart or even Trincomalee
To Pompey or to Kure, this is the life for me.
The dark and light grey outlines, all tragic to the moon
The semaphore, the bunting, the lovely meal at noon
A cosy little bunk where I can sleep at will
A spacious bridge to sunbake on, and a sickbay when I'm ill
Core of my heart the Navy, Best in the whole wide world
What greater joy than to salute the white Ensign unfurled
Core of my heart the Navy, land of the rainbow gold
Through Stoppage and Number 10 she pays us back threefold
Over the Pay Bob's table watch after many years
The great reward for all your toil, and sweat, and work, and tears
And when your twelve is finished, you're free to join once more
To serve another five at sea or even on the shore
An open hearted Navy with wilful lavish hand
All you who have not loved her, you will not understand
Though Earth holds many splendours, wherever I may die
I know to what great Navy, my loving thoughts will fly*

*Penned by an anonymous Australian sailor in the late 1940's or
early 1950's*

*Reproduced from a copy typed on signal paper found amongst the effects
of the late*

Signalman Donald PALLISTER, 29328

LETTERS

I refer to the article mentioned on p44 regarding the P.T.A.'s. All I ever see is about the Jindivik, and nothing about the KD2R5 being operated from on board ships at sea?

I was on that unit for almost 5 years. The Jindivik always operated from the J.B Range, while the P.T.A.S operated from ships at sea, giving targets for both A.A. Training & Sea Cat operations. I was the CPO of the unit from the end of 1965 until I paid off in Feb 1970, & I can never find any reference to that unit. I can remember one year in which we did more Sea Time than the Squadrons & yet that unit is never mentioned in any way! I suppose that as it consisted of only one officer (the controller) and 6 various personnel being 1 CPO A/E, 1 Radio PO, 1 Radio J.R., 1 PO Electrician, 1 Armourer & 1 Aircraft Handler (as a driver). We operated from almost every type of ship, including the old Carrier, Sydney but did not operate from any of the DDG's as there was not enough room for our operations. Maybe we were just one of the forgotten units?

Don R. former CMECHA/E

LETTERS

Dear Editor,

Thank you so much for your letter from the webmaster. Sorry about not contacting you but I have family staying just now.

My memories of Nowra are sketchy after such a long time. It was probably late 44 or early 45 when as a member of 828 Squadron we were working up for a strike on Truck. We had clapped out old Avengers that the Yanks had given us. We had no Technical Officers or air publications. It was learn as you go. As an AM (I) I was paid four and six pence a day and we had to send thirty Bob a fortnight home so no one had a camera. For a weekend we tried to get to Sydney, where hospitality was great. You smuggled on the train, and as the jumper came to see tickets (no corridor so he did it on the running boards) As he got nearer we got on the outside and moved forward. It was easy to get through at Sydney. You had to repeat the performance to get back to Nowra. Our ship was Implacable. Later we got beautiful new Avengers in BPF colours and continued operations against the Japs. At the end of the war we had to ditch them at sea on the orders of the Yanks. Our squadron had one PO Air Mechanic of overall maintenance. My section boss was a Killick. All ground crew were commanded by a Crab Flight Sergeant. Our CO was straight Navy, two and a half. Swanson. We disbanded at Golden Hind where I got demobbed but rejoined later.

I joined 808 Squadron when we were attached to HMAS Sydney. I served on upwards of a dozen carriers but Sydney was the cleanest and most efficient that I sailed in. This time around we had technical officers and each section had a Chief Air Mechanic. Overall charge was a Chief Air Mechanic (AE). I was an acting PO Air Mechanic (L). My Chief did regulating so I had a free hand. My lads were all Sprogs but learned quickly. Our Sea Fury aircraft were easy to look after. Sydney set up all manner of record strikes in the Korean Campaign. I cannot remember names except one of two Tasmanians. Corkhill was his name and I had to give him a bollocking for making a snowman instead of falling in.

In Japan I awoke in a house of ill repute knowing that the ship was under sailing orders I grabbed a taxi to the jetty only to see the ship under weigh. I threw all my cash to a bum boat to chase Sydney. We got alongside and a rope ladder came down. I got on board straight into the arms of the Jossman. Next stop Commander VAT Smith. He was impressed with my effort and gave me six days stoppage of leave. This was how long it took us to get to Honkers. I had a bigger adventure on leaving.

Regards. Pat Knowles

WELL DESERVED



Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Tim Barrett AO, CSC, RAN visits HMAS Creswell to present Commander Kerry Stephen AM, RAN (Rtd) Commanding Officer HMAS Air Nymph and Mrs Midge Vodic wife of Sub Lieutenant Anthony Vodic a group Commendation.

The Chief of Navy has awarded a Group Commendation to the crews of two Royal Australian Navy vessels involved in the search and rescue efforts following the 1964 collision of HMA Ships *Melbourne* (I) and *Voyager*. Members of HMA Ships *Air Nymph* and *Air Sprite* pulled 70 survivors from waters off Jervis Bay, on the New South Wales south coast, in a rescue operation that had some on duty for 29 hours straight. During a ceremony at HMAS *Creswell*, on the shores of Jervis Bay, Vice Admiral Tim Barrett said the tragedy had left an indelible mark on the nation and the Navy. "We must recognise the overwhelmingly positive contributions that the crew members of *Air Sprite* and *Air Nymph* made in what would have been horrific circumstances," he said.

"The crews acted promptly, efficiently and with courage in an extremely challenging and traumatic situation to rescue 70 survivors from the sea and from life rafts following the collision. "On a number of occasions, crew members courageously leapt from the search and rescue vessels into the oil-covered water to pull survivors from among the debris. "The exemplary efforts of both crews undoubtedly prevented further loss of life. "The outstanding professionalism and courage of the crews of HMA Ships *Air Sprite* and *Air Nymph* are of the highest order and in the finest traditions of the Royal Australian Navy."

At the time, *Air Sprite* and *Air Nymph* were based at *Creswell*, where they served under the command of the then Lieutenant Kerry Stephen and Sub Lieutenant Tony Vodic. There were three crews of 10 personnel supported by technical sailors to maintain the boats. One crew was at 10 minutes' notice to move whenever aircraft were operating from the Naval Air Station at HMAS *Albatross* or from the aircraft carrier *Melbourne* if she was in the vicinity.

The now retired Commander Stephen spoke of the actions that followed notification of the collision. "I immediately hit the button for the emergency siren...which sounded throughout the whole of *Creswell*, recalling the Marine Section standby crew," he said. "My crew immediately manned *Air Nymph* and we departed within two minutes of that call heading out of Jervis Bay at maximum speed of 28 knots. "Notwithstanding the pitch blackness of the night it was easy to head to the site of the collision because of all the helicopters flying overhead."

It took more than an hour for his vessel to get to the scene which he said was littered with sailors in the water, some without life jackets, escaping the remains of *Voyager* which was all but sunk.

He singled out Able Seaman "Robby" Robinson as an example of the selflessness of the rescue teams and why he had been so committed to ensure both crews were recognised.

"Able Seaman Robinson saw a sailor nearby sink beneath the water, he immediately leapt overboard, swam to the sailor and recovered him from under the water, brining him back to *Air Nymph* and reviving him," Commander Stephen said. Later the same sailor returned to the water for another 30 minutes to clear the propeller of the craft when it became entangled in a submerged life raft. Almost 50 years after that night the men recounted the events in a phone call when Able Seaman Robinson was in hospital nearing his death, a conversation that Commander Stephen said was long overdue. "I received a call from [his] wife...she said he had been so happy in his last few days as I had confirmed his heroism that night, something his family had not believed." The crews worked tirelessly through the night to search for survivors and missing personnel, pulling men directly from the water as well as from life rafts.

"They worked relentlessly in the darkness saving lives with little or no regard for their own safety," Commander Stephen said. "All crew members excelled in the performance of their duties, without complaint and, until today, have never been formally recognised for their outstanding devotion to duty, under extreme circumstances." Midge Vodic, the wife of the late Lieutenant Commander Vodic, said it was deeply gratifying to have the crews acknowledged.

"I know the families certainly appreciate the effort that the Navy has gone to to recognise the crews," she said. "It is certainly a story that I have told my children and grandchildren and should be told nationally as their bravery was unparalleled."

Commander Stephen accepted the honour on behalf of both crews, and immediately donated his commendation to the *Creswell* Museum.

"This will serve as a permanent reminder to visitors of the outstanding work by the crews that fateful night."

CHIEF's MESS HMAS MELBOURNE DATE N. K.





Caption: The Aviation Maintenance and Flight Trials Unit onboard HMAS Manoora gather for a group photo in front of MRH 90 'Cobra 08' during the First of Class Flight Trials.

Mid Caption: The Royal Australian Navy (RAN) conducts the world's first maritime trials of the innovative MRH90 helicopter off HMAS Manoora. The month long testing regime gauged the aircraft's capabilities at sea through takeoffs, landings, munitions transfers and weight load carries. The Aircraft Maintenance and Flight Trials Unit (AMAFTU), comprised of Navy's elite test pilots, aero-systems specialists and aviation engineers, is the Australian Defence Force's leading authority in First of Class Flight Trials (FOCFT). Forty six MRH90's are expected to enter service by mid 2010



RANHFV REUNION 15-17 OCTOBER 2017

A 50th reunion is planned for all persons who served on, or were involved with, the RAN Helicopter Flight Vietnam. Tentative dates have been set for 15-17th October and the venue will be Nowra, NSW.

The program is yet to be finalised, but is likely to include a Service on the Sunday; a dedication on Monday (the date the first contingent left Australia), and a range of social events including a cocktail party, Barbeque etc.

If you are interested in attending please let the organisers know. Details are on our website, or ring John Macartney on (02) 6557 4165.

2017 SLIPSTREAM EDITION

April/May/June

South Australia.

A general warm HELLO to all Members throughout the Nation where-ever they reside. Down south we are experiencing an early winter rainfall which usually is well regarded but the chill factor is a bugga to contend.

ANZAC Day was a success with warm blue skies, large turn-up, good crowds to cheer us onward and an excellent lunch at our usual Windsor Hotel location.

Member Vic Byas led the Division very well with only the occasional "mark-time" for what-ever reason, and a great "Eyes Right" military voice to startle the spectators. Uniformed Gordon Gray carried the Divisional Flag, Brian Thompson and I carried the National Banner in a buffeting wind that blew in unexpectedly and made us work hard to keep upright, and I can not remember who was our right-hand marker. Only out of step twice which would be a record for most of us.

Gary and Sharon Reid from the Qld Division joined us for the ANZAC Day March and lunch.. Great to catch up on all the gossip.

We had a smattering of Naval uniforms to add colour within the ranks and generally speaking, looked impressive. Ian Laidler has forwarded the Editor photos for inclusion within this Slipstream edition, hopefully.

May 17th was our General Meeting to discuss current events and being the temporary secretary, I took the Minutes only to be told I had left Paul Shiels off the apology section and included Michael Cain in the attendance section, when in fact he wasn't. Bloody computers!

The President Michael Stubbington welcomed transferred Member Brian Dutch from the Qld Division as we also did over lunch.

Michael also mentioned the attendance of Gary Reid (Qld) for the Anzac Day ceremonies.

The death of Les Matterson was discussed briefly by those Members who were instrumental in getting the new SA Division established in 1985 with the valuable help of Les and Mary Rayner.

Our thoughts are with son Chris and daughters Sandra and Veronica.

Secretary Jan Akeroyd is back on-deck after a well deserved break away onboard some civil cruise ship with full stabilisers and a decent wine list.

We have all done cruises but there are cruises and there are cruises! The Grey Funnel line wasn't one of them.

The next scheduled Meeting for this Division is on Wednesday the 19th July at The Windsor Hotel starting around 1130 for 1200 lunch followed by a short Meeting and the real Secretary can take the Minutes.

A Special Hello to all ailing Members Nationally, with the wish for your speedy recovery back to your feisty self. Hello also to John Berry, Dick Widger, Junice Cooper, Graham Bailey and Henry Young to name a few. Catch up soon.

I just know that as soon as I close off and ship this off to Ron Batchelor for Slipstream, a host of other topics of general interest will pop up. Always does.

On closing,

She married a sailor because she wanted to have children and rear admirals.

Regards to one and all.

Roger Harrison

Hon. Whipping Boy.

National Secretary's Report June 2017

Here at Nowra the autumn weather has been great however the nights are turning cold and its time the dreaded Westerlies started to blow. However with all the new facilities at HMAS Albatross I guess the sailors of today are much more comfortable than we used to be.

Again I would like to remind all members of the forthcoming event

The 50th Reunion of the RANHFV during October 2017 (Sunday 15th –Tuesday 17th), please note that the 15th and 16th are the two dates that the first contingent left Australia for Vietnam. Further details may also be found on our Website (www.faaaa.asn.au).

Whilst on the subject of Reunions the Associations 5 yearly reunion is scheduled for October 2018 to be held here at Headquarters and it is hoped that the NSW Division will host the event as they have successfully over past years.

On a not-so-happy note, our membership numbers continue to dwindle – mostly because some members aren't renewing their subscriptions. At least 70-80 members have not yet paid their 2017 subscriptions and regrettably are about to be removed from the Slipstream list. distribution. We'd love to keep you, however, so if you haven't paid yet please make a special effort to do so

Sadly we also continue to lose members as we all grow older and since my last report the following have "Crossed the Bar" *John Gunn, Ron Badger, John Utz, Dennis (Tassie) Hartnett, Les (Jukie) Matterson, Gordon Moon, Jim Caldwell, Des (Dusty) Miller, Huie Wells and Peter Penny.*

Our Condolences go out to their families and friends..

Another item of interest that members may like to look at is the Veteran Rehabilitation Project this is being controlled by the Operation Pilgrimage Group, information on this project may be found on www.operationpilgrimagegroup.com.au.

Well that will have to do for this time as the editor is calling for early reports due to problems with his NBN connection so I leave you with the following.

"A thief who stole a calendar got twelve months"

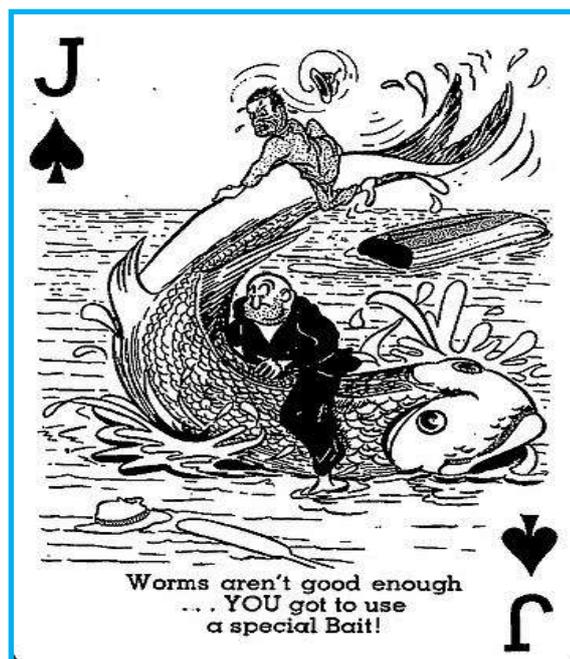
Yours Aye

Pincher

Dick Martin

Hon; National Secretary

FAAAA



Photographic memories

By Alicia Lüdi-Schutz

They were the eyes and ears of the Royal Australian Navy, capturing moments in time that told the stories of conflicts won and lost and the true meaning of comradeship.

Those lifelong friendships came to the fore last week when seventeen men and their wives gathered in the Barossa for the Royal Australian Navy Photographic Reunion.

Travelling from all over Australia, their first "port of call" in the week long reunion was the Tanunda RSL sub-branch where event organiser, Mr Trevor Klose is an active member.

The Vietnam veteran and photographer spent "about 18 months" organising the week hosted in his home region and said he was very proud to have his mates together once again.

"It's amazing, that camaraderie that you have when you are in the service," said Trevor.

"I was in the Navy in 1964 until '73, that's nine years, a lot of these guys we were with still love getting together."

The group represents photographers whose service in the Navy dates back to 1953 through to those still serving in the Reserve today. Photographs they took number into the hundreds of thousands, with many now stored in Canberra's historic archives.

Trevor likened the Navy photographers to a sporting club gathering for a Grand Final reunion.

"I guess it's like a footy team, that sort of camaraderie. I understand why Aussie Rules footballers and all the old guys from VFL...how they have their 60, 70, 80 year reunions - they just love it and so do we.

"We all talk about the good old days. You can go over to any of these guys, not one of them would be talking about what's happening today in this world. It's all about what happened years ago and the great times we had together."

From capturing action at ports, on-board ships and from aeroplanes to photographing royalty, troops and equipment, nothing was missed by the team during their terms of service.

"On the aircraft carriers, there would always be a guy with a still camera and a movie camera - an old Bell and Howell. Every take off and land on was always photographed," said Trevor.

Along with albums of photographs that were passed between those in attendance, close to 2,000 images were shown on-screen during Monday night's dinner at Tanunda RSL, rekindling many old memories.

"We used the old Linhof cameras...the ones with the bellows, and flashlights," Trevor said of his time on the aircraft carrier, Melbourne and troop carrier, Sydney.

"On board the ships we had dark rooms - everything was black and white and we had to develop the prints at sea."

Thought of as "the best job in the Navy" by many reunion participants, it wasn't all just travelling around the world, visiting exotic destinations and photographing troops and Royal tours.

The harsh reality of war had to be documented and memories and images of the Vietnam War still haunt Trevor today.

"We actually had to take photos of bodies when people were killed...for records," he said.

"People like John Dawe, he served with the Americans and was in the helicopter gun shift, he was just recognised last year for his service because out of all the photographers, he probably was the only one who was in the Iroquois choppers in Vietnam.

"He was there for two years and saw more than all of us."



Eddie Schluter served in the Royal Australian Navy from '53 to '59; Trevor Klose, from '64 to '73 and Pedro Fenwick '59 to '68.



Royal Australian Navy Photographic Reunion at the Tanunda RSL club rooms last week. Top row: John O'Brien, who has just completed 50 years' service; Steve Dent, 45 years of continuous service in the photographic branch and Charlie Lammers. Middle: Dick Green, Pony Moore, Brian Warnest, Mick Pasfield, Chris Galloway, Rick Reynolds and John Kwiatkowski. Bottom: George Anderson, John Dawe, Raey de Ross, Eddie Schluter and Pedro Fenwick. Seated: Trevor Klose and Bungy Williams.

NSW Report

For some of you there will be no magazine this issue as overdue membership fees have forced us to remove you from the mailing list. Old age is a worry and we tend to forget things but everyone has been sent a mailed reminder and the costs involved with 'Slipstream' forces this option on us. No doubt I will get a few phone calls re this matter and that will resolve it for that person but please if someone asks you if you have your copy and then complains that they have not received theirs then jog their memory and ask them if they are financial.

The perch at the top of the tree has a fair bit more space on it lately, quite a few old mates have left us and some more are doing it tough. Words of condolence aren't much but they are offered in sincere sympathy to the loved ones of the deceased by all of us in their time of mourning.

'Manuel Labour' is and has always been a problem with a lot of us and when so called friends ask for a hand to help move them is just something you have to grin and bear but I wish over the years they had not gathered so many artefacts. Not only the truck but 4 loads and he sat and watched.

All the recipients of the raffle have had their prizes delivered one way or another and from the Committee we wish to thank you all for supporting us. Finances these days are something that have to be carefully watched as money seems to run like water. Our AGM went off well and we have a larger Committee now than before; this has been brought about by the serving members we have on it getting postings and to keep things on an even keel we added another 'uniform' to make up for those who are away for periods. When posted we do not remove them from their position and on return they continue as before.

This year sees a few significant milestones in FAA history and quite a gathering of RANHFV is forecasted for October. For those who have not been contacted in regards to this I imagine there will be a notice in this edition or else just get in touch with John Macartney, 14 Joel Drive, Old Bar, NSW 2430, (02) 6557 4165, 0427 787 296, jmaca@bigpond.com

Thanks to those who took part in the march in Sydney on Anzac Day for your effort and also a pat on the back for Fred Lane for awakening the desire to attend. Locally this area had a very good roll up at all of the ceremonies and numbers of those attending here just seem to keep growing. At the Dawn Service at Greenwell Point it was noticed that the return march up the hill out of the park appeared to some to be steeper than the year before, could age have something to do with that?

Greg Wise



A DIGGER DIED TODAY

He was getting old and
paunchy
And his hair was falling
fast,
And he sat around the
R.S.L.,
Telling stories of the past

Of a war that he once
fought in
And the deeds that he had
done,
In his exploits with his
mates;
They were heroes, every
one.

And 'tho sometimes to his
neighbours
His tales became a joke,
All his mates listened
quietly
For they knew where of he
spoke.

But we'll hear his tales no
longer,
For ol' Jack has passed
away,
And the world's a little
poorer
For a Digger died today

He won't be mourned by
many,
Just his children and his
wife.
For he lived an ordinary,
Very quiet sort of life.

He held a job and raised a
family,
Going quietly on his way;
And the world won't note
his passing,
'Tho a Digger died today.

When politicians leave this
earth,
Their bodies lie in state,
While thousands note their
passing,

And proclaim that they
were great.

The Media tell of their life
stories
From the time that they
were young,
But the passing of a Digger
Goes unnoticed, and
unsung.

Is the greatest contribution
To the welfare of our land,
Some smoothie who breaks
his promise
And cons his fellow man?

Or the ordinary fellow
Who in times of war and
strife,
Goes off to serve his
country
And offers up his life?

The politician's stipend
And the style in which they
live,
Are often disproportionate,
To the service that they
give.

While the ordinary Digger,
Who offered up his all,
Is paid off with a medal
And perhaps a pension,
small.

It is not the politicians
With their compromise and
ploys,
Who won for us the
freedom
That our country now
enjoys.

Should you find yourself in
danger,
With your enemies at hand,
Would you really want
some cop-out,
With his ever-waffling
stand?

Or would you want a Digger
His home, his country, his

kin,
Just a common Digger,
Who would fight until the
end.

He was just a common
Digger,
And his ranks are growing
thin,
But his presence should
remind us
We may need his likes
again

For when countries are in
conflict,
We find the Digger's part,
Is to clean up all the
troubles
That the politicians start.

If we cannot do him honour
While he's here to hear the
praise,
Then at least let's give him
homage
At the ending of his days.

Perhaps just a simple
headline
In the paper that might say:

"OUR COUNTRY IS IN
MOURNING,
A DIGGER DIED TODAY."

SLIPSTREAM

QUEENSLAND DIVISION MAY 2017

What pleasant weather we're having in QLD at the moment. Here we are on the edge of winter and I've been tidying the pool up and was very tempted to jump in. Discretion took over from valour though. I hate chilly water and it is just on the verge of being so. Anzac Day was hot as usual –cracking 30c—and we were pretty well saturated by the time we'd got to the lower end of Queen Street. I'd been telling my feet to keep pointing ahead for the last bit! As I've been a bit crook of late, we went down to Brisbane on the Saturday to do a test run of the March course. That went ok so decided to have a go on the day. I'd booked a jeep just in case but didn't use it.. Paul Woods does a huge job of getting the banner rigged with assistance of any others who turn up. Cam Barnes and Ron Marsh do well. Paul didn't march but took charge of the equipment to be loaded into the RSL ute at the end. Thanks, Paul. Our marching numbers were down on the day, but still ok. Ray Murrell took the lead as the new President. I dropped in behind to make sure he didn't get out of step!. We were able to get 4 scouts to carry the banner and they loved the importance of the job. Ray had booked a table to 20 or so at the Kedron Wavell RSL for our "after March" lunch. It was pretty crowded so the booking was appreciated: and the lunch was good to. It was good to see James Buchanan of the Vietnam Helicopter Flight, Ron Marsh, Trevor ,Des there with us. Our usual venues have either been sold, renovated or all three, so we are keen to find another permanent venue. We can't hold any raffles at club venues. Ray and John are investigating the use of the Pine Rivers Naval Association site. Sounds promising. Our committee now is comprised of the following after the AGM:

President—Ray Murrell; Vice President—John Stewart; Secretary—Trevor Tite; Treasurer—Des Kelly; Committee—Gary Reid; Cam Barnes; Alan Arnell. Ray is aiming to set up an annual Calendar of events before too long. I will continue doing the Slipstream Letter and our local Newsletter for the time being. It was good to see Noel Bennett who was able to give good info. on the need or not of an Auditor. Noel has been able to give his flying stories a good airing. By the way, Ron (editor) ,the tale of the "search for the golden Lyre Bird" was from me. A fun couple of chilly days!

It has been a sad time for us. Kev Simonsen, Dennis Hartnett and John (blue) Devery have passed on. Blue and his family (of many) used to join us at our Anzac Day venue. I'm going to try to get them to keep coming. We always had a good laugh with the gang. Ray Guest has recently called to see some old friends during his travels and most are on the crook side of the fence. I pray there'll be good recoveries.I think Blue's address is where one of my sister's live with her family of 5 kids in Brisbane many years ago. Need to check that out.

Tales of Austers got me going. I bought my first one from Coventry in 1971and flew it down to Blackbushe where Wing Commander Bennett of Pathfinder Fame,was the owner. Both being Aussies, we got on very well.I finished up owning 6 or 7 to refurbish, fly about as demos and sell on. Having lots of fun learning how to handle them in all conditions. It is said that if you can fly an Auster properly , you can fly anything! They sometimes gave me a hard time trying!

Ray Guest and Dot were at Nowra for the Tracker/816 reunion and Dot lost a valuable diamond ring. Much angst and hours spent searching-around Nowra, out at the Museum and Ray reckons that outside the Museum there would have been a big crowd there for the BBQ, standing on the gravel, etc. Someone said, pointing at the ground "what's that?" and there it was shining like a beacon in the gravel! Wonderful.

Son George and wife Caroline have just produced their 1st child, a boy-Henry John George Lister. We may get over to see them-depends on my health-so I will see how I'm going by the end of June. I sent an email asking George if Henry was walking yet and the answer came back in a flash—"Yep, but a bit like John Cleese!" Smart lad. George has a restaurant in Whitstable, Kent.

Well, there's probably more to say but it's disappeared for a bit so I'll say adios, mes amis.

Barry Lister

Immediate Past President

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN DIVISION



The Western Australian Division celebrated the 40th Anniversary of the formation of the Fleet Air Arm Association on Sunday 21st May. Bad weather prevented us from attending at Monument Hill around the FAAA / FESR Plaques - so we adjourned to the Navy Club for Lunch and refreshments and plenty of companionship. I must thank Jack Suriano for first suggesting the erection of a plaque honouring personnel in the Fleet Air Arm and the suggestion that we honour the 40th Anniversary the way we did. I would also thank Jack for having us join the Australia—America Association. They celebrate the “Battle of the Coral Sea” where each year we attend, as the Lord Mayor of the City of Perth is the Patron refreshment’s are at the Council Chamber’s which has by far the best catered refreshments in Perth; good on yah Jack.



(Back) Brett Dowsing; Keith & Doris Taylor; Greg & Sharron Spargo; Mike Keogh; John & Meryll Brown;

(2nd Row) Greg & Ann Kelson; Peter Adams; Barrie Dunbar; Barbara Atthowe; Paul Hodgkinson; Jan & Jim Bush; Lyn Keogh; Margaret Mayo; Owen & Shirley Gardiner

(Front Row) Leonie Corby; Joyce & Terry Rumens; Bill Atthowe; Jack Suriano; Theo Bushe-Jones; Kevin Baxter; John Selsmark; missing Shirley Suriano.

2017 is turning out to be a bad year; we have lost four Members so far this year with Les Hill-house and Jim Caldwell passing since our last report, the sick bay is also growing at a fast rate.

However, we have added five new Members this year and welcome Trevor Rieck; Phillip Smith;

Robert Woodrow; Robert Dennis & Steve Chaplin welcome to you all.

ANZAC Day went well, numbers down on last year but we had another good day after the March.

(see article in this edition) We also awarded Honary Membership to Chris Faulds of Maco's Fine Meats for his continued great service to the Division.

Bunning's sausage sizzle days are assisting with the Division's bank balance —our last prior to ANZAC

Day was our best yet. The customers asked a lot of questions on who we were and what we did and were happy to accept some memorabilia and give their thanks for what we have done as servicepersonnel.

It's the Bird(ies) migratory period again; couples disappearing all over the world by air and ship, hopefully they will return in the next couple of month's. Happy travelling all

Keith Taylor Scribe.

WEBMASTER'S REPORT JUNE 2017

Although it sounds odd, my duties as Webmaster are wider than just being, well, the Webmaster. I also run the National Database, which in concert with each Division keeps track of each of our members and their status. Because it has been up and running for a couple of years now, it allows very accurate trend information on all aspects of our membership.



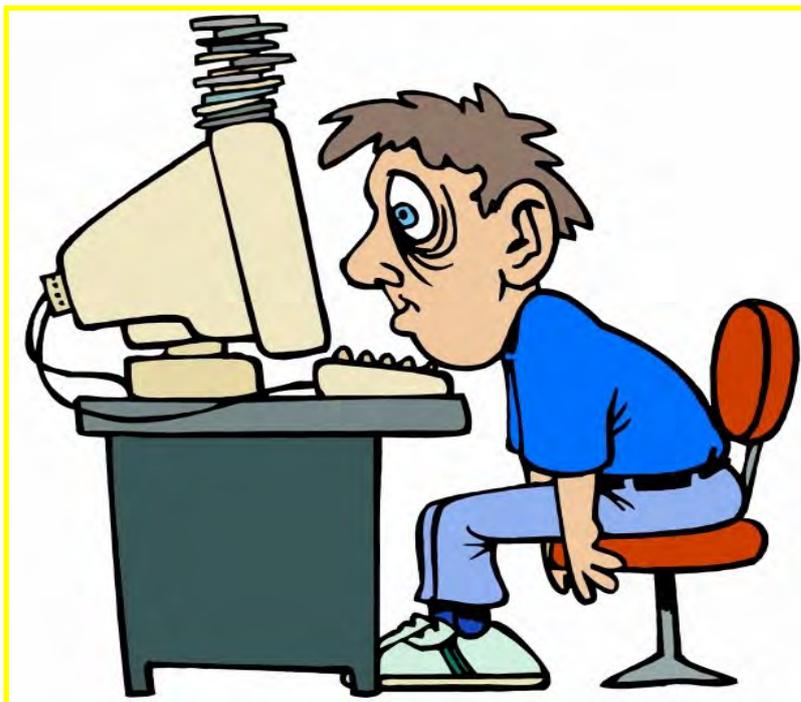
Father time took 22 of our mates last year, which is a heavy burden for both their families and the Association to bear. A further 63 have chosen not to renew their memberships. We have managed to increase our recruiting over the year but the net result is that we are still going backwards.

If we don't turn this around the Association will eventually cease to exist. We therefore need to keep our existing members and recruit new ones. The help of every single one of you is vital. Firstly, if you are thinking of leaving – don't! Stick with us, because you were (or still are) part of a 'band of brothers' – that is, the RAN Fleet Air Arm. Second, we need each of you to recruit just one new member each. We all know a mate who isn't in the Association so take them out for a beer or a coffee and tell them why it's a good idea! Joining up is easy: simply fill out the form on our website or ring me, Marcus Peake, on 0413 250 969 and I'll organise it for you.

In the meantime, enjoy the thing that consumes my life: the website! It's full of good stuff and will continue to be so. Happy reading.

Until next time,

Webmaster



SLIPSTREAM VICTORIA DIVISION

Greetings to all members from the Victoria Division.

Like all divisions Anzac Day was the highlight of the last quarter. Unusually for Melbourne the weather was dreadful early (don't laugh) but the skies cleared just before we stepped of and we managed to stay dry for the duration of the march.

This year we tried a new venue for our reunion, the Tivoli Club in Windsor and the reports indicate that most members were happy with the service and welcome we were given. The march was led by our President, Chris Fealy looking resplendent in his Captain's uniform. With a bit of persuasion, Rob Gagnon dusted off his Commander's uniform and has now set a standard for following years.

John Clifford left his retirement village and caught two trains and then travelled a kilometre along Dandenong Road on his motorised scooter to join our reunion. A mighty effort John. Brian Terry joined us as usual from Mildura but unfortunately his good lady Phillipa is in sick bay and we wish her a speedy recovery. Thanks to Kay Clark who made sure Alan (Happy) was able to join us. Happy is not too mobile these days and it was great to see him. Well done Kay. Thanks to John Fields and George Self who proved themselves to be raffle ticket sellers of the first order and raised a good amount for our coffers. They may well have a permanent job.

By the time this goes to print we will have had our June meeting at the Mission to Seafarers in Docklands. We are still looking for a permanent home and this meeting is a trial to see if it is suitable. Brian Farthing has recently joined the Victoria Division having moved to Bairnsdale. We welcome Brian and whilst he is some distance from Melbourne hopefully we will catch up with him shortly.

Jeremy Butler who is living in London for a few years will be back in Melbourne for our next meeting. August 26th and 27th will see our Annual Dinner at Hastings and our Memorial Service at HMAS Cerberus. This always a major week-end and we look forward to a good turn-out

Mal Smith
Secretary



Chris Fealy and Rob Gagnon



Mal Smith, Rob Earle, Slim Smith,
John Fields



Ken Pryor, Scott Myers, Mal Smith, Rob Earle,
Rob Gagnon



Brian Terry and Mal Smith

GOING NO WHERE



Guess which well known artist from the Nowra area was planning a trip to the snow but did not even make it out of the Fleet Air Arm museum carpark and had to ring for help. Photo taken by an unnamed person. But well done John for being awarded the OAM for services to the visual arts as a maritime artist and to the community. He is the official artist for the Fleet Air Arm Museum, with a gallery named in his honour in 2014



Nowra Hill Public School
150th
Anniversary
1867-2017



HMAS Albatross joins celebrations planned for Nowra Hill Public School's 150th Anniversary

Nowra Hill Public School is in its 150th year and the school is in the midst of planning for celebrations to take place on Saturday 14th October.

A Celebration Fete filled with activities will be held at the school from 10am to 3pm. From games to performances, stalls and jumping castles, to displays and memorabilia, there will be events for people of all ages of the community to enjoy. HMAS Albatross CO, CAPT Sneath, will be in attendance and a helicopter will be on display.

A Reunion Dinner will be hosted at the HMAS Albatross Fleet Air Arm Museum from 6.00pm and there will be entertainment, slideshows and stories from teachers and students to ensure a great night.

Nowra Hill first opened a school in 1867 to service the local farming community. After four years, poor attendance and an unsuitable building caused the school to close. A new school was built in 1877 and at that time Nowra Hill was a busy community with a Post Office, Church and the school serving a large piggery, dairy farming and logging. But as these activities dwindled the school shut again in February 1926.

HMAS Albatross, Nowra Hill, was commissioned on 31st August 1948. It was not long before married quarters were built and families moved into the area. In 1954 approval was granted for the establishment of a public school to be known as 'Nowra RAN'. A school building, which essentially remains today, was erected on the original site. The name of the school was altered to 'Nowra Hill' in 1955.

The school was opened on 8th February 1956 with an enrolment of 64 children. By 1963 the enrolment was 120 and with the exception of two farming families, all were from Navy families. Today the school has an enrolment of 172 children of which 54 come from Defence families.

The school is calling on all students, teachers, parents and friends from the past and the present to join us on our day. The organising committee would also welcome old photos and memorabilia that could be displayed on the day.

QUEENSLAND ANZAC LUNCHEON



Enjoying their Qld Anzac Luncheon are: Barbara Murrell, Flossie Nugent, Brenda Stewart

A Posthumous Bravery Award



Mr Shane Bingham holds his father's, the late Mr Harold Leslie Bingham, AM, BEM, commendation and certificate for Brave Conduct at his home in Barragup, Western Australia

A posthumous bravery award was recently awarded to the late Mr Harold Leslie Bingham AM BEM, a former Navy Clearance Diver. Mr Bingham prevented a deadly situation by detonating volatile explosives at the Nanutarra Roadhouse in the remote Pilbara region of Western Australia. For his actions, Mr Bingham was commended for brave conduct.



Royal Australian Navy aircrew stand in front of the Seahawk S-70B-2 from HMAS Arunta at Australia's main operating base in the Middle East region.

Royal Australian Navy Seahawk helicopter 'Skeletor' has flown its last operational flight after a career logging 6,200 airframe hours and spanning more than 28 years of service. Navy took the opportunity to retire the anti-submarine helicopter S-70B-2, serial N24-011 during HMAS *Arunta*'s recent maintenance period in Bahrain while deployed in the Middle East. The helicopter's last flight from the ship was into Australia's main operating base in the region, where it was dismantled and prepared for transport back to Australia.

Arunta Flight Commander Lieutenant Commander Stewart Mathies said the helicopter provided great service and rarely missed a beat. "She has behaved brilliantly for us, we are hoping that its replacement does exactly the same," he said.

"She has been an amazing aircraft - just amazing." Navy's fleet of S-70B-2 helicopters is being replaced by the newer and greatly developed Seahawk MH-60R helicopter, often referred to as the Romeo model, which is operated by 725 Squadron at HMAS *Albatross* in Nowra, New South Wales.

A Romeo model will soon arrive in-theatre so *Arunta* can maintain its extended surveillance and interception capability as it patrols with the multinational Combined Maritime Forces in the Middle East. Lieutenant Commander Mathies said the Romeo was Navy's next generation of submarine hunter and anti-surface warfare helicopter.

"The Romeo has already proven itself on operations both with HMAS *Perth* here in the Middle East last year and on other navy activities," he said. The MH-60R is equipped with highly sophisticated combat systems designed to employ Hellfire air-to-surface missiles and the Mark 54 anti-submarine torpedo.

Twenty four Romeo naval combat helicopters will replace the older S-70B-2 helicopters currently serving with 816 Squadron.

ACT DIVISION UPDATE

Hi again to all for this edition of Slipstream.

ANZAC Day in the Nation's Capital was a very wet day which resulted in a lower than normal attendance, but those who did brave the elements advised that whilst they ended up soaked it was a proud day for all.

A number of ACT members and partners traveled to HMAS ALBATROSS to attend the FAA Centenary Dinner Dance at the FAA Museum on 20th May. It was a very enjoyable evening and the food was excellent and entertainment by the Navy Band was first class. A big thanks to the organisers of this event and to Terry Hetherington and his team at the Museum for the venue preparations.



Andrew Roach, Les Gernyi, John Schonberger, VADM Tim Barrett (CN) and Ian Daley
at the FAA Centenary Dinner.

The ACT Division held a get together at the Canberra Club on Friday 26th May and around 15 personnel attended. The next function is a Winery Tour of Murrumbateman region wineries for members and partners on Sunday 9th July 17. An email has been sent to members seeking expressions of interest and we hope to get a good turn-out for this day. Mini bus transport will be provided for the day so if want to have an enjoyable day out and wish to sample a few of our local wines, please get in early to book your place on the tour.

A number of ACT Division members attended Peter Penny's funeral on 5th June at Worrigea, following Peter's passing away on 26th May in Canberra. It was a very moving service and although Peter had only recently moved to Canberra, his home was definitely the Nowra area and therefore it was fitting that he was returned there for his final farewell. RIP Peter and our thoughts go out to his wife Diedre, son Darrin and their extended family.

The SE QLD Birdies reunion will be held on the last Friday of October (Friday 27 October 2017) and I expect there will be another good attendance of Birdies at this event. If you need more info regarding the reunion and the code for discount accommodation at the Oaks Hotels, contact ex CPOATV Wayne Avery via email at waavery@gmail.com

Well that is all for this edition. Until next time take care.

Regards,

Schonners

John Schonberger
President, ACT Division

UNVEILING OF LIFE MEMBERS

Anzac Day 2017

The Western Australian Division unveiled its Life Members Board on ANZAC Day thanks to the hard work of our Historical Officer John Brown. Designed and produced in the same format as the Honour Roll Board it will be hung in Clive Mayo's "Church" where Members meet each week at Rosie O'Grady's Hotel in Northbridge.

It was our intention to have our Longest serving Life Member Theo Bushe-Jones with President Greg Kelson unveil the board; however illness prevented Theo's attendance, so we went with the Youngest Naval person present who was Midshipman Nicholas Wright from Nowra, part of the Number2 Flight Training School at RAAF Pearce to Officiate, Nicholas was "Chuffed" to be asked to be part of the unveiling.



Midshipman Nicholas Wright with President Greg Kelson



Owen Gardiner & Wife Shirley with "Penny" (last Slipstream article) & Meryll Brown (the Guinness belongs to Bomber) on the Church Pew



Member for Gilmore Ms Ann Sudmalis MP, Senator the Hon Marise Payne, Minister for Defence, Commander Fleet Air Arm, Commodore Chris Smallhorn RAN, and CO HMAS Albatross Captain Fiona Sneath, RAN

Minister of Defence, The Honourable Marise Payne, and the local member for Gilmore, Ann Sudmalis inspected the progress of the \$157 million Helicopter Aircrew Training System and the Fleet Air Arm's operational 816 Squadron at HMAS *Albatross* recently. Since its beginning in September 2015 the Training System facility has developed considerably with the majority of infrastructure now underway. *Albatross* will become the home for initial helicopter training for all Navy and Army aircrew and will allow for a higher level of training prior to conversion to operational flying squadrons such as those that fly the MRH-90 Taipan and MH-60R Romeo helicopters.

The project includes a new training centre with three flight simulators, refurbished hangars and workshops, new living accommodation and a new aircraft type, the EC-135T2 helicopter.

Commander Fleet Air Arm, Commodore Chris Smallhorn said that the facility will allow for streamlined training that incorporates and embraces high fidelity simulation.

"We will embrace the levels of simulator training previously reserved for front line types right from the beginning of an aviator's rotary wing transition training," he said.

"This enables students to experience the skills necessary to manage complex flight operations and emergencies in a safe environment where the overall learning value is enhanced and strengthen the in-aircraft airborne learning experience."

As part of the visit, Minister Payne experienced a 'flight' in the EC135T2 simulator.

"The simulation was very realistic and training on these systems will benefit our operational capability. The more training that we do in this context, which is so real, the more operational availability we will have," Minister Payne said.

"It made a real difference for me to see first hand something that until now had only been a brief on paper; it brought the technical aspects of the project alive. "In full flight, the training facility has a training capacity of up to 130 students a year from both the Navy and Army. That student body will be made up of pilots, aviation warfare officers, aircrewman and loadmasters, as well as qualified aircrew returning for instructor training.

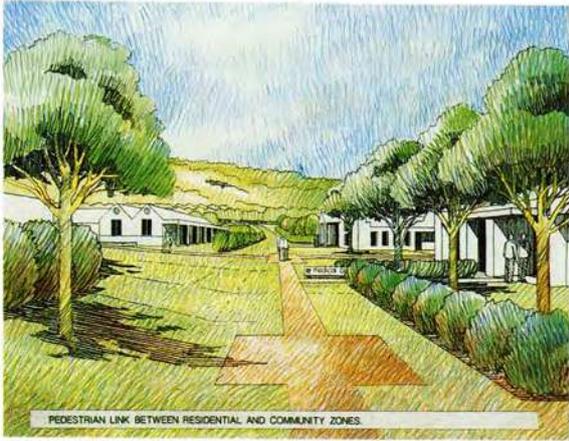


**Fleet Base Option 3
Captains Point
Notional Development Plan**

In this plan, while most of the fleet base is located on reclaimed wetland adjacent to HMAS Creswell and south of Hyam's Beach, some of the facilities have been concealed in tree cover on the western slopes of the study area.

The base is generally outside the visual catchment of Jervis Bay visitors but is visible both from HMAS Creswell and Hyam's Beach. To minimise the visual contrasts, landscaping and buffer zones have been established and major electrical services reticulated underground.

While development is exposed to easterly winds, it has defence advantages in grouping Naval facilities and consolidating human settlement to the western bay edge leaving the areas of Beecroft and Bherwerre in their natural state.





LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Hi Ron,

Many thanks for allowing me to 'proof' read articles prior to your final draft for publication.. In particular the "True Story Of Butch O'Hare" (page 28, March 2017 SLIPSTREAM). I HAVE A COPY OF A 1984 EDITION OF Time-Life books "The Carrier War" and chapter 2, "Blunting the Japanese Onslaught" includes details of his actions which I will repeat in part. To paraphrase "THE DONALD, I think I have uncovered some Alternative Facts", which I believe would be of interest to the majority of your readers.

As well as submissions for SLIPSTREAM, I was interested in reading the print press promotions for the coming "Battle of the Coral Sea" commemorations, and afterwards the article in May 18 2017 Navy News on Australian born US Navy Fighter Pilot Leslie L.B. Knox.

Hoping you can find room in the June 2017 SLIPSTREAM I submit two articles for your consideration. But first to set the scene; following the attack on Pearl Harbour Japanese forces swept through the Pacific like a typhoon with six Aircraft carriers. The Americans had four including the Lexington and the Yorktown in the south west Pacific ocean.

The US flattops carried squadrons of torpedo bombers, dive bombers and about 20 Grumman F4F Wildcat fighters to oppose the superior Mitsubishi A6M2 Zeros.

Two of the Lexicon's Wildcat pilots were Lieutenant Commander John S. "Jimmy" Thach and Lieutenant Edward "Butch" O'Hare. On the morning of 20 Feb 1942 the Lexicons radar detected an unidentified aircraft, Captain Frederick C. "Ted" Sherman ordered Jimmy Thach to intercept it. Thach and his wingman set off and shot down the KAWANISHI H6K four engine Mavis Flying Boat. Sherman assumed that the Mavis had transmitted his position to its base near Rabaul, he called the crew to battle stations and launched aircraft patrols..

Late in the afternoon Thach took off again with six Wildcats to relieve the six on patrol at that time. Nine Japanese aircraft were detected in close range so all the Wildcats engaged the twin engine bombers and shot down eight, one escaped.

Whilst this action was going on Sherman launched four fresh fighters led by Butch O'Hare. As they joined the battle a second group of nine Jap bombers approached. O'Hare and his wingman saw the raiders first and attacked from behind. He aimed at a bomber engine and as his bullets hit, the engine seemed to jump out of the wing mounting. The plane dropped into the sea and Butch shot an engine off the wing of a second then a third and a fourth and finally, one more kill.

In just four minutes of action O'Hare destroyed five of the enemy as the battle moved directly over the carrier and her escorts, their crews cheering wildly; though two Wildcats were lost in the action only one pilot was killed, the other ditched alongside a destroyer and was rescued. Butch O'Hare, with five kills in one flight, had become the US Navy's first ace of the war and was awarded the Medal of Honour.

In the photo opposite, President Roosevelt congratulates Lieutenant Edward "Butch" O'Hare after awarding him the Medal of Honour in 1942 for downing five Japanese bombers. The ceremony was attended by (from left) Navy Secretary Frank Knox, Admiral Ernest J. King and the flyers wife.

Note; "Jimmy" Thach is worthy of further mention. He developed the "Thach Weave" a manoeuvre to counter the Zero's Superior agility over the Wildcats. He later devised the "Big Blue Blanket", to counter the Kamikazi menace to aircraft Carriers; but that's another story for another day.

Cheers --- Jim Lee



Aussie pilot lost without a trace

SGT Dave Morley

AMONG the 543 US Navy members killed during the Battle of the Coral Sea was an Australian-born fighter pilot.

Grumman F4F Wildcat pilot Ensign Leslie Lockhart Bruce Knox (pictured) was born in November 1916 in Brisbane's Kelvin Grove, and later moved to the US with his family, where he attended school in New Jersey.

On the evening of May 7, 1942, 11 Wildcats led by LCDR James Flatley climbed above USS *Yorktown* to intercept Japanese aircraft, amid haze, rain showers and failing light.

Ensign Knox, then 25, was flying in the rear of the formation as wingman to LT William Woollen.

Suddenly, a formation of six Japanese Type 97 'Kate' torpedo bombers appeared from a cloud and flew below the Wildcats, moving in the opposite direction.

Ensign Knox had the best opportunity to attack and broke formation to chase the enemy aircraft, destroying one with his first machine-gun burst and dispersing the formation.

Meanwhile, the remainder of LCDR Flatley's formation attacked a group of Type 99 'Val' dive-bombers, breaking up that formation too, destroying 21 of the 27 attacking Japanese aircraft.



As the US fighters were making their way back to the *Yorktown*, several Japanese aircraft also joined the landing pattern, mistaking the US carriers for their own, but anti-aircraft fire repelled them after lookouts saw the different colour of their navigation lights.

Ensign Knox did not return to the *Yorktown* and no trace of his aircraft was ever found.

The US Navy posthumously promoted Knox to lieutenant for his actions on May 7, 1942, and awarded him the Navy Cross, the second highest gallantry award for US Navy personnel after the Medal of Honour.

In 1943, the US Navy named the destroyer escort, DE-580, in honour of Ensign Knox and the USS *Leslie LB Knox* went on to serve with distinction in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.



CENTENARY OF AUSTRALIAN NAVAL AVIATION

Past and serving members of the Royal Australian Navy's Fleet Air Arm and distinguished guests came together to celebrate at The Centenary of Australian Naval Aviation Dinner Dance at the Fleet Air Arm Museum.

The event marked the 100-year anniversary of the embarkation of a Sopwith Baby Bi-plane onto the Town-class light cruiser, HMAS Brisbane. The aircraft was used for reconnaissance missions to find an



Commander Fleet Air Arm - Commodore Chris Smallhorn, RAN, Mr Ian Irving - Chief Executive of Northrop Grumman Australia, Mr Guy Sherborne son of the late Commander Fred Sherborne RAN (Rtd) and Mr Terry Hetherington stand next to the display case containing Mr Sherborne's father's flying equipment and other artefacts. SBLT Sherborne - who later rose to the position of Commander Air at HMAS Albatross in 1958 - was shot down in his F4F Grumman Wildcat over Chateaufrenard, outside Avignon in the south of France in 1944 during the Second World War. He was rescued and hidden by the French Resistance sympathizers and his plane was hidden in a nearby river. Relics from CMDR Sherborne's aircraft will be returned to Nowra and Northrop-Grumman Australia have donated the display case in which the artefacts will be exhibited at the Fleet Air Arm Museum.

Mr Terry Hetherington, Rear Admiral Mark Campbell, CSC, RAN, and Commander Fleet Air Arm, Commodore Smallhorn, RAN, reveal the commemorative artwork which celebrates the Centenary of Australian Naval Aviation and the aircraft that have been flown in the last 100 years of Australian Naval Aviation.



Warrant Officer Ben Sime, MG, and Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Tim Barrett, AO, CSC, RAN, pose in front of his portrait at the Centenary of Australian Naval Aviation Dinner Dance.

An oldie but a goldie

An elderly scot lay dying in his bed.

While suffering the agonies of impending death,

he suddenly smelled the aroma of his favourite scones wafting up the stairs..

He gathered his remaining strength, and lifted himself from the bed.

Leaning on the wall, he slowly made his way out of the bedroom,

and with even greater effort, gripping the railing with both hands, he crawled downstairs.

With laboured breath, he leaned against the door-frame, gazing into the kitchen.

Were it not for death's agony, he would have thought himself already in heaven, for there,

spread out upon the kitchen table were literally hundreds of his favourite scones.

Was it heaven? Or was it one final act of love from his devoted scottish wife of sixty years,

seeing to it that he left this world a happy man?

Mustering one great final effort, he threw himself towards the table, landing on his knees in rumped posture.

His aged and withered hand trembled towards a scone at the edge of the table,

when it was suddenly smacked by his wife with a wooden spoon

'Bugger off,' she said, 'they're for the funeral.'

MY FORGETTING IS GETTING BETTER

My forgetting is getting better

But my remembering is broke

To you that may seem funny

But, to me ,it's not a joke

For as I sit 'here' wondering

If I really should be 'there'

As I try to think it through,

I haven't got a prayer

I often walk into a room,

Thinking 'what did I come in here for?'

I wrack my brain, but all in vain!

Zero, is my score.

When I go out shopping,

And someone stops to chat,

AS the person walks away, I wonder

'Who the hell was that?'

Yes, my forgetting is getting better

But my remembering is broke,

And it's driving me plumb crazy

And it isn't any joke.

I don't remember who I got this from,

Or who I've sent it to.

So please disregard this message,

If it came from you

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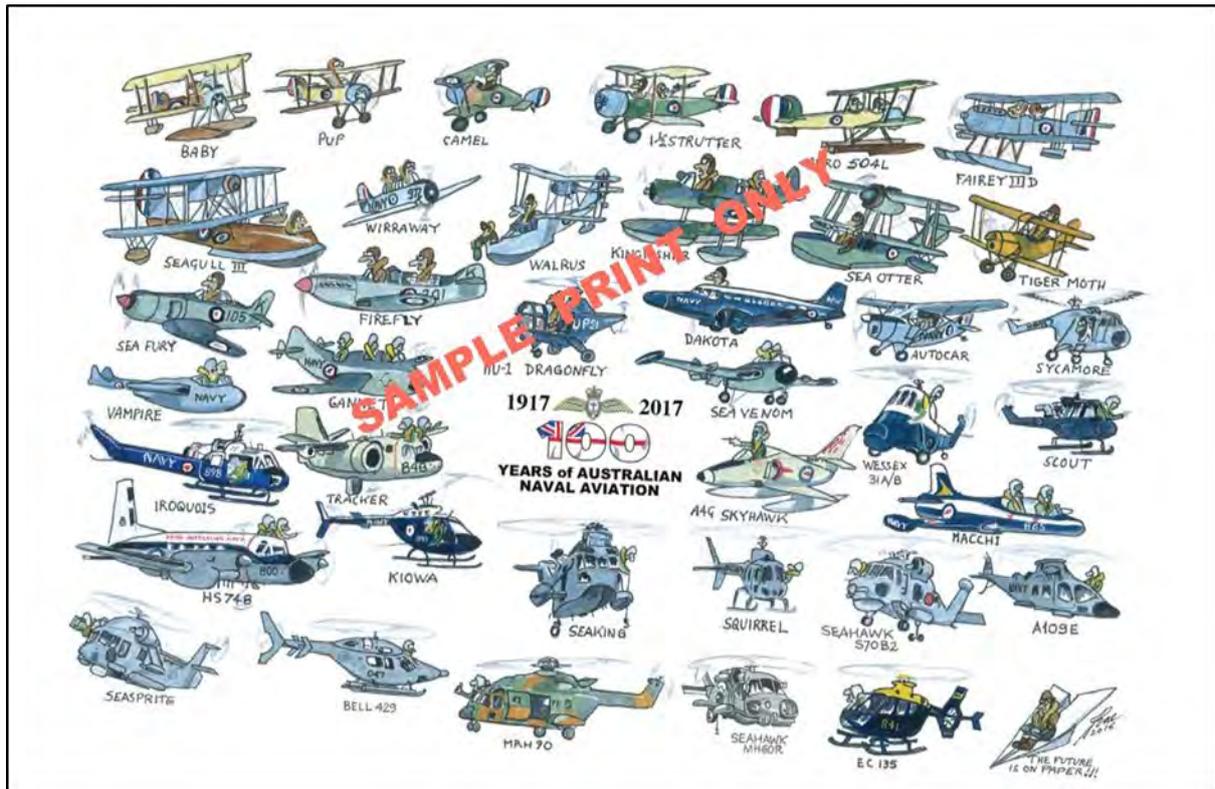


Hello! Gordon's pizza?

- **No sir it's Google Pizza.**
- So it's a wrong number?
- **No sir, Google bought it.**
- OK. Take my order please ..
- **Well sir, you want the usual?**
- The usual? Do you know me?
- **According to caller ID, the last 12 times, you ordered pizza with cheese, sausage, thick crust**
- OK! That's it
- **May I now recommend ricotta, arugula with sun dried tomato?**
- No, I hate vegetables
- **But your cholesterol is 7.4**
- How do you know?
- **Through the subscriber's guide. We have your blood tests for the last 7 years**
- Okay, but I don't want this pizza, I already take medicine
- **You haven't taken the medicine regularly, 4 months ago, you only purchased 30 tablets at Drugs Online**
- I bought more from another pharmacy
- **It's not showing on your credit card**
- I paid in cash
- **But you did not withdraw that much cash according to your bank statement**
- I have another source of cash
- **This is not showing on your last Tax form unless you got it from undeclared income source**
- **BLOODY HELL? Stuff Google, Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp. I'm off to an Island without the internet.**
- **I understand sir, but you need to renew your passport; it expired 5 weeks ago.."**



LAST CHANCE!!



The Webmaster has a few Centenary posters remaining, to be sold on a 'first come, first served' basis. Drawn by the renowned naval artist Jim Rae, the poster is a wonderful and inexpensive way to commemorate the one-hundred year journey from those first faltering steps to the capable and deadly machines we take to sea today.

A very limited number of posters are available in two sizes, until stock runs out: Small [320x450mm] or Medium [420x594mm]. If you wish to order one, simply fill out the form below (or copy the details onto a piece of paper) and send to the address below.

Your Name:		
Address:		
Phone:		
Email (if available):		
	Small @ \$7.50 each	Medium @ \$10.00 each
No. of Posters Required:		
Postage and Packing	\$10.00	

Please make cheques payable to 'FAAAA' and send your order to:

The Webmaster

3 Bonaira Street, KIAMA NSW 2533 Phone: 0413 250 969

HMAS NESTOR



Captain Gavin Irwin, RAN, salutes after laying a wreath on behalf of Chief of Navy Vice Admiral Tim Barrett, AO, CSC, RAN, at the 75th memorial service held at the Royal Australian Navy Heritage Centre at Garden Island, Sydney.

The lives of three Australian and one British sailor lost during the Second World War when HMAS *Nestor* was attacked have been honoured at a commemorative service at Garden Island, Sydney.

On 15 June 1942, *Nestor* was part of a covering force for a large convoy when she came under air attack about 100 miles north of the port of Tobruk, in Libya. Three heavy bombs straddled the ship, resulting in the No 1 boiler room being flooded.

The destroyer was taken in tow by Royal Navy ship HMS *Javelin*, but under the threat of further attack a decision was made to scuttle the Australian ship a day later, after her surviving crew had been transferred to safety.

The four men killed in action that day were Australians: Petty Officer Stoker Jack Bulmer; Leading Stoker Campbell Hill; Stoker Leslie Blight; and British sailor, Leading Stoker Matthew Burns of the Royal Navy.

Executive Officer of Sydney base HMAS *Kuttabul*, Lieutenant Commander Barry Purkiss, was joined by two *Nestor* survivors, Captain John Stevenson and Lieutenant Commander Ken Brown, in remembering the bravery of those involved in the action.

"*Nestor* isn't one of our most famous ships, but the 249 members of her ship's company made a valuable contribution to the war," Lieutenant Commander Purkiss said.

"We not only remember those who never came home, but also thank the survivors and the commitment of the men and women who have served their nations in times of conflict.

"We are recognising many 75th anniversaries this year, and it is a poignant time for the Australian Defence Force to reflect on why we commit ourselves to service. The ideals fought for in the Second World War are the same we continue to pursue today," he said.

Nestor was awarded Battle Honours for Atlantic, Malta convoys and Indian Ocean. The N-class destroyer was also awarded a battle honour for being part of the force that hunted and sank the *Bismarck* and destroyed the German submarine U-127.