



# FLYBY

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A periodical of the Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia  
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**H**alf a century before the Miracle on the Hudson, Pan America's 'Sovereign of the Skies' ditched in the middle of the Pacific Ocean after a harrowing five-hour long nightmare for her passengers. In this abbreviated excerpt we take a look at the extraordinary story of Pan Am Flight 6, and the circumstances that brought her – and her 24 passengers - to that fateful end.

In 1947, Pan American World Airways began the first regularly scheduled "Round-the-World" passenger service. Each day, a flight would depart from the East Coast (New York or Philadelphia), heading east towards Europe and another on the West Coast of the United States would lift off from San Francisco Municipal Airport and, heading west, fly the same route in reverse.

These globe-trotting flights were partly promotional, putting Pan Am in the world spotlight and were only for the very wealthy. Tickets were \$2,300 for a single economy passenger and \$4,000 for a couple. With inflation, this translates into about \$22,000 and \$38,000 respectively. First class was considerably more, but one has to understand that Economy (or Tourist Class as it was known then) aboard a Pan Am Clipper was more luxurious, far roomier and had much higher service than



VINTAGE WINGS of CANADA

This story is brought to you with the kind permission of Vintage Wings of Canada. You can see this, and many other interesting stories, on their website [here](#).



*Above: An overspeeding propeller was a real concern and could cause catastrophic damage, as this photo of a B-29 shows. No.3 engine's constant speed unit failed and the propeller tore from the shaft and flew into the fuselage. The aircraft was able to make a safe landing into Iwo Jima on this occasion.*



*Above: Pan American World Airways Boeing 377 Stratocruiser 'Sovereign of the Skies' in flight in the 50s. Not long after this photo was taken she met her end in the sea half way between Hawaii and San Francisco on 16Oct56. The design was advanced for its day and included two passenger decks and a pressurised cabin. It could carry up to 114 passengers. (PAA)*

Business Class has today. Due to these costs, many of the passengers on these flights were not round-the-world travellers, but simply business men, diplomatic families, and servicemen and women returning home or repositioning.

By 1956, these daily flights around the globe were old hat to the highly experienced cockpit and cabin crews of Pan American. While the waypoints around the world had changed somewhat, the system was sophisticated and well worked out, with maintenance and administration services in each city to deal with technical issues as well as passport and customs requirements. Of all the aircraft used on these runs, the Boeing 377 Stratocruiser was undoubtedly the queen of the skies—for Pan Am and other operators in the Pacific and Atlantic runs like Northwest and United.

Pan American World Airways was the launch customer and largest purchaser of the Boeing 377 Stratocruiser. They called them StratoClippers in keeping with their traditions. By the mid-1950s, the roomy and reliable double-decked Stratocruiser had flown many millions of miles in "round-the-world" service, and, while the glamour was still there,

the flights were largely routine. But not all.

Which brings us to 15 October 1956, and Flight 6. She was part of a Pan Am round-the-world service, on the Honolulu to San Francisco sector, and was being provided by StratoClipper N90943 *Sovereign of the Skies*. In Honolulu, after her long and exhausting flight over water, *Sovereign of the Skies* exchanged crews after almost 18 flying hours since taking off from Tokyo. The fresh crew would be responsible for getting safely to her final stop in San Francisco, some 3,800 kilometres (2,400 miles) across empty Pacific Ocean.

The Flight 6 relief crew, like many Pan Am StratoClipper crews, was the best of the best—Captain, First and Second Officers, Engineer, Purser and two Stewardesses—and all experienced and highly-trained and aware of their primary duties. The crew's Captain was 43-year-old Richard N. Ogg of Saratoga, New York, a Pan American

World Airways company man if there ever was one. Ogg, a pilot for 20 years, had been employed by Pan Am for 15 years, flying for the airline during the Second World War. He had accumulated over 13,000 flying hours in that time and was considered a very capable and calm aircraft Captain. He had 738 hours on Boeing 377s and had recently completed a ditching emergency procedures course.

*(continued on page 8)*



*Above: It is obvious from period photos that the Boeing 377 Stratocruiser dominated Honolulu-based international flights. (Photo via Ian Lind at ilind.net)*



## Were You Involved in Operation Navy Help Darwin?

I served in the WRANS as an WRROS from 1973 to 1979 and was based at HMAS Coonawarra in Darwin when Cyclone Tracy hit on Christmas Eve, 1974.

I am writing a book partly about that service, but mainly about the role of the WRANS and the RAN during Cyclone Tracy and the subsequent Clean-Up.

So far, my sources for research are the Navy News; Department of Defence Historical Monograph No. 15; National Library Archives; the lecture "Operation Navy Help – Disaster operations by the Royal Australian Navy post-Cyclone Tracy" by Commodore Eric Johnston AM, OBE, CstJ, RANEM, RAN; the comprehensive report by Rear Admiral N.E. McDonald, Flag Officer Commanding, East Australia Area, dated 20 May 1975; Northern Territory Library Service; the book "Winds of Fury – the full true story of the great Darwin disaster" by Keith Cole" and newspaper articles. There's a lot more out there but I'm concentrating on official reports as much as possible.

I am enhancing the reports with personal accounts by Naval personnel aboard the aboard the patrol boats Advance, Arrow, Assail and Attack, at HMAS Coonawarra, and those involved in "Operation Navy Help Darwin". Accounts by spouses, civilian employees of the RAN and civilian contractors are also very welcome.

Some contributors have written down their recollections of the time and emailed the documents and photographs to me. I've interviewed others in person or over the phone, recording our conversations. I provide those people with a transcript and also write up their story in a Word document, putting the events in chronological order, tidying up some grammar and adding a word or two if clarification is needed. The document remains essentially in their own words and can be kept for their own personal records.

We all enjoy a good laugh over our antics and the situations we got ourselves into during our service, but it's hard to talk or write about the tough times, like Cyclone Tracy and the Clean Up. Making the effort is important. Funny, sad – it's all good.

Of course, I provide contributors with a Consent Form to be filled out and returned to me, so that the interviews can legally be recorded, and their stories and photos can be used in my book.

Would you and anyone in your network like to participate? Any former naval personnel - WRANS and RAN – who would like to have their memories of that time included in my book can contact me on [patriciacollins1@bigpond.com](mailto:patriciacollins1@bigpond.com)

Regards, Patricia Collins ✈

## Operation Bursa ASM Awarded to Veteran in WA



**Operation Bursa** was only really known by those engaged in it at the time – the secretive counter-terrorist operation raised to recapture any of the strategically important oil rigs in Bass Strait if taken by terrorists. The Fleet Air Arm Wessex and Sea King helicopters of HC 723, HU 816 and HS 817 Squadrons and their aircrew, maintainers and support staff were involved in providing the capability for inserting the airborne component of the SASR/CDT Tactical Action Group (TAG) from August 1980 to December 1989 inclusive.

On Friday morning of 12 February 2012, CO Stirling (**CAPT Gary Lawton**, RAN) presented ex- POATWL **Danny Joyce** with his Australian Service Medal with Clasp Counter-Terrorism/Special Recovery (ASM CT/SR) in front of a small group of serving FAA and Stirling personnel and Danny's wife, Leanne. This is the first presentation of the medal in WA since it was approved late last year and was fittingly conducted in front of a MH-60R helicopter (816 Squadron) at the Helicopter Support Facility at Fleet Base West.

Danny joined the Navy from country WA in April 1971 and was a maintainer on Wessex helicopters engaged on

Operation Bursa commitments from September 1983 to September 1984 during which time he was on constant recall and deployed to RAAF Base East Sale several times for the Squadron to exercise with the TAG. During Danny's time involved in Bursa, upwards of 10 Wessex would deploy for 2-3 week deployments with flying operations occurring at all hours of day and night. This placed an enormous load on the maintainers when operating from the remote section of the airfield or Lakes Entrance airstrip. Unfortunately, the dangers of this operation were realised while Danny was deployed when Wessex 825 lost control and crashed into the sea during a returning flight on 4 December 1983 – two personnel were killed - the aircrewman (LSA **Gary Macey**) and a RAAF passenger (LAC **James Campbell**).

Danny was also a member of the commissioning crew of HU 816 Squadron on 9 February 1984, which continued the Operation Bursa mission with the Wessex component transferring from HC 723 Squadron. At the end of 1985 Danny transferred to the Work Study Branch and transitioned to the Reserves as a CPOWS in November 1992. He went on to senior managerial positions in several large retail organisations in WA and now he and Leanne enjoy full retirement just south of Perth.

Those personnel who believe they are entitled to the ASM CT/SR should see the conditions for the award and apply through the FAAAA website [here](#). ✈

## Wall of Service Update

Order No. 48 has now been submitted to the Foundry for manufacture of the plaques, and it contained the following names:

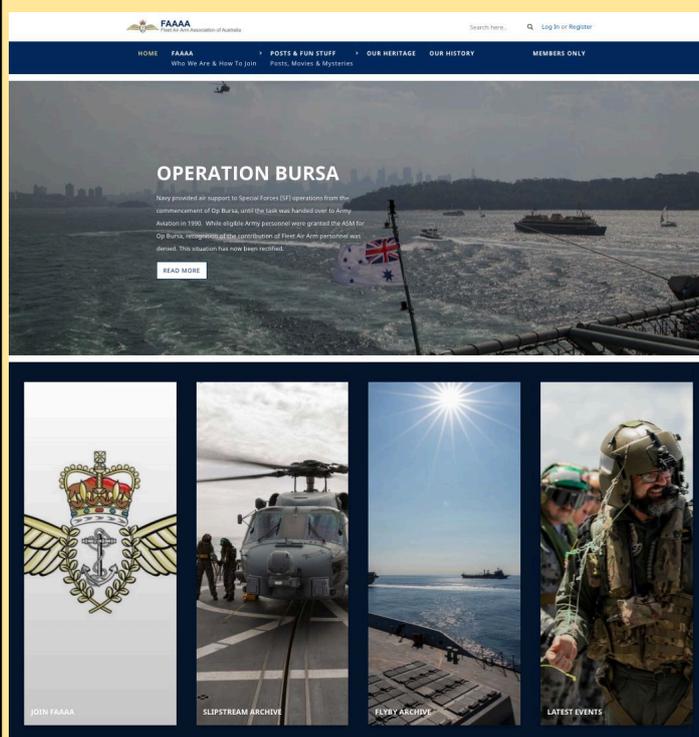
K.B. ENGELSMAN O2154 CMDR (P) Feb63-Jul10.  
 E.H. DALE A35562 POAF(A) Dec47-Mar54.  
 W.J. CALLINGHAM R95087 CPOATA Oct65-Oct85.  
 J. McCAULEY O105961 LCDR(P) Mar70-Jan84.  
 W.R. WARE R51285 LAMET Aug55-Aug61.  
 T.J. BULLEY O125389 CMDR WEA Oct78-D.R. HILL R96182 CPOATA Jul67-Mar85.  
 G. S. SEALY R107017 LSATA Nov69-Nov79.  
 R.M. GOLDEN R103606 ABATA Jul68-Jul74.  
 A.J. LENDRUM R114540 CPOA Apr73-Apr93.  
 P. BARNES R63176 EMAC Apr64-Jul70.  
 S. FLANNERY 8074180 CPOATV Apr80-Mar20.  
 G. P. JAMES R41785 LSATA Apr66-Feb74.  
 M.B. ALEXANDER R103497 WOATC Jul68-Jun88.  
 D. WRIGHT R105274 LSATWO Jul68-Jul81.  
 R.P. BALMFORTH S141775 LSA Jun87-Jul99  
 G.E. ARMSTRONG S125120 WOATA Jan78-Jul00.  
 R.J. THOMAS R52716 NAMEA1 Jan57-Jan63.  
 S. WALTERS S131880 WOATA Jan82-Aug20.  
 R. WOOD R94558 LSATC Jul64-Jul76.

Order Number 49 is now open for applications, with one name on it so far:

J.R. MACARTNEY R93356 POEAC Jul 61-Jun73.

You can find out what the Wall of Service is and how to apply for a plaque on it by clicking [here](#). ✈

## What is Happening With Our Website?



Readers will remember our website suffered a serious technical problem last year, which despite our best efforts, resisted all attempts at repair.

Due to the amazing generosity of many readers, sufficient funds were raised to pay for a complete upgrade to the site. So where are we at?

Webics, our developer, has been busy building the new site (see sneak previous above). The home page and all linkages off it is complete, and work has begun to manually import 'complex' pages from the old site to the new one. This is the time consuming part as there are many hundreds of them, so the task is expected to take a couple of months.

The webmaster has attempted to strike a balance for the new site – that is, to retain the overall look and feel of the old one, but to take full advantage of the technical advances of the last six years.

The new site will be fully compatible with both large and small screens (phones and tablets) as about 50% of our readers now use such devices. There will be less text on the main screen and more pictures, linking readers to various parts of the site. Emphasis has been given to making it simple to use, and to have clean lines.

You can still access the old site and all its contents, but no new material can be posted on it for the next couple of months.

A more complete update will be given in the coming weeks. ✈

## Did You Know?

Most of us know that the town of Holbrook, in Victoria, has an O-class submarine in a paddock by the side of the main road.



The town was originally named Germantown, but in 1915 was renamed amid a wave of anti-German feeling. A dozen names of politicians, senior admirals and generals were considered, but the residents decided they wanted something more in keeping with a young nation whose soldiers were fighting on the shores of the Dardanelles. They chose to name the town after Lieutenant **Norman Holbrook**, who was the first naval VC winner to be gazetted in the First World War.

On the morning of 13 December 1914 Lt Holbrook was in command of the submarine B-11, attempting to attack enemy ships in the Dardanelles. Despite treacherous currents he dived under five rows of mines. The water was shallow and his craft had to bump along the bottom, scraping mine mooring lines. He was fired upon by shore batteries and prosecuted by patrol boats, but successfully pressed home his attack to sink the Ottoman Navy's ironclad *Mesudiye*. He then withdrew, surfacing nine hours later filled with stale air and with batteries so low he

had to rely on the freshwater current to carry him into open waters.

Holbrook survived the war and died in 1976. His wife Gundula retired to Austria, donating to the town her late husband's VC and other artifacts bearing his name.

In 1988 the RAN submarine HMAS *Otway* was decommissioned, broken up and taken in sections to Holbrook, where it was intended to be rebuilt as a memorial. When Gundula learned the scheme had stalled, she wrote a generous personal cheque which galvanised the community into action. It is now a notable tourist destination which receives some 200,000 visitors a year.

**Gundula Holbrook** died on the last day of 2020, aged 106. Her hologram in the submarine museum tells her husband's story. ✨

## H&AT Update



In our last edition we mentioned that the Defence Honours and Awards Tribunal is currently holding an Inquiry into recognition for members and families of members who are wounded or killed as a

result of service. Submissions to the Tribunal closed on 31Mar21. More details can be found [here](#).

The Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia will be making a submission to the Tribunal in support of the proposition.

## Were You Involved in Fighting The Tracker Fire?

We have received advice that **Ian Carroll** is considering a submission to propose a Bravery Citation for all RAN members and others who fought the 1976 Tracker fire.

He is interested in hearing from anyone who was involved that night, and who would be willing to support the proposal. His background rationale can be seen [here](#).

Please contact Ian directly [here](#).



The body of our submission will be reported in the next edition of FlyBy. ✈

## Covid Variants – the NILE virus

Virologists have identified a new Nile virus - type C. It appears to target those who were born between 1940 & 1970

The Virus causes you to :

- send the same message twice.
- send a blank message
- send a message to the wrong person.
- send it back to the person who sent it to you.
- forget to attach the attachment.
- hit SEND before you've finished.
- hit DELETE instead of SEND and/or
- SEND when you should DELETE.

It is called the C-NILE virus!

And if you can't admit to doing the above, you've obviously caught the mutated strain: The D-NILE virus.

*By Editor. I've had reports there's an even more destructive mutant going around called the P-NILE virus - but the less said about that the better. ✈*

## Kavanagh Oval Update



A little while ago we reported that the sign on the **Errol Kavanagh** oval was in poor repair, and what might be done to replace it. Errol lost his life in a MiG accident in 1993 and the oval was named after him in recognition of his skill in avoiding the crowded oval in the last seconds of control of the stricken jet.

Our contact in Canberra has been in regular discourse with the local government, who move slowly. They requested photographs, which have been provided together with a rough idea of what the Association would like to see in its place – a permanent metal sign together with a plaque telling the story of who Errol was and why the oval is named after him.

The Association is working with **Carol Kavanagh**, Errol's widow, in this matter.

Further details will be advised once we get some movement at the station. ✈



### Dear Editor,

I write in regard to your "Mystery Photo" answers in the last edition, and in particular your comments regarding contra-rotating props.



While the comment you make is an outcome of fitting a contra rotating prop, the real reason is to have a prop capable of absorbing the engine's output, the diameter being constrained by the aircraft's physical characteristics. Diameter is also affected by tip speed. A large diameter requires lower RPM to keep an optimum helical tip speed of about .84 to .88 Mach (RPM and aircraft speed vector).

As with all engineering solutions nothing is perfect and trade-offs have to be made – diameter, number of blades, RPM, speed range of the airframe etc

A problem the Spitfires had was when they were installed with the higher powered engines and didn't have a contra prop is they had to use the power very judiciously on take off, it was possible for such a degree of yaw to be generated that the tyres would be rolled off the rims. In flight controllability as detailed below was also a problem as well, also the longitudinal stability of the 5 blade prop aircraft was less - the spiralling prop flow perhaps?

From the Spitfire Mk. 45 and 46 pilot notes:

#### Take-off

- Mk. 45 (5 blade prop). Whenever possible open the throttle slowly up to +7 lb/sq.in boost only. This is important as there is a strong tendency to swing right and to crab in the initial stages and if much power is used tyre wear is severe on runways. +12 lb/sq.in boost should be used on becoming airborne, but +7 lb/sq.in is sufficient for a normal take off.*
- Mk. 46 (contra rotating prop). Full power may be used for take-off; there is no swing. Normally, however, from a runway +12 lb/sq.in boost (obtained at the gate) is quite sufficient.*

#### Mislanding

- (i) *The aircraft will climb away easily at climbing power with the undercarriage and flaps down, and the use of full take-off power is not advised on Mk. 45 aircraft due to the large change of directional trim. On Mk. 46 aircraft, there is not the same large change of directional trim because of the counter-rotating propeller.*
- (ii) *Open the throttle to +9 lb./sq. in. boost, raise the under-carriage and retrim.*
- (iii) *Climb away at 115 knots I.A.S. with the flaps fully down.*
- (iv) *Above 300 feet raise the flaps and retrim.*

*WARNING.—On Mk. 45 aircraft the application of instantaneous full power when near the stall results in a considerable rolling tendency to starboard added to a very strong tendency to tum to starboard which cannot always be checked by the use of opposite rudder and aileron alone. Care should be taken after a mis-landing, especially during a deck landing approach, not to open the throttle at such a rate that the tendencies to roll and turn to starboard cannot be controlled.*

Blue Skies, **Brian Abraham** ✈

**Dear Editor,**

Reading your article on the Austers and its subsequent correspondence I realised that I was the last RAN pilot to fly either of them.



In late 1963 I was in 724

Squadron running a Vampire course for two pilots (Errol Banks and Rob Partington) to bring them up to wings standard on the Vampire so they could enter the normal OFS training stream.

On the 4th November I received a message to report to “Wings” (Digby Johns) in the tower. Normally such a summons would have ominous overtones but my conscience was clear so I cheerfully toddled over to see what was up.

It turned out that the two Austers had been sold, one to a Victorian Flying Club and the other to a private individual associated with the club. They had arrived to pick them up but would not take them over without “test” flying them both. There was no protocol in place to permit a civilian to fly a Navy aircraft in circumstances such as these nor were we at all sanguine regarding the capability of these two unknowns as pilots.

It was decided that they could each fly the machine they had purchased with me in the right hand seat. My brief from “Wings” was, “they can fly but you are in command and don’t let them break anything”.

The two flights only lasted 30 minutes each and each “test” involved two turns using less than 45 degrees of bank

(heady stuff) and an attempted landing. The first pilot flew his approach at 70 knots when 45 to 50 or even under was ideal (the aircraft stalls dirty at just under 30) and of course he ballooned badly, nearly stalled and I had to take over and go around.

I then demonstrated an approach at a more appropriate speed and landed off it. He then had another go and once more was reluctant to reduce speed but did manage to get it on the ground, without much finesse at all but at least he didn’t cause any damage.

My second flight was with pilot number two and turned out to be a carbon copy of the first, two turns, hot on finals, big balloon, takeover, go-around, demonstration approach and landing followed by a very undignified arrival in the hands of the new owner.

After this I told Wings that they could both take-off and while landings were an issue, they would probably be able to get themselves on to the ground in a sort of fashion wherever they were going after departure from Nowra. He was happy with that and I think he was quite pleased to see them go.

Having given the aircraft the OK and prior to departure they said that I must be a very experienced Auster pilot and offered me a job at their Flying Club (a bit cheeky I thought!). I didn’t have the heart to tell them that prior the two flights with them I had less than 10 hours on type and that spread over 4 years!

Jerry O’Day ✈

## New Members This Month

We’ve had a bumper number of new members this month, and we thank them for their support of the Association.

At the time of going to print the following names have been added to our membership list during March. For the interest of readers, their home state is also shown:

Ken <b>Alderman</b> , Sth Africa	Richard <b>Balmforth</b> , SA
Glenn <b>Armstrong</b> , NSW	John <b>Benson</b> , NSW
Tracy <b>Brown</b> , QLD	Chris <b>Hall</b> , ACT
Neville <b>Hickmott</b> , NSW	Troy <b>Holloway</b> , QLD
Stephen <b>Huxtable</b> , QLD	Bob <b>Luxton</b> , QLD
Scott <b>Naughton</b> , QLD	Robert <b>Thomas</b> , QLD
Christopher <b>Partington</b> VIC	John <b>Weller</b> , WA
Dennis <b>Wright</b> , NSW	Dennis <b>Newton</b> , NSW
Christopher <b>Tonkin</b> , WA	

If you are not a member of the Association why not join today? Full details can be found [here](#). ✈



While the Boeing 377 was a reliable aircraft and her crew well-trained and committed, she was about to cross 2,400 trackless miles of open Pacific Ocean, into the setting sun and starlit night. If her passengers or pilots cared to look out into the inky blackness during the flight, they might see the sparkling lights of an infrequent cargo ship but little more. To help her in her crossing would be the sentinel assurance of Ocean Station November, a United States Coast Guard cutter holding station approximately halfway between Hawaii and San Francisco.



*The US Coast Guard cutter Pontchartrain when she was involved with the salvation of Flight 6. At the time of the ditching, she was acting as Ocean Station November, one of a series of ships holding station in the Pacific and Atlantic oceans, forwarding weather reports and standing by for Search and Rescue duties. (US Coast Guard).*

The duty cutter this night was USCGC *Pontchartrain*, which had a number of duties including weather reporting, radio relay and most importantly this night, rendering assistance to the growing number of airliners plying the Northern Pacific skies. There was an archipelago of ten Ocean Stations in the Atlantic Ocean and another three in the Pacific, all of which were stationed under well used aerial highways across the oceans. Ocean Station November was, for all pilots, a human voice to report to on every Hawaii to San Francisco flight, but this night *Pontchartrain* was more than that. She would become a beacon of hope and a link to salvation for 24 passengers and seven crew members.

While Ogg and his crew briefed and prepared for the flight, the purser oversaw the loading of food and drinks and made sure the cabin was perfect. Meanwhile the new passengers went through customs and waited in the main

passenger lounge. In all she would have 24 paying souls in her care—a mixture of tourists, diplomats, military servicemen and businessmen with connections to Asia and the Pacific Rim.

The passengers were not the only living souls making the crossing to San Francisco. Pan Am cargo staff cared for and then loaded two dogs, one very talkative parakeet and 3,000 twittering canaries into the cavernous forward hold.

At approximately 8:30 PM HAST, Captain Ogg pushed the throttles forward to give 2,700 RPM on each engine, released the brakes, accelerated down the runway and climbed into the late evening sky. Ahead lay a planned 8 hour and 54 minute flight to San Francisco. With all four massive engines spouting blue flame from the exhausts, the *Sovereign of the Skies* lifted over Mamala Bay, retracted her heavy gear into her wells and set a course for Ocean Station November.

A couple of minutes after 1:00 AM Honolulu time, as she neared the Point of Equal Time (sometimes referred to as the point of no return), *Clipper Sovereign of the Skies* radioed Honolulu for permission to climb VFR to their next assigned altitude of 21,000 feet. Four minutes later they had the OK, and the aircraft was gently climbed to the new level, where speed was increased to 188 knots. Everything was fine. The crew remained vigilant. The passengers slept, some in their “sleeperette” berths. The animals in the hold continued to stress.

One minute later, at 1:20 AM, their world started to unravel. There suddenly came a loud, shrieking noise from the left side of the aircraft and the port wing dipped suddenly.

The First Officer, George Haaker, called out to the Flight Engineer for more power to increase airspeed. As he calmly gained control of the situation, the Captain, who had been aft, returned and took his seat. The tachometer for No. 1 engine was rapidly increasing and both pilots immediately diagnosed the problem as runaway propeller, sometimes called an overspeed. It was not an uncommon problem with the Boeing Stratocruiser. The overspeed was caused by the failure of the Constant Speed Unit

**There suddenly came a loud shrieking noise from the left side of the aircraft and the port wing dipped suddenly...the tachometer for No.1 engine was rapidly increasing.**

(governor) which adjusted the pitch of the blades to keep the engine speed constant. When an overspeed condition occurs following the failure of the

CSU, the propeller begins to rotate faster than the desired RPM setting—hence the red-lining engine tachometer on No. 1.

The pilot must immediately feather (rotate) the blades so that they are in line with the slipstream. Haaker immediately assessed the overspeed and attempted to feather the blades, but the blades did not respond. Now the prop was free-wheeling in the slipstream and overspeeding the engine, slewing the aircraft to the right. The noise was deafening and Ogg and Haaker shouted over the

shrieking. While the three working engines were steady at 2,300 RPM, No. 1 was off the dial which only went to 2,900 RPM.

Ogg and Haaker shouted to Garcia behind them to "Freeze it, freeze it!" Garcia hit a switch which would cut off the oil supply to the troubled engine and force it to stop. It would take a few minutes before the engine would seize, and Ogg asked Purser Reynolds, who had entered the cockpit to see what was happening, to go back into the cabin and watch for fire in No. 1. Two minutes later, there was a decrease in RPM on No. 1, followed by a heavy thud. The engine seized, but the propeller had decoupled from the drive and was now wind-milling out of control on the shaft. The drag caused by the propeller was slowing the Stratocruiser down and Garcia increased power on the three remaining engines to keep speed.

Ogg then made an announcement over the intercom: "*Ladies and gentlemen, I'm sorry to wake you, but we have a real emergency. One of our engines is giving us some difficulty. Just in case we have to ditch the plane, please put on your life jackets, take your seats and fasten your seatbelts.*" He then informed the cabin crew to prepare the passengers for a night-time open-ocean ditching and radioed a distress call to *Pontchartrain*, informing them that he may have to ditch. He got a steer from Brown and turned towards their salvation. Quick calculations of remaining fuel and the reduced airspeed necessary to control a Stratocruiser with a wind-milling propeller indicated that the aircraft could stay aloft for another 750 miles. Both Honolulu and San Francisco were over 1,000 miles away however. It would be *Pontchartrain* or nothing.

The problem was that it was pitch dark and even though *Pontchartrain* was firing off star shells and was laying down a string of electric water lights in the best direction for ditching, a night-time water landing would likely result in tragedy. If he could maintain altitude and nothing else went wrong, Ogg calculated he could wait out the night and ditch after the sun came up. At 2:00 AM HAST Ogg told his crew and that of Commander William Earle, Captain of *Pontchartrain*, that he would fly circuits over the ship until first light, which was three hours away. *Pontchartrain* left the water lights on the surface of the ocean should the situation change.

The crew and passengers settled down in an atmosphere of calm stress to wait out what most surely would have been the longest four hours of their lives. The aircraft droned through the night, keeping the lights of *Pontchartrain* and the water runway in sight. At around 2:15 AM HAST, Ogg and Earle were calmly discussing options and Plan Bs, when Earle informed the Pan Am captain that the aircraft carrier USS *Bennington* was speeding to the scene. "Maybe you can land on the carrier" he quipped. Ogg laughed and declined. The atmosphere was both professional and warm between the two men.

Ogg's situation got considerably worse at 2:45 AM. No. 4 engine began to backfire and instruments indicated a big drop in power. Garcia, the Flight Engineer, analyzed the situation and found that the electrical system was shorting and the second radial row of cylinders was not firing properly. Ogg then instructed Garcia to feather the No. 4 engine and the Engineer reached up and hit the controls and successfully feathered the propeller blades.

The engineer then reset the remaining two engines to deliver 2,550 RPM and the engines began a 2,000 gallon-an-hour fuel burn rate. The speed had dropped to 140 knots and the aircraft was down to 2,000 feet, possibly too low if they were not set correctly for the ditching in their circuit above *Pontchartrain*.

At 3:00 AM, Ogg took the aircraft back up to 5,000 feet as it had become lighter with the fuel burn. At this height, the cockpit crew practiced approaches and drill, readying for the dawn. It was Ogg's plan to burn off as much fuel as possible to reduce the possibility of a post-ditching fire and



*A photo taken during the early hours of the morning as the StratoClipper flew orbits above the Pontchartrain and a passenger stands up to stretch his legs. There was exemplary calm amongst both the passengers and crew, which contributed towards the outcome. Life Magazine.*

to make his aircraft as buoyant as possible. Then night wore on and the worrying consumed the passenger cabin.

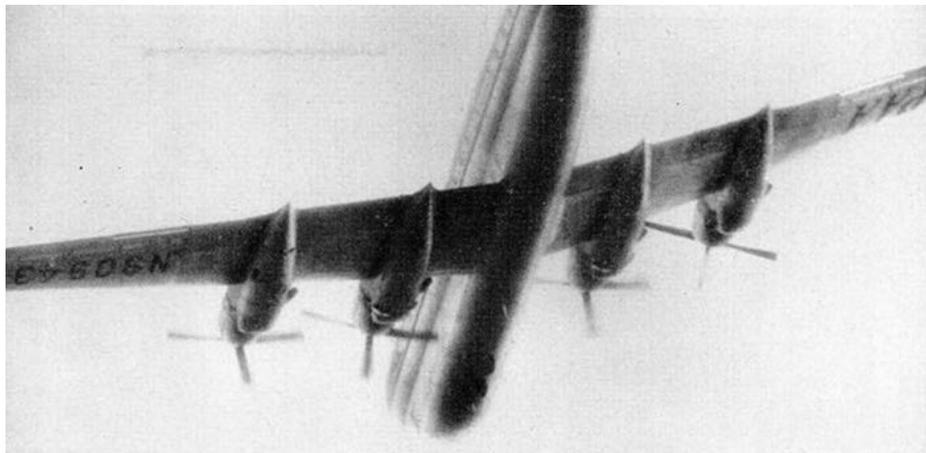
At 5:10 AM the stewardesses moved the First Class passengers forward as far as possible, filling the seats in Tourist Class (in those days the First Class cabin was in the rear of the aircraft). Captain Ogg had ordered this as the previous year another Pan Am Stratocruiser had been forced to ditch just 35 miles off the Oregon Coast following the complete loss of No. 3 engine and its propeller. Loss of control forced the ditching during which the tail section broke off after slamming into the waves, resulting in four deaths.

Ogg continued to burn off fuel, while down on the ocean's surface, *Pontchartrain* was pulling the electric lights from the water and Earle asked Ogg for a ten-minute warning of the ditching so that his crew could lay down a half mile-long path using fire-fighting foam to mark the best course for ditching. The foam would also allow Ogg and Haaker to better judge their height over the water at the last moments and might help reduce the possibility of a surface fire. At 5:40 AM, Ogg called *Pontchartrain* and notified them that he would be ditching in half an hour.

As the crew of *Pontchartrain* scrambled to dump barrels of pre-positioned fire-fighting foam from the fantail as well as from firehoses at the rail, Ogg dropped the aircraft to 900 feet and made a practice approach to the foam runway, overflying *Pontchartrain* in the process. In the passenger cabin everyone was instructed to take their crash positions. Ogg made an announcement to the passengers: "*Ladies and Gentlemen the water temperature is 74 degrees and the waves are only a matter of inches high. There is absolutely nothing to worry about-things couldn't be better for us. I'll soon give you a ten-minute warning. Then one minute before touchdown I'll tell you this is it. Do as the stewardesses tell you please.*"

At 6:05 AM, Garcia released carbon dioxide into the wing tanks to deal with any fire and everyone got set for the ditching. Captain Ogg pressed the microphone button and told his passengers: "Ten minutes to ditching time." Eight minutes later, Ogg turned the fatally injured *Sovereign of the Skies* to a heading of 315 degrees one last time and set full flaps. He began a long, flat and slow approach to the foam runway with Haaker on his controls in case needed. At the same time, Ogg announced: "*This is it!*"

With *Pontchartrain* standing off with her boats half-lowered, Ogg and Haaker skimmed *Sovereign of the*



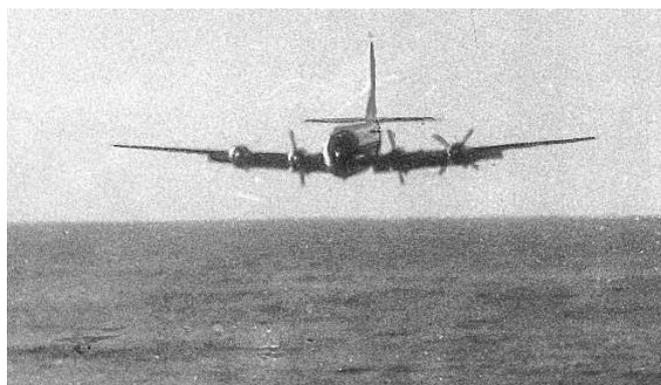
*With the sun just up, Captain Ogg thunders low overhead the Pontchartrain just before setting up for the ditching. The port outer engine is still wind-milling, while the starboard outer is shut down with the propeller feathered. Moments later, Ogg would set up for the ditching, announcing just prior to hitting the water that "This is it!" (William Simpson USCG via Life Magazine.*

Skies low over the swells, cut power to his two remaining engines and settled to the surface at a speed of 90 mph. She lightly touched at first, skimming a few hundred yards on ground effect before slamming down hard into the swell. For a few seconds it looked like a textbook water landing, but the wounded port wing caught the swell, bit hard into it and the giant aircraft slewed violently to port, turning nearly 180 degrees.

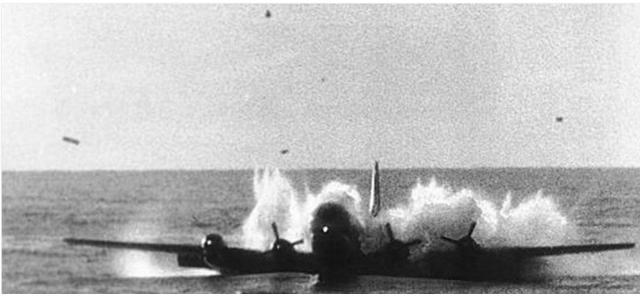
The impact cracked the gleaming white fuselage just ahead of the massive tail—just as it had with Clipper *United States* the year before. With a shrieking rending of metal, the entire tail toppled slowly backwards. If it were not for Ogg's insistence that everyone move forward, it is likely that a few passengers would have followed the tail to the bottom of the Pacific Ocean. Moments later, as passengers could be seen to scramble out onto the wings, the tail disappeared altogether.

Commander Earle, standing off to stay out of Ogg's way, now ordered full steam ahead as *Pontchartrain* raced to close the distance to the remains of *Sovereign of the Skies* and to rescue as many passengers as she could.

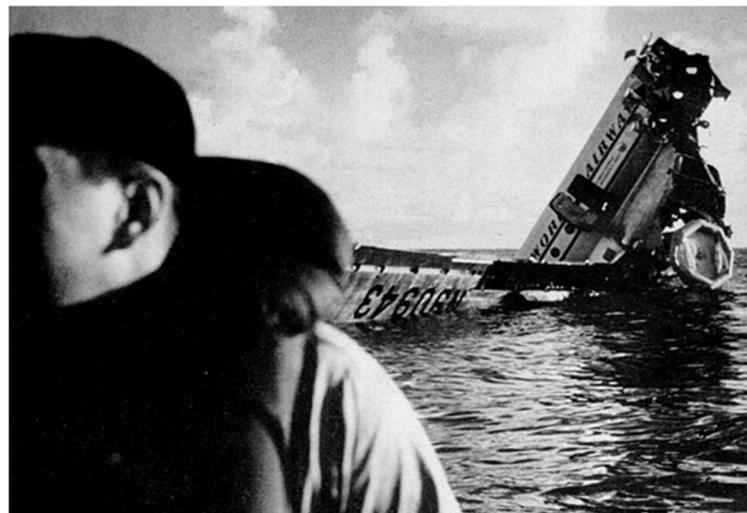
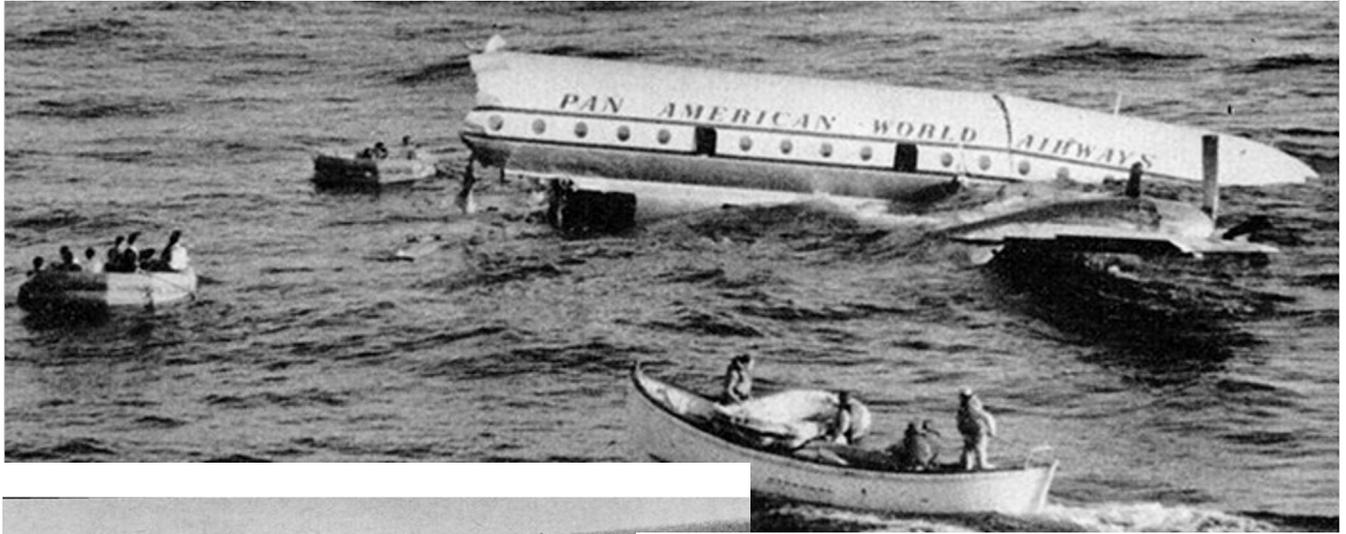
The following photographs, most published in LIFE magazine the following week, tell the remaining story.



*The last moments of Flight 6 – flaps down, gear up, starboard propeller feathered and not visible. The photographer was Pontchartrain's cook by the name of William Simpson.*



**Above:** Flight 6 slams into the swell and chunks of the two powered propellers fly off. The nose-high impact broke off the tail but the crew had anticipated this and had the passengers all sitting forward. As the forward part of the wreckage settles nose-down passengers clamber out onto the wings. **Below:** A photo taken from the deck of the Pontchartrain shows passengers in two of the airliner's liferafts. The third raft became snagged in the wreckage of the broken-off tail.



**Centre Left.** Passengers clamber over the wing to get into a liferaft. They were not in them long, as Pontchartrain's whalers (above) were quickly on the scene to pick them up. **Bottom left:** Captain Ogg was the last to leave the stricken aircraft, having checked that nobody was left. 21 minutes after ditching the StratoClipper slipped below the surface.

The last to leave the sinking aircraft was Captain Ogg, having just checked to make sure that no one was left in the passenger cabin. Similarly, 50 years later, Captain Chesley Sullenberger, who was five years old at the time of the Pan Am ditching, would do exactly the same thing. In the photograph on the previous page taken by passenger Braat, he seems hardly stressed at all, smiling almost. No doubt the realization that all of his passengers and fellow crew members not only survived, but did so without a scratch, gave him much comfort at this moment.

One of the passengers, on climbing aboard Pontchartrain, exclaimed "Thank God for the Navy!" It is interesting to note that this type of statement was common and irritated the Coast Guard. Eight years later, President Kennedy gave designer Raymond Loewy (designer of such things as the Studebaker Avanti, the Greyhound Scenic Cruiser, and the Air Force One paint scheme) the contract to distinctively identify Coast Guard ships and assets. That is how the now-ubiquitous diagonal stripe on Coast Guard ships and aircraft came to be. In any event the passengers were safely transferred to Pontchartrain and the two captains enjoyed each other's company for the next three days as they shaped course for San Francisco.

A day out of San Francisco, a cutter met Pontchartrain and transferred clean clothes for the rescued passengers and crew. When Pontchartrain tied up at San Francisco's Coast Guard pier, there were hundreds of press people, well-wishers and family members there to meet them.

Sovereign of the Skies sank at 6:35 AM HAST, a little over five hours after the Constant Speed Unit failed on her No. 1 engine. Through five hours of interminable stress, Richard Ogg kept his cool, as did his whole crew. Their professional behaviour, flying skills and calm demeanour went a long way to keeping the passengers safe. Captain Richard Ogg, like Sullenberger 50 years later, was rightly a hero. He would be asked to speak about it for the rest of his life. He remained a Pan Am pilot to the end of his career.

Richard Ogg, who was still actively flying, died at the age of 77 on 4 June, 1991. Six months later Pan American World Airlines ceased operations and filed for bankruptcy. There is no doubt that the demise of the great company would have saddened him greatly. On his deathbed, his wife Blanche saw him with a distant and sad look in his eyes. She asked him what he was thinking about. "I was thinking of those poor canaries that drowned in the hold when I had to ditch the plane." Ogg replied.

Dave O'Malley. Vintage Wings of Canada.

*This abbreviated article was reproduced with the kind permission of Vintage Wings. The full article, with many other photographs, can be seen [here](#).*

*If you don't subscribe to Vintage Wings, you might consider doing so. It's free, and produces beautifully researched aviation stories such as this one. Sign up [here](#). ✈*

## Bursa Recognition Update



The medals are on their way! Medals and clasps have already been delivered to some recipients.

The Governor General has authorised all applicants in Batches 1-3, for the award of the Australian Service Medal (ASM) with clasp Counter Terrorism/Special Recovery (CT/SR), for operations conducted in Bass Strait in the 1980s, involving the

protection of offshore oil and gas platforms against potential terrorist attack.

Applicants will be in one of the following batches if they received a positive response (ie "registered" or similar) in the specified time frame:

- Batch 1 – notified before 19 Nov 20 (100 people)
- Batch 2 – notified between 20 Nov 20 and 9 Dec 20 (62 people)
- Batch 3 – notified between 10 Dec 20 and 28 Jan 21 (46 people)

Applicants who received a positive notification between 29 Jan 21 and 31 Mar 21, will be in Batch 4 (44 people). We still have some applicants yet to provide documentation. Those applications cannot be progressed without evidence of qualifying service.

Batches 1-3 were signed on the same day by the GG and all sent together to the engraver in Melbourne on 11 March. Notwithstanding the potential for delays caused by COVID lock-downs, the medals/clasps are anticipated to be with recipients in plenty of time for ANZAC Day.

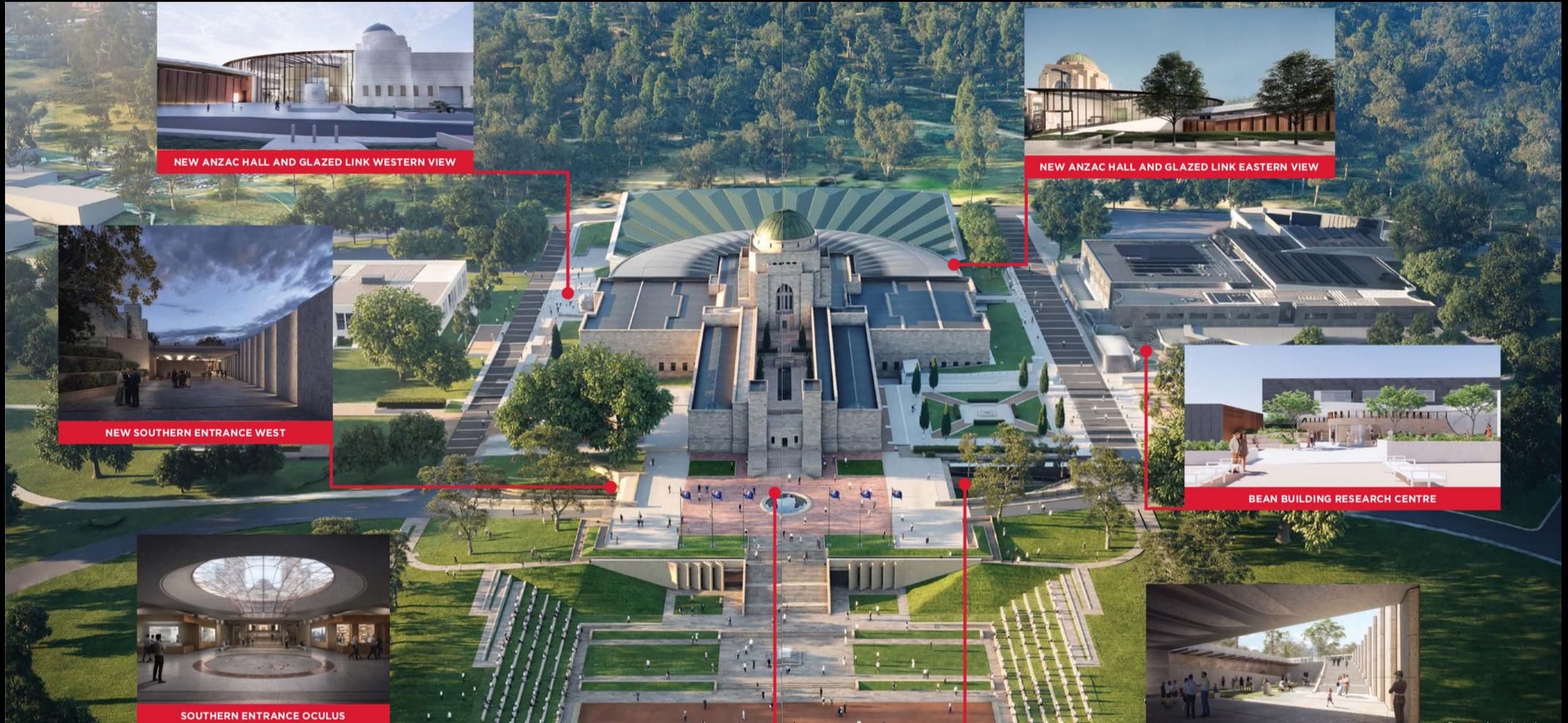
Medals and clasps will be delivered by Australia Post, but with the relaxing of COVID-19 restrictions, award ceremonies will now take place. This means recipients will need to bring the medal to the ceremony for it to be formally presented to them. This is a more expeditious delivery method and allows time for the medals to be mounted for ANZAC day.

For those who have their medals mounted before the presentation ceremony, a boxed spare medal will be available for presentation purposes and photos. On the subject of mounting medals, Christies has a good reputation. They are at 276 Pitt St in Sydney, next to Defence Plaza. See: <https://www.christies.net.au/>.

Invitations have been extended to recipients in Batches 1-3 to attend award ceremonies, which are planned as follows:

(Continued on page 20)

# Snapshot of Proposed War Memorial Expansion



The Australian War Memorial is hoping to expand its facilities to tell the untold stories of 100,000 Australians who have served our country in war, conflict, peacekeeping, humanitarian and disaster relief operations. This composite graphic shows the major features. The proposal now moves to the final stages of approval for the nine-year program of work. You can see more details in the Memorial's information booklet which can be viewed [here](#).

In our last edition we gave a little bit of information about the Mars Rover.

Phil Thompson, who has an amazing eye for anything aeronautical, drew our attention to a spectacular publication called "Free Astronomy", and in particular, to a special issue magazine they have just produced entitled "Mars Rovers from Sojourner to Perseverance". You can find it [here](#).

Filled with spectacular images and chock-a-block full of fun facts and information, this little magazine is worth an hour or two of anybody's time.

The publishers have given us their kind Permission to reproduce a couple of them here, just to whet your appetite.

National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration



# THE EVOLUTION OF A MARTIAN

*An artists' impression of the evolution of Mars Rovers, culminating in Perseverance which made a successful landing last month.*

*Mars, perhaps more than any other planet, captures our imagination as a place where life might once have existed, or perhaps still does.*



**Left:** The Perseverance in a clean room in Pasadena, California, before it was transported to Florida for its launch. Perseverance looks virtually the same as Curiosity, but there are a number of differences. The most remarkable is that this rover can sample and cache minerals. To do so, Perseverance has a new coring drill to collect samples. (NASA/JPL Caltech)

**Below:** Sojourner analyses "Yogi Rock" with the Alpha Proton X-ray Spectrometer. This rock was the first on Mars to be found to be made of basalt, which suggests volcanic activity.



**Left:** The rock called "Wishbone", abraded by Spirit with the Rock Abrasion Tool to examine the internal composition. It was found to be rich in phosphorus. Note the Rover's tracks on the soft sandy surface. Before landing, the goal was for each Rover to travel up to 40 metres in a single day, for a total of one kilometre. Both exceeded by many years. Spirit lasted over 20 times longer than the nominal mission, travelling 7.7km instead of the expected 600 metres. Opportunity worked on Mars longer than any other human artifact: nearly 15 years.

**Right:** Packed underneath Perseverance is "Ingenuity", a small and lightweight helicopter set to be the first aerial device to travel over and survey another planet. With a total of five planned flights over the course of 30 days, Ingenuity offers the possibility of greatly extending the distances that rover can travel by providing much higher resolution imaging of troublesome surface features.



## Last Post Ceremony – 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2021



Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> April will mark the 16<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the crash of Shark 02 in which nine ADF members lost their lives.

The Australian War Memorial will conduct a “Last Post Ceremony” on that day, to remember LEUT **Paul Kimlin** who was the aircraft captain of Shark 02. Members of the public are invited to attend the ceremony (within current restrictions) and we encourage any reader who is able to do so to pay their respects in this way.

The ceremony will be at the Australian War Memorial Canberra commencing at **1645**. You will need to book a (free) ticket to the event to secure a place. Alternatively you can live stream on YouTube or Facebook, or watch it later on YouTube.

You can book your ticket (if available) or get the streaming links [here](#). ✈

## Fly Navy Stickers



Sorry, folks, the last of this batch of Fly Navy stickers has been sold. Due to the generosity of one or two people in particular we made a useful profit which will go to the website development fund. Thank you for your support. ✈

## New President for QLD Division

The QLD Division held its Annual General Meeting on Sunday 14 March at which a new President was elected – **Stephen Huxtable**.



Stephen joined the RAN in Apr 81 as an ATWL, subsequently serving on 851 Squadron (Trackers);

723 (Iroquois, Squirrel, Kiowa) and 816 (Wessex). He paid off as a Leading Seaman nine years later.

For a while he was in Sales and owned a small business selling Snap On tools, but the aviation bug took hold again and he completed a private fixed-wing pilots license and commercial rotary wing licence – but work was scarce so it was back to a 3-year stint at Oakey working on Kiowas again.

A change of contractors provided the opportunity for redundancy and he moved to the middle east to work on the upgrade of Jaguar ground attack aircraft, followed by a stint in Kuwait.

Back in Australia, Stephen worked for Boeing in Oakey, completed 3 years there and after 911 I decided to help the Americans so off to Kuwait I went. Another 3 years of working on and off doing logistics for them I returned back to Australia.

Employment with Boeing provided the opportunity for a UAV course and 5 years of operations in and out of Iraq and Afghanistan flying them for the Australian Army. He left that company in 2012 to start a career as a remotely operated vehicle (ROV) driver. They are remotely driven submersibles and are used by the offshore oil and gas industry.

Stephen that industry around Feb 2019 and is currently looking for work, but he advises he has taken a keen interest in the returned serviceman world after doing time in war zones and seeing first hand what goes on. We welcome him as a new member to the Association and, in particular, to his role as President of the QLD Div.

The outgoing President, **Ray Murrell**, will step into the Vice President's shoes for a while. Ray has devoted many years of unstinting service to the FAAAA, for which he has our grateful thanks. ✈

## New President for SA Division

March was clearly the month for AGMs, as South Australia Division had one too. In it the long standing President, **Michael Stubbington**, stood down and he takes with him the grateful thanks of the Association for his long and dedicated years of service.



**John Siebert** was elected to be the new President. John is a retired pilot living in Adelaide. He commenced his flying career with the Geelong Gliding Club whilst a student engineer at RMIT. Two years of engineering studies convinced him

that flying was definitely the way to go. Naval aviation gave John the opportunity to fly the A4 Skyhawk and the Harrier together with experience in several staff appointments. After leaving active duty in 1992, he managed a flying school for two years before joining Adelaide based National Jet Systems where he flew Lear 35s and the BAe146 and Boeing 717 airliners.

In retirement he potters about the sky in his Van's RV4 whenever the weather is blue skies and light breezes. ✈

## NSW DIVISION AGM Key Outcomes

NSW also held an AGM during the month of March. All committee positions were spilled and a new committee appointed comprising the following:

President: Phil Carey

Secretary: Dick Martin

Treasurer: Ron Batchelor

General Committee:

John Balazic (WoS administrator)

Keith Boundy (Museum Liaison)

Howard McCallum

Ian Warren

Paul Norris

The NSW raffle was drawn with the following winners:

First prize: Nicola Adams; Second prize: Don McCutcheon; Third Prize: David Radisich.

A revised Constitution was approved at the meeting.

Finally, the Committee agreed that, due to impending rising costs of Slipstream magazine, the price of membership subscription would need to increase from 01Jan2022. New prices will be \$40 pa for Hardcopy members and \$30.00 for softcopy. This will be the first increase for many years (in fact, costs were reduced two years ago), and is regretted. ✈

## Squadron Patches and Emblems Wanted

725 and 816 Squadrons are working on history of their respective Squadrons and Flights at sea, and are looking for copies/photos/ images or even originals of any previous flight patches or emblems, to catalogue them as part of that work.



If anyone has anything they think might be of interest, please can they contact SBLT **Shane Leviton**, the TAO of 725 Squadron, on 0435 030 271 or via email at [shane.leviton@defence.gov.au](mailto:shane.leviton@defence.gov.au)

## A Very Fishy Story...



From [Army Times](#). Photo: Spc. Matthew Tattersall

The paratrooper who celebrated his upcoming departure from the US Army by jumping with his pet Siamese fighting fish — and whose selfie of the act later went viral on social media — will serve 12 days of extra duty before closing out his time in uniform.

To mark his last jump April 11, Spc **Matthew Tattersall** decided to bring his fish, "**Willy Makelt**", along for the ride.

"It was a daytime combat jump, but with me being so close to getting out, I didn't have any gear, so it was a Hollywood jump for me," Tattersall said shortly after the jump.

He and his friends had long talked about doing something special or unique for their last jump, but "no one actually went through with it," he said at the time.

So when his turn came, "I wanted to make it awesome, and I did just that," he said.

Tattersall and Willy Makelt made it safely to the ground, and the hardy fish earned a middle name. He's now Willy Did Makelt. ✈

FlyBy is a publication of the Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia. We are constantly after material so if you have any photos, articles or opinions on anything to do with Naval Aviation, please help us out by submitting them. Simply email the webmaster [here](#).

## Nowra Bridge Construction Update



Readers living in the Shoalhaven will be familiar with progress of the new Nowra bridge, and may even be suffering from the congestion it has brought – but we thought it might be of interest to folk further afield who only remember two bridges...or perhaps even just the one.

Fulton Hogan won the \$342m design and construction contract in February 2020 and major works began later that year.

As planned, land piling started in late November, while river piling was expected to begin in March 2021. The

work will first take place on the southern bank of the river and will then move along the temporary rock platform and into the river. The temporary rock platform is required as the river at that point is too shallow to allow the use of a large barge for piling works. Once the bridge is complete the temporary rock platform will be removed.

There will be 39 piles for the new bridge and 10 smaller temporary piles to build the foundation of the casting yard on the southern side of the river. The majority will be steel driven piles, with some bored piles for the northernmost pier, where the depth to rock is around 10m below the riverbed.

Once the bridge piles are ready, a reinforced concrete cap will be placed over each group of piles, from which the pier extends up to the bridge deck.

While piling should be done by late 2021, the full project is not expected to be complete until mid 2024.

There has been significant criticism that a by-pass around Nowra was rejected in favour of a new bridge alongside the existing bridges, but DMR reports that 85% of the traffic that uses the bridge will be local, who would not utilise a by-pass.

More updates over the next year or two! ✈



*Above: The piling platform at the southern end of the construction. Once the piles are complete the filling will be removed.*

# REUNION CORNER

## 817 Squadron 23-25 April 2021

Advice has been received of an 817 Squadron Reunion Weekend at Goolwa, SA from Friday 23 to Sunday 25 April 2021. 817 'Adopted' the town of Goolwa some years ago and there was a close relationship between the township and the Squadron up to its disbandment in 2011.



Organised by Nobby Clarke, the weekend will include a Friday night evening at the South Lakes Golf Club at Goolwa featuring a show by John Schumann and the Vagabond Crew; a Saturday morning march to the memorial site of Shark 902 and the opportunity for golf at the RSL; an evening BBQ at the RSL and a bonfire, beer and wine evening at the Goolwa Discovery Van Park.

817 Squadron will be asked to attend the Dawn Service at the Goolwa Cenotaph and of course anyone attending this weekend may do so too. The remainder of time in Goolwa is free time to enjoy the local area.

The reunion is open to anybody who served on 817 Squadron. You can buy your tickets [here](#). ✈

## Vietnam Veterans Concert 5/6 June 2021

The Vietnam Requiem will be the third in a series of seven national commemorative concerts and recordings that are created and produced by The Flowers of War team through assistance from the Australian War Memorial.



It will premiere **Saturday 5 and Sunday, 6 June** from 1300-1600 at the Llewellyn Hall, ANU, Canberra

This epic concert of music and projected images will be a fusion of iconic songs of the era featuring **Little Pattie, John Schumann** (I was only 19), **Normie Rowe**, and others in the first half.

The second half will be created by some of Australia's leading composers and performers. Written by **Ross Edwards, Elena Kats-Chernin, Andrew Schultz** and **Graeme Koehne** with musicians from the RMC Duntroon Band and the Canberra Symphony Orchestra, we will detail the war's chronology by telling the stories of the war in each of the movements. The Australian and NZ personnel on the battlefield; medical

staff, journalists, cameramen, photojournalists and entertainers who toured; the protest movement, and the South Vietnamese refugees who fled here to freedom as Boat People. Movement three Tuba Mirum by Graeme Koehne features the RAN and the HFV with images displayed on the big screen during the music.

Little Pattie wrote to **Chris Latham**, the Director of the Flowers of War "I know that this Requiem can be an important step on the road to healing. I promise I will bring all my life's experience working with the Vietnam Veteran community, to ensure its success."

If anyone would like to know any further information, they are welcome to contact me at any time.

Tickets will go on sale from 15 March via Ticketek. We are also offering veterans, donors and guests the opportunity to book early from 22 March to avoid disappointment. Tickets are \$70 for veterans and concession card holders; \$85 for adults.

**Chris Latham**,  
Flowers of War team [www.theflowersofwar.org](http://www.theflowersofwar.org)

Phone: 0438 952263 ✈

## Vietnam Veterans 16-18 August 2021

You are invited to join us for three days of activities to commemorate Vietnam Veterans Day, concluding with a Service hosted at the Old Bar Public School.



Outline of program:

**Monday Aug 16<sup>th</sup>.** Meet and greet from 4pm

**Tuesday Aug 17<sup>th</sup>.** Lunch with the RSL, and Reunion Dinner.

**Wed Aug 18<sup>th</sup>.** Brunch. Vietnam Veterans Parade and Service. Farewell Dinner.

Enquiries to: John Macartney. Phone (02) 6557 4165 or 0427 787 296 or email [here](#). ✈

## Aircrew Reunion 22-23 October 2021

An Aircrew Reunion is planned for 22-23 October at the Historic Aircraft Restoration Society at Albion Park Rail, Illawarra.

Details to be advised, but get the dates in your Diary as places are expected to go quickly once bookings are open. More info in future FlyBy newsletters. ✈

## Bursa Recognition Update (continued fm p.12)

- **Nowra** (FAA Museum) - Mon 19 Apr.
- **WA** (HMAS Stirling) - Mon 19 Apr
- **Canberra** (HMAS Harman) - Thu 22 Apr
- **Brisbane** (including Oakey/HMAS Moreton) – Tue 4 May
- **Cairns** (to cover FNQ – HMAS Cairns) – Wed 5 May

The following locations are still under consideration for presentation ceremonies, but have significantly smaller numbers:

- East Sale
- Melbourne
- Sydney (many of those in Sydney have opted to attend a ceremony in Nowra)
- Adelaide

Those in Batches 1-3 need to confirm their attendance at a ceremony with the Op Bursa Team (as per the previously sent group emails) by Tuesday 6 April.

The number of applications coming in has slowed to a trickle, even though there are probably still over 200 people who qualify, but are yet to apply for the medal. Remember to keep spreading the word to your mates who are yet to apply. The Team always seeks to

respond to any applications within 14 days of them being received.

Contact the Op Bursa Recognition Team at [op.bursa@defence.gov.au](mailto:op.bursa@defence.gov.au) if you have any questions.

Andrew Whittaker, CAPT RAN ✈

**Below:** Taken from the ADF's "Best Defence Images of 2020", LSIS Leo Baumgartner's stunning photo captures HMAS Parramatta's MH-60R helicopter deploying Counter Measure Dispense System flares during a training flight conducted on deployment through South East Asia. (ADF image).

