



**Bumper  
Christmas  
Edition!**

# The Westland Scout

## First of a new breed



As the first small-deck helicopter in the RAN, the little Scout broke an important barriers for the Fleet Air Arm.

**Kim Dunstan** tells the story...

In the early 60s the RAN selected the Westland Scout helicopter to assist with survey work on the new hydrographic ship HMAS Moresby (11) mapping the Australian coastline and islands to the north. The Scout demonstrated that helicopters could successfully operate from small ships, ferrying survey personnel and equipment to observation points ashore, completing tasks in hours that would otherwise take days if using boats - and a vast improvement on the pre-war employment of seaplanes and flying boats in hydrographic survey work.

### Westland Scouts arrive

In 1962 the RAN ordered two Westland Scout AH-1 helicopters. They were the Navy's first turbo powered helicopters, arriving at Sydney on MV 'Auckland Star' in March 1963. The two Scouts (WS-101 & WS-102), in Oxford blue, entered service with 723 Squadron at HMAS Albatross, Nowra, on 6 April 1963. After test flights, Scout conversion courses began. The plan was for one Scout to be embarked on HMAS Moresby rotating it with the other at NAS Nowra. Moresby was the RAN's first purpose-built hydrographic survey ship and was fitted with a helicopter deck and hangar at the stern. On 8 January 1964, prior to the ship's

commissioning, a Scout from Nowra conducted landing trials on Moresby's helicopter pad at Newcastle State Dockyard.

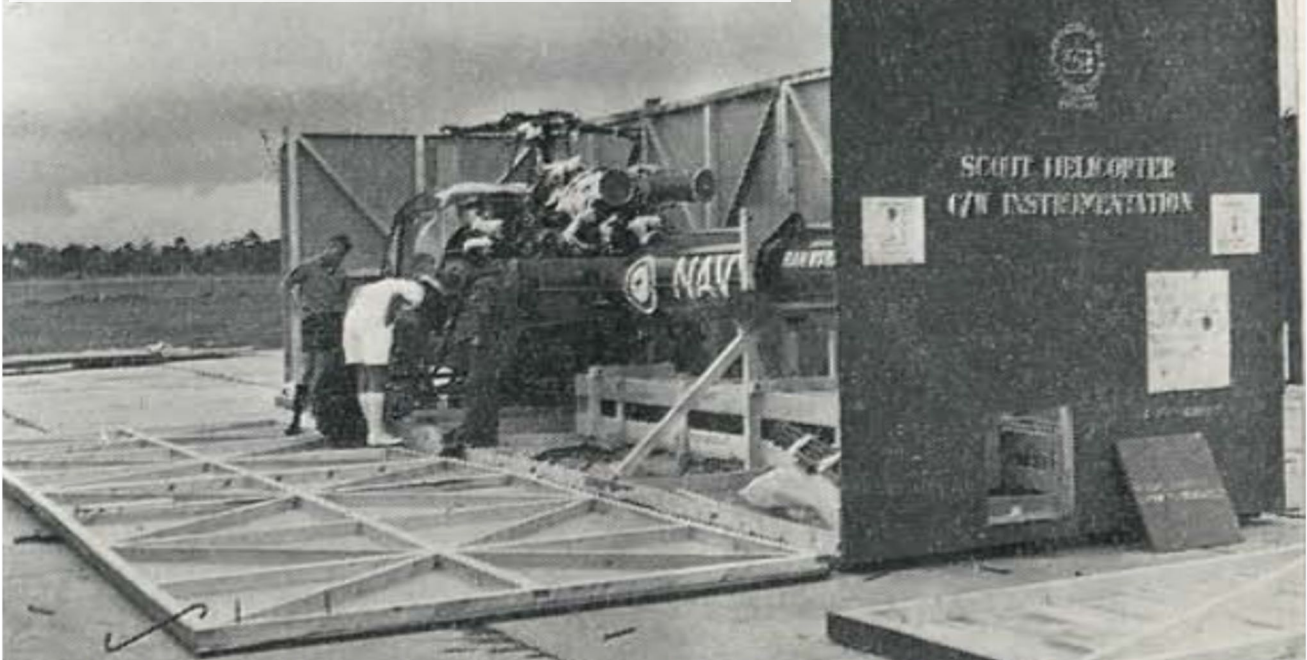
### Sea trials start

After her commissioning on 6 March 1964 HMAS Moresby sailed for Jervis Bay on 13 April and over successive days at sea began exercising with the embarked Westland Scout. The trials were successful with the helicopter alighting on Moresby in swells up to 2.4 m (8 feet); the Scout could also be launched without interrupting the ship's sounding runs.

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A Scout arriving at Albatross in March 1963. It was largely assembled, requiring relatively little work before test flying and entering service with 723 Squadron. HMAS Moresby, the purpose-built survey ship, was to carry one Scout on a permanent basis, whilst the second underwent maintenance at Albatross – a routine that was followed for many years.



A week later in Tasmanian waters an important exercise took place at Storm Bay **where** a heavy swell runs and landing by boat is hazardous. But the Scout completed a transfer with ease proving the Scout could land survey parties and their bulky equipment in difficult locations. And in some instances to complete tasks that would never be attempted without a helicopter.

### The Scout in Brief

The Westland Scout AH-1 was a light utility helicopter developed for the British Army that evolved from the Saunders-Roe P.531. Following SARO's merger with Westland Helicopters in August 1959, Scout production began in 1960. Although small and rugged looking, it was a high-performance machine that required deft handling in flight and careful maintenance.

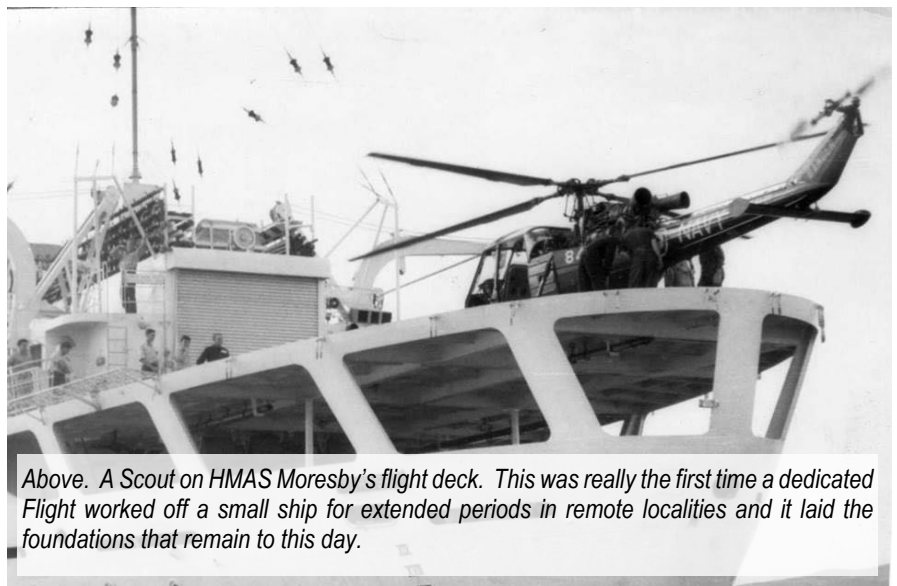
The Scout cockpit had side-by-side seats with cyclic sticks and tail-rotor pedals for pilot and co-pilot, with one collective lever on the left of the pilot's seat. The cabin had a bench seat for three passengers and could be rejigged to carry stores - or a stretcher using the blister-type cabin doors. Both the cockpit and cabin had good visibility with removable doors as required. The main rotor blades were folded back for hangar stowage.

The single 685 shp (511 Kw) Bristol

Siddeley Nimbus 102 turboshaft engine, mounted at the rear of the cabin, drove a four-blade main rotor. Stressed aluminium alloy covered the airframe and the empennage had a small elevator and a two-blade anti-torque rotor, with a tailskid beneath. The widespread landing skids cut ground resonance and shock absorbers reduced rebound on landing. A cargo hook was attached to the underside of the cabin.

The RAN Scouts operated with one pilot and up to four passengers. An aircrewman/loadmaster was required when freight was carried in the cabin or with a cargo-sling.

*(Continued on page 4)*



Above. A Scout on HMAS Moresby's flight deck. This was really the first time a dedicated Flight worked off a small ship for extended periods in remote localities and it laid the foundations that remain to this day.

# Mystery Photo No.62 Answer



Our Mystery Photo last month showed a Gannet on Melbourne. We asked what was odd about the markings. Most people who responded correctly picked that the starboard wing roundel was lacking a 'roo, but few offered an opinion why...perhaps because it was too obvious?

When Melbourne left the UK for her maiden voyage back home many spares were taken aboard at RNAS Abbotsinch (Glasgow) and the larger items were stowed on the hangar walls. This included Gannet mainplanes which were in their original colours (the Kangaroo motif was not adopted by the RAN until later in '56). The lack of a roo suggests that the starboard outer mainplane had been replaced by one such spare, with the motif yet to be painted on.

It was suggested the repair might have been necessary as a result of **Ray Morrirt's** diversion into the catwalk of Melbourne (not once, but twice!) but this occurred in '56 whilst the above image is probably much later than that. Image: Ron Marsh.

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## SUFFER NOT THE LITTLE CHILDREN



What better time to help someone than Christmas, and what better present than the gift of sight?

Truat was just five years old and was born with cataracts in both eyes. She lived amongst the poorest of Vietnam and her family's income of \$50.00 a month meant they simply couldn't afford the simple treatment to restore her sight. Her future looked bleak.

**But last month all that changed when the Fred Hollows foundation brought her a miracle.**

It cost me just \$25.00 to help that little girl – the price of a average bottle of wine that wouldn't last Christmas dinner: but that modest amount has changed Truat's life forever.

So why not help restore the sight of a fellow human being? You can donate as much or as little as you want, or set up a small monthly allotment to bring a brighter future to people less fortunate than ourselves. Click [here](#) to give someone a fair go today. ✈

### † REST IN PEACE †

Since the last edition of 'FlyBy' we have become aware of the loss of **Noel Morgan** and **Paul Stanton**

You can read a little more of these sad events on our Obituary pages [here](#), and, if you are a member of the Association, you can leave a comment there if you wish. ✈

## The RAN's Scouts *(continued from page 2)*

### The Essential Helicopter

When embarked on HMAS Moresby (2540 tonnes) the Scout operated in a maritime environment, flying in tropical and sub-tropical conditions, landing in rough-and-ready locations, often with abrasive coral sand that damaged rotor blades, engine and airframe parts, requiring constant attention. Despite the hostile conditions the RAN Scout AH-1 helicopters made a valuable contribution towards the ship's mapping and survey work.

The Scout was fast, manoeuvrable, and carried a sizeable payload, quickly moving people and equipment from the ship to shore. It also increased the range the ship could begin ferrying equipment ashore - cutting 'dead time' while steaming between sites. It was a major improvement on using a launch to land people and equipment – followed by a gruelling climb to a survey point. The overall experience on Moresby proved that the Scout delivered significant benefits in survey and utility work.

Although the helicopter had advantages there were occasional setbacks. Generally, the Scout performed well, but delays in acquiring spare-parts was a hinderance. Having an unserviceable helicopter affected survey plans causing hold-ups. Many of the engine and airframe problems came from landing ashore in a swirl of dust, sand and shell grit.

When Moresby docked at Garden Island for maintenance, the Scout would disembark to NAS Nowra where major servicing took place; re-embarking when the ship was at sea again. While the Scout helped the survey team it also assisted with re-supply, personnel transfers, mail drops, photographic sorties and other utility work.

Significantly HMAS Moresby's Scout helped to map many hitherto uncharted coastal areas and islands around Australia, the Great Barrier Reef, and Papua New Guinea.

### Maintaining the Scout

As the Scout operated in a corrosive saltwater environment and adverse conditions ashore it required constant, high-level maintenance. To reduce damaging dust and grit entering the turbo engine an Inlet Particle Separator (IPS) could be fitted on the turbo intake. Because the IPS reduced power slightly they were only fitted as necessary. Delays in accessing spare parts caused some unserviceability.

From a maintainers point of view the Scout was relatively easy to work on, in particular the engine and transmission due to ready access to most parts and its rugged simple design. On Moresby special attention was given to preventing saltwater corrosion and repairing damage caused by dust and sand when landing on rough ground. The Scout's skid-type undercarriage coped well landing on the ship, but care was needed when moving it between the hangar and flight deck.



*On Saturday 08 April 1967, while Moresby was surveying the coast of PNG, Scout WS-102 was due to investigate a survey point at Cape Won. Soon after take-off from Moresby the helicopter lost directional control and ditched in Wewak Harbour. Fortunately pilot and passengers escaped unhurt and were quickly rescued by the ship's crash boat. Divers soon located the wreck and Moresby's crane recovered the aircraft, which was subsequently written off. (FAAM)*



**Above:** A typical day in the life of Morseby's Scout: sling loading fuel or other stores to set up surveying sites on remote spots on the coast. Had the helicopter not been available it would have been back-breaking work. Flight members liked the autonomy of the posting, which also gave a sense of accomplishment with each job done.

### Other happenings

The Scout helicopters were often engaged in laborious work and given the unusual and demanding circumstances encountered it is no surprise that accidents should happen. But being sturdy machines they were seldom out of service for long. The following outlines several unusual events.

According to the 723 Squadron diary in March 1964, Scout N8-101 was engaged in cargo lifting exercises at NAS Nowra on the 26th, when upon landing the tail rotor struck the ground demolishing the blades. Luckily the helicopter settled without further damage or injuries.

While on HMAS Moresby N8-101 was damaged on 3 June 1964 near Police Point, south of Hobart. During a landing on uneven ground the main rotor blades hit the cockpit canopy and the tail boom – due to droop stop failure. Nobody was injured, but the Scout was trucked to Port Huon and loaded on Moresby, where the fault was investigated.

### The Cape Legendre incident

In August 1968, while Moresby was surveying in the Monte Bello Archipelago off the NW coast of WA,

Scout N8-101 was despatched to inspect a tide-gauge at Cape Legendre. During the flight signs of pending engine failure made a precautionary landing necessary, at Decca Green (a radio survey point on Legendre Island). Further inspection showed an engine-change was necessary – albeit in a very challenging location.

Legendre Island is surrounded by reefs and limestone cliffs, with three-metre tides and just one tiny beach. Yet on Thursday the 22nd, at high tide, the ship's 'Hercules' 5-metre utility boat carrying a spare engine surfed over the reef onto the beach. The engine was then manhandled ashore and loaded onto a trailer - together with spars, blocks and tackle - and pushed two kilometres over rough ground to the Scout; where sheerlegs were rigged for the engine change.

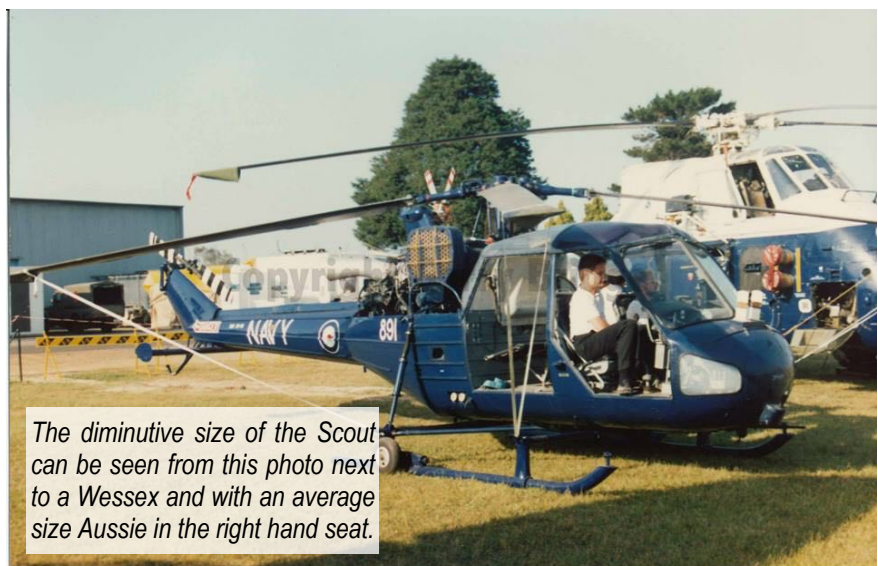
'Scout Flight' personnel did the engine change and test flew it, so it was ready by late afternoon. With the ship positioned near Cape Legendre the Scout made the flight without incident. Next day the helicopter was to have recover the faulty engine, but minor faults prevented it, so the 'Hercules' utility boat was used. Lowering the engine, via an old lighthouse derrick, into the 'Hercules' was a remarkable exercise in itself. Meanwhile, on Moresby, the Scout was repaired and declared serviceable.

### Exit the Westland Scout

After 14-years' service with 723 Squadron, operating variously as a utility and survey helicopter, Scout N8-101 disembarked from HMAS Moresby for the last time on 26 July 1973. Over the next four years N8-101 operated at NAS Nowra until delisted on 10 August 1977.

In October 1973 the RAN acquired its first CAC Bell 206-1 Kiowa (N17-013) as a replacement for the Westland Scout; assigned to 723 Squadron for survey duties it first embarked on HMAS Moresby on 05 February 1974. Additional Kiowas were delivered to NAS Nowra for utility and training purposes and rotation on Moresby.

The legacy of the RAN's Westland Scout AH-1s is the vital role they played in assisting HMAS Moresby's survey work -



*The diminutive size of the Scout can be seen from this photo next to a Wessex and with an average size Aussie in the right hand seat.*



An early Morseby Flight. Back row, L-R: Rick Watkins, Keith Englesman, Terry Tuckfield. Front Row: Les Crane, Mike Perrott, Dick Daley.

enhancing Australia’s position as one of the world’s foremost hydrographic authorities.

moved to Gray’s Auctions and sold on 06 March 2019. Other ‘Historic Flight’ aircraft went to HARS via tender. ✈

**At the Fleet Air Arm Museum**

After decommissioning Scout N8-101 stayed in ‘A’ hangar at NAS Nowra until October 1982 when it was transferred to the RAN ‘Historic Flight’. Over the next few years N8-101 was restored to flying condition and placed on the civil register as VH-NVY. Its last authorised flight was on 04 August 1985.

In November 1985, VH-NVY was part of a static display at Schofields Air Show. When the show closed an attempt was made to move it - one of the people responsible for its restoration was concerned for its security and decided to hover-taxi it a short distance to HMAS Nirimba – without a helicopter license. Shortly after becoming airborne control was lost hitting the ground some 60 metres from the parked position. No one was injured.

The badly bent VH-NVY was returned to Nowra and repaired with a tail boom from an ex-British Army Scout (serial uncertain). Since then it has been on display as WS-101 at the Fleet Air Arm Museum, at Nowra, south of Sydney.

**Farewell Scout VH-NVW**

One other Westland Scout (ex-British Army XR603) was acquired by the RAN ‘Historic Flight’ to be refurbished at Nowra where it was painted in Navy colours to represent WS-102. In June 1999 it was registered as VH-NVW but never flown. When the RAN ‘Historic Flight’ was disbanded in 2009, because it wasn’t an RAN aircraft, XR603 was



VH-NVY. What happens if you try to hover-taxi a helicopter when you don’t know how to do it...



## Wall of Service Update

Order No. 47 is now closed and has been submitted to the Foundry for manufacture. The following names were in the Order:

T.R.HETHERINGTON R43207 CPO ATA4 Jan 66–Dec 13.  
 A.N.MUDGE O43225 LCDR AE Jan 66–Jun 95.  
 R.I. GAGNON O165860 CMDR (P) Feb 98–Aug 09.  
 O.L. NICHOLLS O3018 CMDR (P) Feb 68–Jul 16.  
 D.A. RUSSELL R51593 LEM(A) Jan 56 – Mar 62.  
 H.R. HURREN R38167 EM1(A) Mar 50 – Jun 53  
 B. BURDETT R50605 ? 55-61  
 J.D. DEERING R54530 EMAW Jul 58 – Jul 67.  
 P.W. GREENFIELD O2990 LEUT GLEX (P) Jan 68–Aug 79.  
 J.C. GORDON R109793 WOSTD Jan 71 – Jan 91.  
 J. McCORMACK O108580 CMDR GLEX (O) Jul 72 – Oct 98.  
 M.P. FOLKES O114061 CAPT (O)(HWI) Mar 75 – Mar 10.  
 K.J. VOTE O2679 LCDR GLEX(P) Mar 66 – Apr 86.  
 J. CLARK O105955 LEUT (P) Mar 70 – Mar 80  
 A. A. REYNE O107404 LCDR (P) Jan 70 – Dec 17

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P.D. BLEACH S164428 LSNPC Aug 97 – Aug 12  
 E.M. KAVANAGH O2094 CMDR GLEX(P) Oct 62 – Nov 87

Names under the black line were not included in the 'Free Plaque' contest as their applications arrived after the closing date. See page 13 for the winner of that contest.

Order No. 48 is now open for applications with two names:  
 K. ENGELSMAN O2154 CMDR (P) Feb 63 – Jul 10  
 E.H. DALE A35562 POAF(A) Dec 47 – Mar 54

You'll find all the details about the Wall (and the application form) [here](#). ✈

## Nowra Veterans' Centre Update



**VETERANS and their families on the south coast of New South Wales will soon be able to access their support services in the one location with the announcement**

**today that RSL LifeCare will lead and deliver the Veteran Wellbeing Centre in Nowra.**

Minister for Veterans' Affairs **Darren Chester** and Senator for New South Wales **Jim Molan** AO DSC announced today that RSL LifeCare had been selected after extensive consultation with the local ex-service community.

"RSL LifeCare has great local knowledge and expertise, providing practical support designed to assist veterans in health and welfare, including their contribution in assisting homeless veterans," Mr Chester said.

"The Nowra Wellbeing Centre will, once completed, provide a central point for veterans and their families to access assistance from government, health services, ex-service organisations (ESOs) and community groups.

"I applaud RSL LifeCare and RSL NSW for their hard work and ongoing assistance to provide the serving and ex-serving community in NSW with high quality and specialised support."

The Government's \$30 million investment in a network of six Veterans' Wellbeing Centres will put veterans and their families first, bringing together organisations that currently provide them with services and support

Senator for New South Wales Jim Molan AO DSC says, "It gives me great pleasure to see that a terrific organisation such as RSL LifeCare will run the Nowra Veterans' Wellbeing Centre."

"This centre will be a fantastic way for local veterans to gain greater independence and receive better support. I look forward to visiting this great centre when it opens," Senator Molan said.

"The commitment of \$5 million towards the Nowra Wellbeing Centre at the last election is another example of how the Morrison Government is putting veterans and their families first."

RSL LifeCare Board Chairman **Andrew Condon** says "We are very proud to have been selected by Department of Veterans' Affairs and RSL NSW to design, build, own and operate the Nowra Veterans' Wellbeing Centre.

"The RSL LifeCare strategic plan focuses heavily on our role in service delivery for veterans, and this centre represents a further milestone in our 100-year plus history of enriching the lives of veterans."

CEO of RSL LifeCare **Laurie Leigh** says, "We plan to continue to engage with the local community to determine the resources and services most needed by veterans in Nowra and the surrounding regions.

"The centre will become a 'one-stop shop' for veteran support services, integrating both physical and virtual spaces."

RSL NSW Acting President **Ray James** says, "From the outset this has been a project by the local community, for the

local community, and we thank the many local RSL sub-Branch volunteers, ESOs and community service providers that collaborated with us to get to this exciting milestone today.

“We look forward to working with our partner charity RSL LifeCare and these many other local providers in delivering quality and responsive support services to veterans and current serving personnel and their families in the Nowra, Illawarra and the greater Shoalhaven region.

“RSL NSW's members are committed to being wherever veterans and their families are, supporting them whenever they need it and delivering services however they can be best utilised on the ground, and we hope today serves as an example of how we can all work together to provide a similar model for other centres right across NSW.”

The Department of Veterans' Affairs worked with local groups, including the NSW Office for Veterans' Affairs, RSL and other ESOs to understand the services currently available and the ongoing needs of veterans and their families in the Nowra region.

RSL NSW led the development of the Nowra Veterans' Wellbeing Centre and its project team looked at how the centre will operate and what services it will deliver. A detailed business case proposal was developed by the project team, which included responses received through the recent Expression of Interest process.

All those involved are working together to deliver the centre as soon as possible for the benefit of veterans and their families. For more information about the Veterans' Wellbeing Centres, visit the DVA website [here](#). ✈

## EMU MURAL IN THE PENTAGON

Dear Editor. In your capacity as Fly By website manager I am forwarding the attached images recently acquired in response to a former Vet's query about the mural in the Pentagon I had something to do with establishing when I was Naval Attaché.

In the second floor corridor connecting the Pentagon to its shopping precinct is the ANZUS Corridor. On one wall of the corridor is a very large mural with the EMU and 135th AHC crests. There is also a display cabinet including the EMU crest and a paragraph acknowledgement on the wall.

Anyhow, it's something that only those with access to the Pentagon will ever see but everybody who uses the shopping precinct can't avoid it! I was able to furnish the Pentagon's historians and graphic designers with some great photographs provided by **Neil Ralph** and **David Farthing** back in 2009.

Anyway, may be a nice little item of interest for our HFV folks. It's 'slightly' (a lot) bigger than the recognition afforded them in our own Australian War Memorial and I may forward the Pentagon folks a copy of the GG's Unit Citation for Gallantry to round off the story for posterity in the Pentagon.

**Vince Di Pietro.** ✈

## WEBSITE APPEAL UPDATE

A big THANK YOU to all those who have contributed to the personal appeal to help repair our website.

The National President has written to everyone who contributed except for a couple of people whose names we just couldn't pin down (as no initials were provided). If you are one of those and would like a formal letter of thanks, just let the webmaster know and he'll fix it.

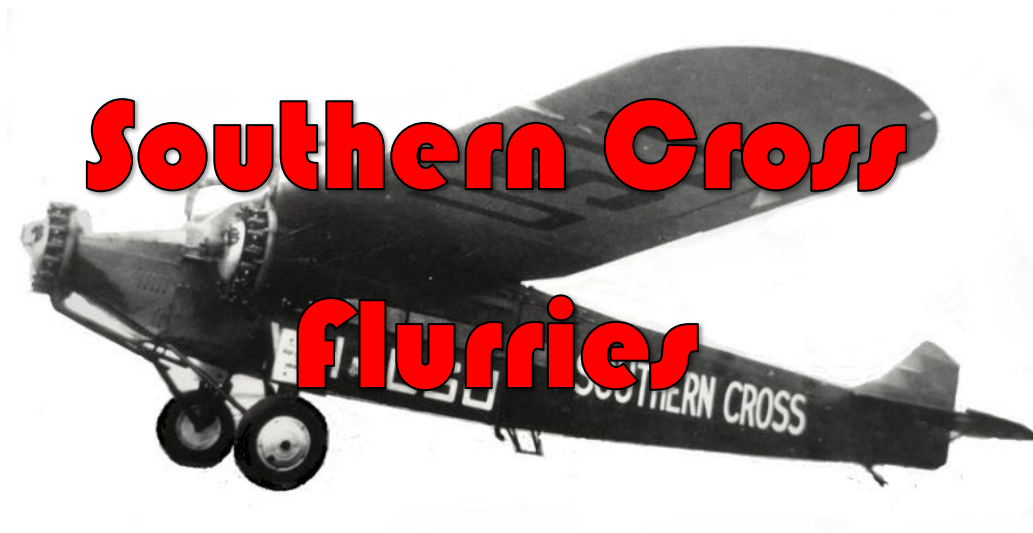
We are now seeking quotes for the rebuild of the website and are optimistic that work may begin before Christmas, although it will take up to three months to complete.

The generosity of personal contributors has been amazing, and we could not have got this far without you.

Thank you again. ✈







Our article last month on the Southern Cross and Smithy caused a bit of interest, including some Letters to the Editor, as follows:

**Dear Editor,**

I read your article on Smithy's Southern Cross with interest particularly the words:

*"Rebirth of a Legend Kingsford Smith sold The Southern Cross to the Australian Government for £3000 in September 1935 to be displayed as a museum piece. It subsequently featured in the 1946 movie 'Smithy'. It was refurbished in 1985 for display at Brisbane airport, where it resides to this day."*

I was in my last year of Primary School at Ascot State School near Brisbane Airport in 1958 & remember Southern Cross arriving that year commemorating an anniversary not 1985. It certainly wasn't 1985 as I recall. **Mick Storrs.**

*By Editor: Thanks so much for your input, Mick. The FlyBy article had to be necessarily brief, as to tell the full fascinating story would have (and has!) filled a book or three.*

*According to my research, Smithy sold the Southern Cross in 1935. The last flight was on 18 July of that year, a relatively short flight from Sydney Mascot to Richmond. The aircraft was kept in storage there until restored to flying condition during WW2, to feature in a post-war film entitled "Smithy".*

*Placed back in storage, its future was uncertain. Plans were laid to house it in a purpose-built building at Brisbane's Eagle Farm airport, and it was brought out of retirement around 1957 to raise funds for the building, which was eventually opened the following year. I've seen a photo of it at Brisbane airport around that time, so perhaps this is when you saw the aircraft?*

*The Cross was, I believe, refurbished again (in 1985) in preparation for its new home.*

*Alas, when we are young we don't always understand the significance of events, but it must have been an amazing moment to see the original flying in that brief window when she was brought out of retirement for the last time. ✈*

**Dear Editor,**  
Re Southern Cross.  
On a deployment to RAAF Edinburgh airshow with **Leigh Costain** and **Ted Wynberg** mid '90's in 898 we approached a God-forsaken airfield in the middle of the backblocks and through the shimmering heat haze appeared a large blue trimotor. A Final Countdown moment!

Peter Fitzsimons (can't stand his politics!!) has written an excellent book "Charles Kingsford Smith and Those Magnificent Men".

The photo below is of the wreckage of the "Southern Cloud" sister ship to the Southern Cross that went missing on a passenger flight Sydney - Melbourne in the thirties. Found by a worker on the Snowy Scheme in the late fifties while on a bush walk in very remote terrain. The wreckage is housed in a memorial on the eastern side of the road south out of Cooma NSW. Cheers, **KJ. Vote ✈**



**Dear Editor,**

Perhaps a bit of nit-picking, but **Alex Ignatieff** joined the FAA in January 1952 (not 1951) and became a member of 9 Course RAAF (not 10) - (NAC 4) at Archerfield, Q'ld.

He did move to 10 course after breaking his collarbone playing Rugby for the Navy whilst undergoing flight training at Archerfield. That was why we all subsequently gave up playing contact sport thereafter.

With suitable respects, **Geoff Litchfield.**

*By Editor. Hi Geoff. I'm always happy to stand corrected! Thanks for your interest and input. I'll publish your advice in the next FlyBy to set the record straight. ✈*

Do you want to help? HARS is always looking for volunteers who can bring skills to refurbishing historic aircraft. If you would like to help contact them [here](#).

# Navy Heritage Flight Dakota Comes Together

06/11/2020 12:54

Photo: Michael Hough, HARS



06/11/2020 12:49



06/11/2020 12:51

HARS has recently provided an update on the ex-RAN Historic Flight C47 Dakota (N2-90) which has undergone a significant amount of work since the Society bought it a couple of years ago. It is a very low hour airframe, served in both RAAF and RAN livery, and its VIP interior was specially adapted to be part of the Queen's Flight in 1954.

Hats off to the HARS volunteers who are bringing this grand old lady back to life – perhaps even (eventually) to flying condition. (Thanks to Michael Hough).

## Calling All DFRDB Recipients



Many people on a DFRDB pension would be aware of the work of **Ken Stone**, who has been working tirelessly to right a wrong regarding recipients of that scheme.

The issue is that ADF members who chose to commute some of their DFRDB benefits to a lump sum, and whose pension was therefore reduced accordingly, were never told that those reductions would continue beyond the age of Normal Life Expectancy (NLE). This was the point at which the up-front lump sum had been mitigated.

In other words, by NLE the 'advance' they had taken as a lump sum had been fully restored to the Commonwealth, and their pension should therefore have returned to its full value. But the full pension was NOT restored, and veterans were never informed that the reduction would continue for the rest of their lives.

Ken continues to push a very reluctant system in an effort to right this wrong, including recent letters to the Australian Financial Complaints Authority, the Federal Police Fraud Squad, and every Australian Senator.

He has flagged that if these latest efforts don't gain any traction then it may be time for some demonstrations in large numbers to gain media interest and public attention. He needs to determine the number of interested people if he comes to this, so you are asked to respond to him [here](#), if you believe you can help. ✈

## Update on Errol's Sign



Back in October we reported that the signage for the Errol Kavanagh Oval in Canberra was looking decrepit and that an able-bodied volunteer was approaching the local Council to see what could be done. Readers will remember that Errol was killed in a Mig-15 crash in 1993 and the Oval was named in honour of his attempts to avoid people on the ground.

**Tony Di Pietro** has been busy speaking to the Council. There's still a way to go, but we are hopeful the sign will be

replaced at public expense and may be of metal, rather than wood. We are also optimistic that the FAAAA will be consulted on the look and feel of the sign, and may have the opportunity to provide an explanation of who Errol Kavanagh was, and why the Oval is named after him.

We will keep readers informed of progress over the coming months. ✈

### DID YOU KNOW...

**...that when you purchase an item from smile.Amazon or EBay, you can select the Fly Navy Heritage Trust as your chosen charity and they will donate. You can support them for free! ✈**

## More About the Tracker Incident



By **Chris Tutin**

Whoever heard of a Midshipman having a viewpoint and how did a helicopter MIDN get involved with a Tracker recovery?

Let's start at the beginning – the Sea Kings were not embarked for the August 1979 NZ trip so CO 723 thought it a good idea to get three of his junior aircrew some sea time attached to Melbourne SAR Flt with the two Wessex. Even though we were not Wessex qualified we could fly as co-pilots to the 3 SAR Flt pilots.

So **SBLT Champion**, **ASLT Sydney** and MIDN Tutin, all badged helicopter pilots, embarked for the NZ trip. I never realised that having a badged MIDN was a novelty until my very first Cocktail party in Wellington when the embarked Fleet Commander tapped me of the shoulder and introduced himself to a Mid!!

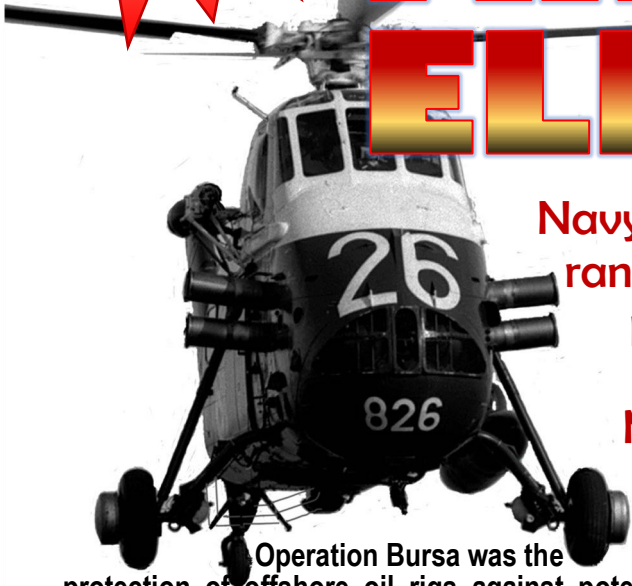
Back to the Tracker story. The Sea Knight was requested due to the lack of Sea Kings and USS Camden lent their Vertrep/Transfer helo for the heavy lift. Now, the Sea Knight had been embarked for 6 months and had a few unserviceable avionics - no Nav aids, suspect compass and only one UHF radio.

*(Continued on page 14).*

For update on submitted applications see next page

# ARE YOU ELIGIBLE?

Navy's involvement in [Operation Bursa](#) ran for some ten years, and those who participated in it may be eligible for the award of an Australian Service Medal (Counter Terrorism Clasp). You need to apply for the medal. Learn more about it on this page.



Operation Bursa was the protection of offshore oil rigs against potential terrorist attack. Navy's commitment began in 1980 and ended in 1989, with elements of HC723, HU816 and HS817 Squadrons being involved over that period.

After many years of work, recognition for those who were involved in the Operation has been granted, and a project team has been established to process applications from people who believe they are eligible for the Award.

Eligible personnel must have:

- served 60 consecutive or more days on Operation Bursa (a member who did not complete 60 consecutive days due to death, illness, injury or disability due to service in Op Bursa will be deemed to have completed 60 days)
- not been awarded another medal for operational service over the same period;
- been qualified on aircraft type (Wx 31B or SK-50A/B);
- been posted to one or more of the following Squadrons during the periods designated:
  - HC723 Squadron (1Aug80 to 9Feb84)
  - HU816 Squadron (9Feb84 to 1Nov86)
  - HS817 Squadron (1Nov86 to 31Dec89)

The 60 consecutive days qualifying period includes deployment, operational training and while on a reduced Notice-To-Move (NTM) (generally less than four hours) in support of Op Bursa.

Periods attached to a ship's Flight, deep maintenance units not on a reduced NTM, or while on course are NOT counted in the qualifying requirements.

If you think you are eligible, you must apply for the Award. Nobody is going to reach out and offer you one!

Click on the button for full instructions and eligibility requirements, and access to an Application Form

[Click Here](#)

## How Do I Apply?

A hard-copy paper application form can be downloaded from our website (click button above), but before you fill it out please read the covering page carefully and gather your evidentiary documentation to email to the project team as soon as you have submitted the form electronically.

## Documentation Requirements

You must forward evidentiary documentation to the project team to support any application. Your application will not be processed without it.

**Aircrew.** Scans of Flying Log Book pages showing qualification on the designated aircraft, training for the Op Bursa role and participation in exercises at East Sale or Nowra over as long a period as possible that complies with the qualification requirement.

**Maintainers.** Scans of any suitable documentation such as Record of Training and Employment and posting record that indicates qualification and employment on the aircraft type while engaged in Op. Bursa, over the period that complies with the qualification requirement.

The project team is **CAPT Andrew Whittaker** and **LCDR Murray Lindsay**, who can be contacted [here](#) if you have any questions. ✈

## Wall of Service Competition



For a couple of months now we've been advertising the 'Wall of Service Free Plaque Competition', where one lucky applicant would have their fee refunded in full.

The competition closed on 06 November when the requisite number of applications was achieved.

NSW Division, which built the Wall and administers it, put the names of the applicants into a hat and the President drew out the winning name at his general meeting on 18 November. The lucky winner is **Paul Folkes**.

Our congratulations to Paul, who will receive a cheque in the mail (promise!) A little bird told us he is going to spend it on a nice Christmas present for his wife, Fae. ✈

## Update on ASM(CT) Applications



The online application process for the ASM-CT went live on Friday 6 Nov 20, with a flood of applications in the first few days and a steady stream since then.

The awards for "The Pathfinder Group" (the nine members who comprised the test case and those killed in the crash of Wessex 825 (LSA Gary Macey and RAAF CPL James Campbell)) are presently with Defence Honours and Awards for final processing/oversight.

The Project Team has assessed a further group of 100 applicants, which was submitted to Navy

Honours and Awards for approval on 20 Nov 20.

Applications will not be processed without supporting documentation being provided. This should be sufficiently detailed to show the member was qualified for role and employed on Op Bursa (either directly or on recall) for the periods specified for the relevant squadrons. Log book scans/photos need to show dates and mission details. Photos should be of sufficient resolution to be readable by the Team. A number of applicants have submitted lo-res phone camera photos which have been rejected as unreadable. **There are over 20 applications sitting in the**

"pending" tray because of no, or inadequate, documentation being provided. Everyone with inadequate documentation is informed and given the opportunity to provide it, in order to get their application moving.

Also, please double check details in the application form before sending. In particular: PMKeyS number (or Official Number if no PMKeyS), email address and that the qualifying period you are claiming is within the approved parameters for each of the squadrons.

As we are at the beginning of the process, it is not possible at the moment to provide a timeframe on when medals (and/or clasps) will be received. While it would be desirable to have the medals presented at a public award ceremony, this is not currently practical with COVID-19 restrictions. Unfortunately, this means that the likely method of delivery will be via Australia Post.

You can access the on-line background information and the hard copy application form [here](#).

Captain Andrew Whittaker. ✈

## A Pair of .45s

Following on from last month's story and pictures of a charred & crumpled Tracker 845, it's time to reveal why there were in fact a Pair of 45's.



In 1977 there were four surviving Trackers from the 'H'

Hangar fire. We all know that 842 was undergoing overhaul at Hawker de Havilland's at Bankstown, and from the ashes of 'H' hangar three surviving S-2E's 849, 843 and 845 were potentially repairable.

Once repaired, these were to be re-numbered 840, 841 and 843. The undamaged 842 retained its original side number and together with 840 and 841 these three S-2E's formed 816 Squadron for the epic Queen's Silver Jubilee Cruise of 1977.

In the event, S-2E 845 (which would have been 843 after its rebuild) was found to be beyond economical repair so it was repainted with its original side number and used as a training aid and then museum gate guard. However, the replacement S-2G's were to be numbered from 844 to 859 to coincide with the sequence of their USN Bureau Numbers from 152333 up to 153582.

So, between the 1976 'H' Hangar fire and the 2019 Summer bushfires, Trackers N12-152334 and N12-153600 both carried the side number 845. ✈

## Tracker Recovery – A Midshipman's viewpoint (continued from page 11)

An agreement was reached that the SAR Wessex would shepherd the Sea Knight to Whenuapai while also transporting the empty engine stand. Nothing could go wrong with a plan like this agreed between two Navies!

Well it would have worked, except FLYCO refused to release the escort Wessex until the other Wessex was back from the Fleet Bread and biscuit run! (Melbourne had the Fleet bakery and most days the SAR Flight was tasked with delivering fresh bread and biscuits around the Fleet. The Flight had some very well fed aircrew as the crewies raided the biscuit barrels).

So the Sea Knight arrived, picked up the new engine on stand and was sent off alone on a heading and distance to RNZAF Whenuapai. (Melbourne always knew exactly where she was!!). Remember the lack of avionics. Twenty to thirty minutes later the Wessex with the other stand left the ship with **Ron Lawrence** as Captain and myself as co-pilot, and we listened to the lost and forlorn Sea Knight crew trying to find a RNZAF base. For those that don't know, there was no area radar in NZ at the time either military or civil. The Sea Knight had flown right of track and bypassed Whenuapai. We heard this radio exchange:

Sea Knight – *Ah, approach we're just trucking on in here and we don't know where we are.*

App – *Roger that, Can you see any landmarks to assist in placing you?*

Sea Knight – *Goddam! We just flew over a chicken farm.*

At that point Air Traffic realised where he was and they were able to direct the Sea Knight to Whenuapai. We landed at almost the same time although we'd left 20 minutes later. After the drop-offs we both refuelled and we escorted the Sea Knight back to mother.

We got back just before sunset and due to darkness and forecast weather the Sea Knight stayed the night folded and tucked up close to the island. The LWO was lost overboard during the night with 70 knots of wind across the deck and eight metre swells. The array fell out board and the OOW reported to the Captain – 'Sir the LWO is down'. 'Roger report when its back up'. 'No Sir, the LWO is down over the side in the ocean'!!

And the Midshipman slept right through the event. ✈



*If you want to see a heart-warming story of love and commitment, try this movie. Just don't say the title too quickly...*



A couple of editions ago we brought you the story of the 60% scale Avro Arrow II, which is being built by volunteers of the Avro Museum in Canada.

The Museum releases regular newsletters and in their latest report on slow but steady progress. The tail assembly has been attached, which required a rethink on the aft fuel tanks. A complete fuel system reassessment has been completed, resulting in additional fuel capacity. In fact, the Museum proved the fibre-glass fuel tank concept after nine years of testing to meet Dept. of Transport requirements.

Work has also continued on the improved 3-axis Flight Simulator.

You can read about the project [here](#), and ask for regular updates for yourself. ✈



*The 60% scale Avro Arrow II on the tarmac at Springbank Airport in Calgary, Canada. With a projected cost of \$1.5m the build is about 70% complete. The aircraft is designed to fly at 500 knots with a 12,000 fpm Rate of Climb, with two people on board.*

# Navy WINGS

Inspire & remember

Our friends at Navy Wings have extended a special offer to 'FlyBy' readers – 20% off their entire range if ordered before Christmas!

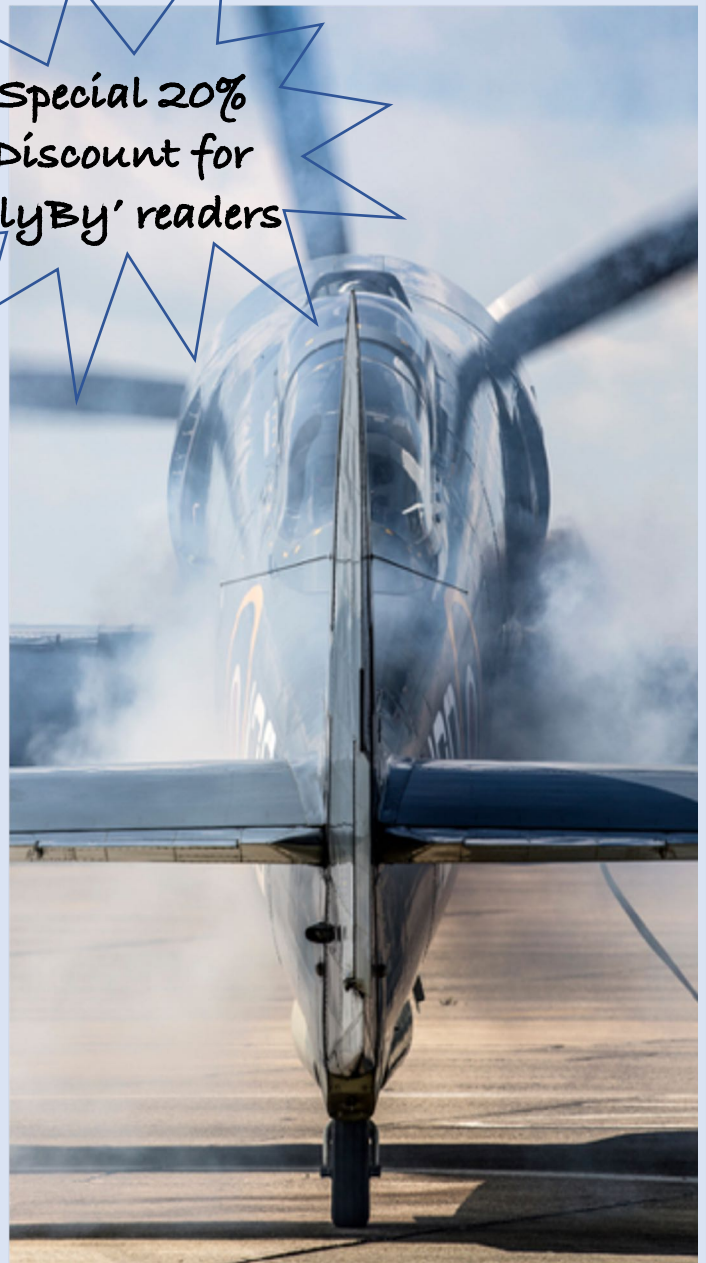
For those that don't know, Navy Wings is a non-profit organisation that brings together historic aircraft, people and the stories associated with flying from warships at sea. One hundred percent of their profits help to keep historic aircraft flying.

It is based in the UK and has a very extensive range of art, books, clothing, Christmas gifts, badges, pins, and naval/FAA bric-a-brac which can now be purchased on-line. Postage to Australia is quick and easy and surprisingly cheap, and much of their collection is relevant to the RAN FAA.

View their catalogue [here](#), and, when you purchase, input the code FAAAAXMAS202020 to get this amazing and exclusive discount.

You won't find a better collection anywhere!

Special 20%  
Discount for  
'FlyBy' readers



## FAAAA Subscriptions Now Due

Most members' subscriptions run out at the end of December so unless you've paid for 2021 in advance, it would be really helpful to settle your account now.

Subscriptions are our only source of income, so early payment would be much appreciated.

You can see how to pay (and how much) by checking on the final page of this newsletter. If you are not sure or have any questions, contact the database manager [here](#).

Dear Santa,  
Please send me a baby brother.



Santa wrote back:  
'Send me your mother...'

## Next Month in FlyBy...

In November QANTAS turned 100 years old, making it one of the oldest continuously operating airlines in the world.

From its humble beginnings in an outback town in Queensland through the great depression and the years of the Second World War, the fledgling company gradually grew into the impressive enterprise it is today.

Like all airlines it has been battered by COVID, an event that will undoubtedly change the way it operates for ever; but it remains our flagship carrier and the Flying Kangaroo is a symbol known the world over.

In next month's FlyBy we tell the story of the Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Services, and how WW1 veterans Paul McGinness and Hydson Fysh envisaged and built an iconic organisation that would not only bring the remote outback towns of their heritage closer together, but would eventually connect Australia to the rest of the world.



Vic Battese and Tom Smillie in Iroquois 898, which featured at the HARS Sunday Tarmac day on 15<sup>th</sup> Nov. The UH1B had been in the Navy Historic Flight but fell into disrepair when that was disbanded. Bought by HARS in 2017, a dedicated band of volunteers has painstakingly restored it to flying status.

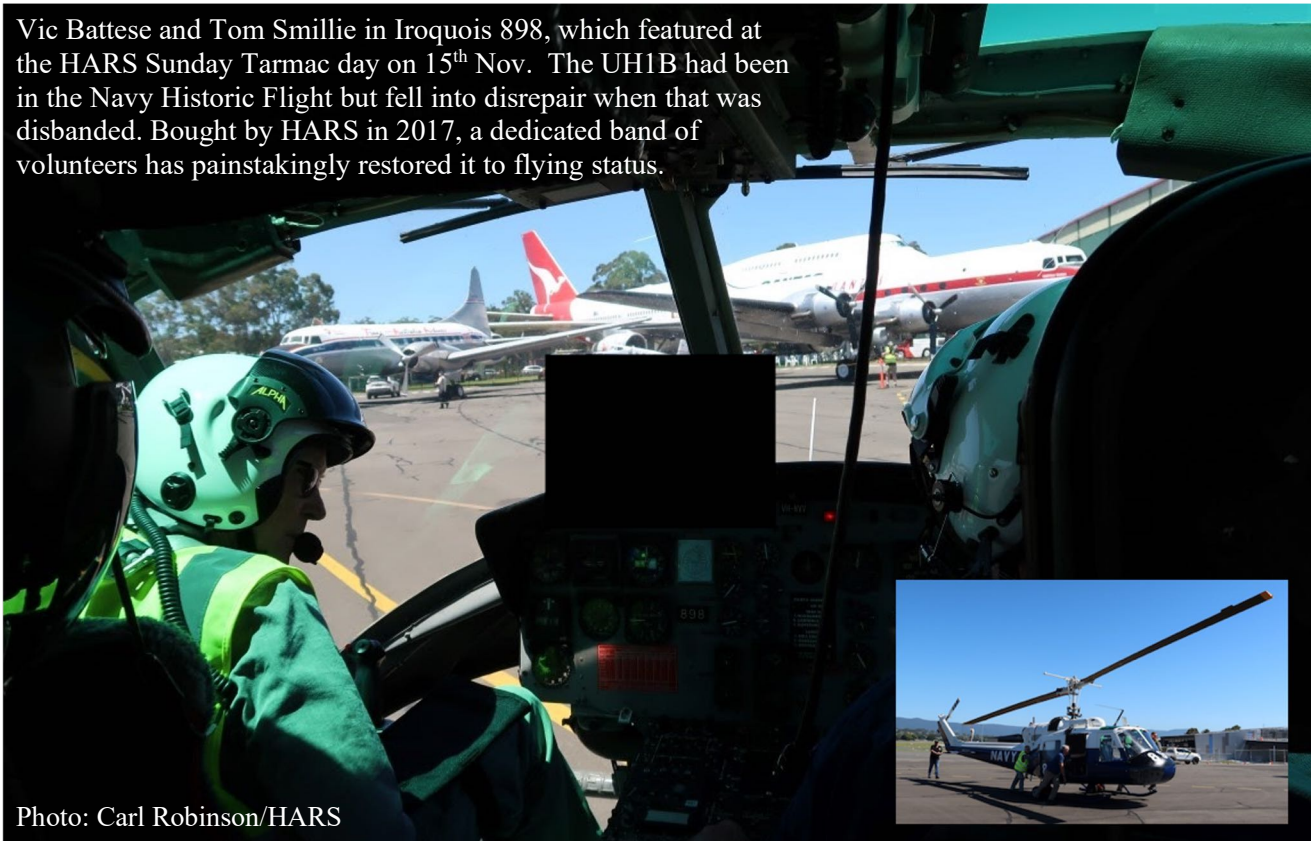


Photo: Carl Robinson/HARS



## Subscription payment details for members:

### NSW DIVISION:

**Account Name:** FAAAA

**BSB:** 637 000

**Account:** 7168 19 388

**Reference:** Membership Number or your surname+initial

**Amount:** If you receive 'Hard Copy' Slipstream - \$35.00  
If you receive Electronic Slipstream – \$25.00

**Cheques:** The Treasurer FAAAA NSW Division, PO Box 28, NOWRA 2541. Ensure you put your full name on the back!

### ACT DIVISION:

**Account Name:** FAAAA

**BSB:** 032 719

**Account:** 374 093.

**Reference:** Membership Number or your surname+initial

**Amount:** If you receive 'Hard Copy' Slipstream - \$30.00  
If you receive Electronic Slipstream – \$20.00

**Cheques:** The President FAAAA Act Division, 41 Noarlunga Crescent, BONYTHON 2905. Ensure you put your full name on the back!

### SA DIVISION:

**Account Name:** FAAAA

**BSB:** 065 118

**Account:** 009 05 668.

**Reference:** Membership Number or your surname+initial

**Amount:** \$45.00 per annum

**Cheques:** The Treasurer FAAAA SA Division, 460/1075 Grand Junction Road, HOPE VALLEY 5090. Ensure you put your full name on the back!

### QLD DIVISION:

**Account Name:** FAAAQld

**BSB:** 034 611

**Account:** 171 277.

**Reference:** Membership Number or your surname+initial.

**Amount:** \$30.00 per annum.

Please note subs would be appreciated no later than end Jan21.

**Cheques:** The Treasurer FAAA QLD Divn, 6/74 Mattocks Rd., Varsity Lakes, QLD 4227. Ensure you put your full name on the back!

**WA DIVISION** has declined to publish its payment details. If you have any queries please contact the Secretary.

## If you need some advice/help

You can make a payment as per the instructions on the left, but if you need to contact your Secretary you can do so using the links below.

[NSW – Dick Martin](#)

[ACT – George Sydney](#)

[VIC – Mal Smith](#)

[SA – Jan Akeroyd](#)

[TAS – Graham Nicholas](#)

[WA – Keith Taylor](#)

[QLD – John Stewart](#)

or: Contact the Database Manager, [Rocky Norris](#), who can offer advice on your membership details.

**Did you know** you can pay for future years of membership in advance (except ACT Division)? This will protect you from future price increases, and will save you from the chore of renewing each year.

Simply make your payment a multiple of however many years you wish to sign up for: e.g. for a NSW Slipstream 'Softcopy' recipient, one year = \$25, two years = \$50.00 and so on.

### VIC DIVISION:

**Account Name:** FAAAA

**BSB:** 083 961

**Account:** 3108 23774.

**Reference:** Membership Number or your surname+initial

**Amount:** If you receive 'Hard Copy' Slipstream - \$45.00  
Associate Members - \$10.00

**Cheques:** The Treasurer FAAAA VIC Division, PO Box 2179 RMH Post Office, PARKVILLE 3050. Ensure you put your full name on the back!

### TAS DIVISION:

**Account Name:** FAAAA

**BSB:** 037 013

**Account:** 13 3119.

**Reference:** Membership Number or your surname+initial

**Amount:** \$35.00 per annum.

**Cheques:** The Treasurer FAAAA TAS Division, 7 Danbury Drive, LEGANA 7277. Ensure you put your full name on the back!