



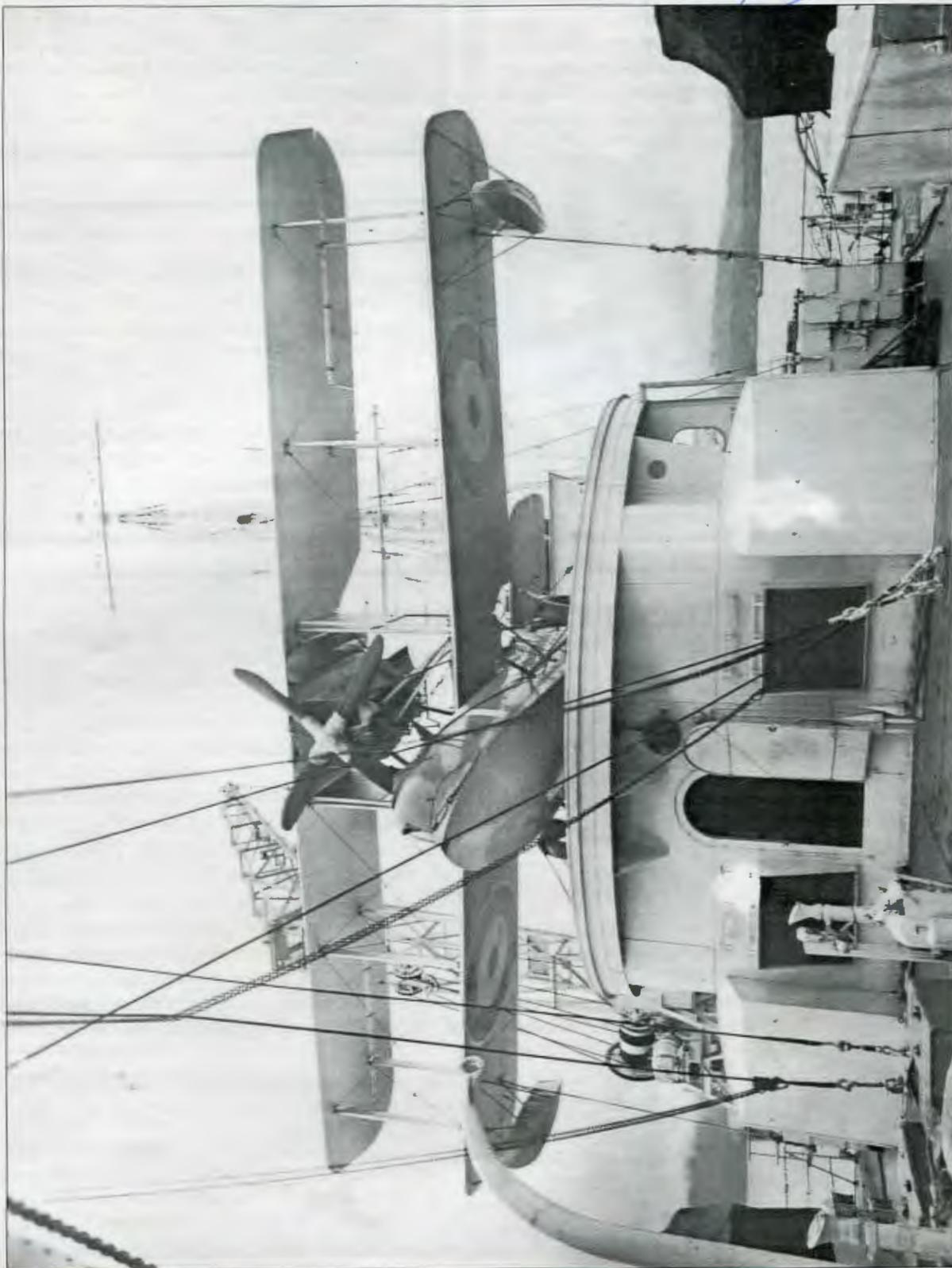
SLIPSTREAM

The Quarterly Journal of the Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia,

Volume 10, Number 3

GEAR

JULY, 1999



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Incorporating

FLY NAVY

of the Australian Naval Aviation Museum Foundation



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VALE

JACK McLOUGHLIN

I was shocked and saddened to hear one of my old mates, Jack McLoughlin, passed away recently, we were pals for many years. Here is a photo of Jack with Ray Homer and myself in a beer hall, Kure, Jpana, Xmas 1951. We will miss him.

Frank Donnelly, Urunga Waters, NSW



CHARLIE (COOLY) RILEY

Very belatedly we learn that CHARLIE (COOLY) RILEY who was a transfer from the RN to the fledgling RAN Fleet Air Arm in the late 1940's passed away in Auckland, New Zealand some years ago.

Charlie saw service in HMAS SYDNEY during the Korean War - he is survived by his wife Diane who lives in New Zealand.

LESLIE ALLEN, 1930—1999

Max Wilson of Kilcoy has advised us of the passing on 2nd May, 1999 of Les Allen a former A/C mechanic. Joined FAA in 1951 to 1957. Served SYDNEY and MELB OURNE.

He lived in Bowen owned a bus company and was involved with the Lions, Air Sea Rescue and Holy Trinity Church.

OSCAR 'OCKER' HARRY COLLINS Chief Physical Training Instructor 1918 - 1999

Known as 'Ocker' he joined the Royal Australian Naval Reserve on the 10th September 1936 as an Ordinary Seaman, was made an Able Seaman in 1937 and Leading Seaman in September 1939. His official number was S2760.

In January 1940 'Ocker' was in PENGUIN then drafted to CERBERUS then to his first ship, HMAS WESTRALIA, in the same month. Later he was to serve in HMA Ships ADELAIDE and MANOORA and in April 1943 over to HMA London depot for HMAS SHROPSHIRE as a Petty Officer where he remained until 1946 and finally to ALBATROSS in July 1949. During this time he was rated to Chief and carried out duties as Staff Chief PTI until January 1957 when he was drafted to HMAS MELBOURNE and finally to Naval Dockyard Police.

'Ocker' was a very versatile Chief who enjoyed life and always had a smile. Aircrew will remember him for his training in Bush Survival and most other rates will recall the voice of command either in sport or physical training.

I remember 'Ocker' for the 'smokies' we had in his cabin and the many car race meetings we attended at Bathurst and Mount Druitt where he raced his black MG TC sports car on Saturdays and Sundays and then drove back to Nowra on Monday morning.

After retiring he moved to Toowoomb Bay and spent his time swimming all year round and teaching children to swim - right up to a few months before he was diagnosed with melanomas and finally left us on the 5th March 1999.

He is survived by his wife Lilian and son Russell who is also ex-RAN.

A wonderful person who will be missed in this life.

Max Gant



EDITORS REMARKS

By the time readers receive this edition of Slipstream the Albatross Golf Club - well the Albatross Golf Course - will be no more (the Club will continue as an official entity until the end of 1999).

Always the best Club, though perhaps not the best course on the South Coast, one could always be assured of good company and a very friendly 19th hole.

The paying-off ceremony came in the form of a gala golf at the course on the final day of competition. It was pleasing that a number of Club Members from yesteryear were able to attend the occasion.

As always, I am encouraged by the response to the latest (April) issue of Slipstream and I thank readers for both their interest and the contributions they make to the success of this journal. There are times when we have more material than there is space available. Do not despair if your contribution does not appear first up as it will most likely appear in the next edition.

I was interested to see some familiar names from yesteryear appearing in Division reports. To name a few there was Ivor Janz who used to live across the road from us in Walrus Crescent (MQ). Women's Business Editor and I have often speculated about what became of Ivor. John Mann who I remember as a three badge A.B.

Handler when I first joined and lastly my old mate Maurie Mahnkoph. Maurie and I served together on the 'Vung Tau Ferry' (and on MELBOURNE) and I recall that after we had been on SYDNEY for a bit and made several trips to Vietnam, a new Cargo Officer arrived in the form of Bill Mulholland. Maurie and I agreed that we were not going to have some wet behind the ears aircrew officer telling us what to do and every time Bill came up on deck we would make ourselves scarce. As Bill came up one lift we would go down the other and vice versa. I suppose this game went on for a week before Bill finally caught up with us. As it turned out he (Bill) was a good boss and we got on very well.

Whilst on the subject of the 'Port Jackson - Vung Tau Ferry' included with this issue is a flyer promoting for Sale a book:

The Vung Tau Ferry
(HMAS SYDNEY)

and Escort Ships

(Vietnam 1965 - 1972)

by Rodney Nott and Noel Payne.

Rodney Nott has very kindly made a donation towards the production of this issue of Slipstream.



The Official Party waiting to hit off the 1st are Geoff. Coles (CO ALBATROSS), Ladies President Pat Perkins, Lyn Coles and Albatross Golf President Mike MacNeill.

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**PLEASE NOTE
CLOSING DATE FOR COPY FOR
OCTOBER SLIPSTREAM
WILL BE 14TH SEPTEMBER, 1999**



FLY NAVY

From the Museum Director

Tenders for the Museum's new \$1.6 million Stage 4 building project will be let in September this year with site works scheduled to commence the following month. The project provides for a new 100 seat lecture theatre complex, an archival research centre and office accommodation for both the Museum and the Association's administrative personnel.

Allowance has also been made for a second floor above the foyer-reception space, together with a mezzanine walkway linking the existing function centre with the new Stage 4 annex.

Inevitably there will be some disruption caused by these works although we hope to minimise this by temporarily suspending construction during our busy Christmas holiday period. Work will then resume around March 2000 and be completed by mid year. Chances are then that we will have already 'turned the first sod', as it were, by the time you receive your next Slipstream.

Foundation Directors have also begun investigating a possible redevelopment of the Museum's existing exhibitions, an independent design study having recently been commissioned for this purpose. I am particularly excited by this initiative which, to my mind, has the potential to help make this great institution even greater... world class even!

HANGAR HAPPENINGS

A temporary addition to our display area is Tiger Moth VH-CYA (sky blue and beige). The aircraft's owner Mr Mark Wilson (Qantas Pilot) intends using the aircraft for joy flights on weekends.

Workshop floor space is becoming scarce with the acquisition of both metal working and woodworking machinery surplus to navy requirements. This machinery enables us to become almost self sufficient for as long as our materials last.

Rumour has it that the 'old salvage' building is to be demolished to make way for new construction on Base. Those of you old 'salvage hands' may remember the permanently situated water cooled compressor located in the building. Because of its age and relic value we are trying to acquire it for display at the Museum.

Don Parkinson

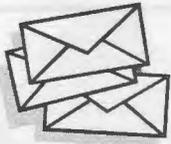
I had the pleasure recently of meeting with two former 805 Squadron pilots (see photograph) who, quite by chance, happened to call in at the Museum on the same day. The two hadn't seen each other in many years and, as luck would have it, one of them also happened to have with him his flying log and a handful of old photographs. The meeting might have only lasted an hour but as you can probably imagine the conversation flowed freely and excitedly as each visitor triggered the other's memories. Watching this exchange from the sideline brought home to me more than ever the fact that the Museum is much more than just a repository... it's also a meeting place for people who more than likely share a common interest in aviation and who - as in this instance - may have also served together.

The Museum advertised last issue for volunteers interested in assisting with our proposed archival database and digital imaging project. We're hoping to initiate these programmes next month and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank those people who have kindly volunteered their services.

I'd like now to sign off with another call for assistance, this one going to all those Navy pilots out there who might have logged some time in either Winjeel A85-402 or Wirraway A20-653. The Museum hopes to acquire these two RAAF trainers for display and is keen to determine if either - or both - was ever flown by Navy pilots.

Mark Clayton, Museum Director





Dear Bob, Bill Heard may have already contacted you re the following contribution (I sent him a copy and discussed it with him) but as I believe he is now off on tour with the other 'Grey Nomads', I haven't been able to confirm that, so here goes.

You will recall that in our heyday of the fifties and sixties, we used heaps of Carbon Tetrachloride - as a cleaner, as the major ingredient in five extinguishers, as a fore-runner of WD40 and RP7, etc. etc. You will also recall that official thinking was that, being non-flammable and non-conductive of electricity, it was

To: All interested former Royal Australian Naval Personnel.

Subject: 1. Carbon Tetrachloride usage in the RAN., particularly during tropical service such as F.E.S.R. etc., also 2. Passive smoke inhalation during such service.

Having been a life-long non-smoker who now suffers from respiratory ailments, specifically some chronic airways limitation and asthma, which DVA have some difficulty in accepting as being related to the above irritants, I was interested to find out whether or not my own case was a mere aberration. What astounded me at the reunion with old shipmates at last year's Fleet Air Arm Golden Jubilee at Nowra was the sheer number of former Radio Mechanics in particular, as well as other aviation trades in general, who now suffer chronic respiratory problems despite also having been non-smokers. (Smokers also, but these I discounted because DVA don't have quite the same problem in accepting Navy culpability in that the Service promoted the smoking cult almost as much as did the Marlboro Man).

The other stand-out factor I noted, both amongst smokers and non-smokers indiscriminately, seemed to be a plethora of cancers and other disorders of the liver, heart, kidneys and nervous system, etc., which I recognised from my own research and reading as being consistent with Carbon Tetrachloride (CTC) usage.

The primary routes of exposure to CTC include inhalation, skin absorption and accidental ingestion. Material may accumulate in the human body and cause progressive tissue damage. Chronic exposure may also cause visual blind spots, haze, narrowing of the visual field, red and white blood cells in the urine, depression, etc.

Inhaled fumes from CTC include toxic levels of phosgene, (a World War I trench gas more irritant than Chlorine gas), hydrogen chloride, carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide. These FACTS are gleaned from Chem Water Full Report 1846 and Chem Watch Material Safety Data Sheet 1846. refer <http://tafawn1/chemweb/msds.exe?cwno+1846>

More recent research also suggests a linkage between CTC and Parkinson's Disease as well as with certain motor neurone diseases.

Also, during our stints of many months of tropical service in particular as well as in Australian waters, aboard warships of a generation designed with the North Atlantic experience in mind and therefore very deficient in ventilation, passive smoking in the workplace was much more than a 9 to 5, 40 hour, 5 day week problem, it was a fact of life endured by non-smokers for up to 24 hours a day, seven days per week. This is a fact of life that those of us who were non-smokers had to live with at the time yet now it has become an odd quirk of fate that the respiratory and cancer related claims of smokers are far likelier to find acceptance with DVA than those of non-smokers.

If you feel that you have one or more of the problems which I have listed and you genuinely feel it may be as a result of CTC exposure and/or passive smoking in the Navy, particularly if you have qualifying operational service, I urge you to write to the Repatriation Medical Authority, GPO Box 1014, Brisbane 4001. They are NOT the DVA, they are the people who draw up the Statements of Principle which guide the DVA delegates. The RMA are intelligent, understanding people who welcome and value the input of veterans provided it is factual and sustainable.

harmless, therefore no protection was advised for its usage.

The attached blurb is self-explanatory. It has already been published in the FAAA Queensland Division Newsletter and in FESR News and has attracted considerable interest as so many of us identify with the problems.

Hoping you will see fit to publish in the next 'Slipstream' and allow more of our members the chance to voice their concerns to the Repat. Medical Authority.

Yours faithfully, Arthur Rowe, Yangan, Q'land.

THANK YOU ARTHUR. YES WE WILL PRINT YOUR BRIEF AS I AM CERTAIN THERE ARE MANY OUT THERE IN 'SLIPSTREAM LAND' WHO WILL BE INTERESTED IN YOUR THESIS. ED.

On my return from the Nowra bash last November after talking to Bill Heard, I prepared a three foolscap page submission and arranged an appointment to discuss the matter with an RMA Doctor. This lady cheerfully rearranged her timetable, giving up most of her lunch hour as I was only in Brisbane for a few hours and had other business that day. She was friendly, interested in my submission and what I could tell her. Having explored the old frigate HMAS DIAMENTINA at the QUEENSLAND MARITIME MUSEUM with her young sons on a couple of occasions, she was aware of the cramped accommodation and restricted working environment and could well relate to the obvious ventilation and comfort limitations of that era of British warship design in the tropics.

I also found her to be very knowledgeable regarding Carbon Tetrachloride and it's toxicity but as most data available results from American research into its effects on dry-cleaning workers and firefighters and as up till now Naval veterans have tended to look to other causes for their ailments (since we were always led to believe CTC was safe because it was non-flammable and weren't issued with protective clothing to work with it), this lady and other RMA doctors were unaware of it's widespread use as a general solvent, degreaser and fore-runner of WD40 in electrical applications due to it's non-conductivity.

The RMA wrote to me in December to inform me that at their December meeting "the Chairman and Members considered the information contained in your letter at their meeting on 15 December 1998. Your submission will be included when reviewing and preparing future Statements of Principle.

Thank you for providing this information to the Authority."

So there you have it. I don't know why I haven't thought of this before but as so many in our Association have made me aware of the extent of their own concerns regarding these issues, why not help the RMA to explore the extent to which we have been affected? They cannot know if we don't tell them. Bill Heard (another former Birdie Radio Mechanic) and I have got the ball rolling with RMA and Alex Schultz, my very cluey Advocate is battling hard to achieve a landmark breakthrough with DVA and/or VRB.

If you feel that you too have a genuine health concern relevant to these issues you can make the RMA aware of the extent of the problem by getting off the collective clackers POST HASTE and simply write to the RMA, GPO Box 1014 Brisbane 4001 (politely please, they're nice people and they'd like to help if they can).

I would suggest you keep it simple and just state the following:

- Your Branch of Navy, years of Service and exposure to CTC and/or it's derivative gasses.
- What relevant disabilities you feel this has caused you.
- Whether or not you were ever issued with any health warnings or protective clothing. (If you were I'd be surprised).
- If you were a non-smoker please inform them. This may help them evaluate the extra risk of passive smoking aboard our inadequately ventilated ships of that era.

For those without operational service, updating Statements of Principle may still provide a precedent to ComCare should you need to go that route.

Arthur Rowe ex REM(A)

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

As another ANZAC Day approaches (at the time of preparing this article), it is timely to remember those who gave their lives for our freedom.

Mr Bill West of Florey, ACT reminded us of this when he wrote in recently about a lesser known action during World War II:

'Referring to page 5 of The RAN Fleet Air Arm History At A Glance (Touchdown 3/98), a few years ago with the help of Captain Keith Eames RAN, here in Canberra, I was searching on behalf of our RAN Fleet Air Arm Museum for records of Telegraphist Air Gunners that served with the RAN. One name that surfaced was that of Petty



Officer Colin K. Bunnett. Whilst some record was found, Bob Geale, the Museum's Curator, got hold of quite a story.

In 1940 when France fell to the Germans, the French Fleet in the Mediterranean fled into the port of Dakar. HMAS AUSTRALIA was there with the British Fleet commanded by Admiral Cunningham, who was trying to control the activities of this now Vichy French Fleet. HMAS AUSTRALIA's Walrus seaplane was used for spotting the French activities, but, on 25 September 1940 the seaplane was shot down by two Curtis Hawks of the Vichy French, with the loss of our crew.

The crew of the Walrus was

Pilot: FLTLT George G. Clark RAAF (formerly RAN)

Observer: LCDR Frank K. Foggarty RAN

TAG: PO Colin K. Bunnett RAN
by SONAS

I checked our local records and you are spot on Bill. The Supermarine Walrus was lost exactly as you described. The particular aircraft was A2-L2247 from 9SQN, RAAF.

NO ERSH RN

FORMER JUDGE TO CONDUCT REVIEW INTO VETERANS ENTITLEMENTS

The Honourable Mr Robert Mohr, formerly of the Supreme Court of South Australia, will conduct the review of veterans entitlements to repatriation benefits and medals for Australian Defence Force service in South East Asia between 1955 and 1975.

Mr Mohr, formerly of the Supreme Court of South Australia, will head the review, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence, Bruce Scott, announced today.

Mr Mohr served with the RAN from 1942-1947 and subsequently with the Citizen Military Forces, culminating in his appointment as Judge Advocate General of the Australian Defence Force. He was promoted to the rank of Major General in 1982.

A former senior RAN officer, Rear Admiral Philip Kennedy, who retired in 1987 after 38 years service, will assist Mr Mohr in the review.

Mr Scott has asked Mr Mohr to provide a written report by the end of October. The report will examine areas of service including:

- RAAF Butterworth in Malaysia;
- RAAF Ubon in Thailand;

- ADF service in Malaysia during the period of Confrontation with Indonesia, and

- Other ADF service in South East Asia during the period 1955 to 1975 where prima facie evidence is presented to the review of possible anomalies.

"The review will consult widely with ex-service organisations and call for submissions from interested groups," Mr Scott said. "The results will be made public on completion."

Submissions to the review should be sent to: The Secretariat, Review of Service Entitlement, Anomalies in South-East Asian Service 1955-75, Russell Offices, CANBERRA ACT2600 Media contact: Michael Priebe on 02 6277 7820 or 0418 482 514

KOREAN WAR MEMORIAL TO BE DEDICATED TUESDAY 18 APRIL 2000

The Australian National Korean War Memorial, which is to be erected on Anzac Parade, Canberra, will be dedicated at a ceremony to take place on Tuesday 18 April, 2000. A two day programme is planned which will include a non-denominational religious service at RMC Duntroon on Monday 17 April and a short march past of veterans of those units with Korean War battle honours, as part of the dedication ceremony on the Tuesday. Unit reunions are scheduled for the Tuesday afternoon after the dedication ceremony.

I have volunteered to act as the co-ordinator to muster those who were members of 805, 808 and 817 squadrons which formed the Sydney Carrier Air Group during the operational tour 1951/52. It would help the planners if they had an indication of the numbers; accordingly could you let me know by phone/fax or letter if you will be attending, and which days.

My address is 25 Rubbo Crescent, Weston ACT 2611, phone/fax 02 6288 2285. I would also be happy to provide help with local knowledge of the Canberra area for any other HMAS SYDNEY 1951/52) groups planning to attend the dedication.

Norman Lee

KOREAN WAR VETERAN'S NOMINAL ROLL

(source Commonwealth Department of Veterans' Affairs)

The Department of Veterans' Affairs has completed the first draft nominal roll of Australians who served in the Korean War.

The nominal roll will list all Australian Defence Force veterans who served in the Korean Operational Area from 27 June, 1950 until 19 April 1956. This area included the Korean mainland and the sea within 100 nautical miles of the coast.

The names are listed with initials, service number and unit, arranged in alphabetical order under the following groupings: Navy, Army and Air Force.

Servicemen and women who wish to make sure their names have been listed on the nominal roll should contact the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

Some veterans may not wish to be included on the nominal roll and should also contact the department on the number below.

The families of deceased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander veterans may also have reasons based on cultural belief for not wanting the names of family members to be published. Family members should contact the department, indicating whether names should be included and, if so, the appropriate manner in which the veteran should be referred to on the nominal roll.

All enquiries about the Korean War Veterans' Nominal Roll should be referred to the Department of Veterans' Affairs on Freecall 1800 502 302.

PHOTOS REQUIRED

LES JORDAN ex C.P.O. HANDLER

Has any former Shipmate any photos of me in Petty Officers or Chief Petty Officers uniforms. Most of my Navy photos were destroyed.

Please contact:

Les Jordan, 2/292 Warrigal Road,
South Oakleigh, Vic. 3167
03 9563 7989

MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH - MALAYAN EMERGENCY CAMPAIGN 1955-1960

Admiral Mike Hudson, Federal President of the Naval Association, welcomed the announcement today by Minister Bruce Scott (Veterans Affairs and Defence Personnel) that Government had agreed to an independent review into the repatriation and medal entitlements of naval personnel who served afloat during the Malayan campaign from 1955-1960.

He said this was a major breakthrough in a long running battle and this significant initiative by Bruce Scott could also lead to the inclusion on the War Memorial's Roll of Honour of the names of those sailors killed whilst serving with the Far East Strategic Reserve during this period.

Admiral Hudson went on to say this was a matter of equity between all arms of the Defence Force who were sent overseas to pursue the then Government's aim of preventing the expansion of Communism in South East Asia and, in particular, to counter the terrorist campaign in Malaya.

The debate had been drawn out and sometimes bitter and Admiral Hudson commended the efforts of all those involved besides the Naval Association. These included the RSL, the HMAS SYDNEY and Vietnam Logistic Support Veterans Association (VLSVA), the Far East Strategic Reserve Association (FESR), AVADSC, RDFWA and the RAAF Association, as well as a large number of individuals and other veterans organisations.

Admiral Hudson said it was now up to the veteran and veterans organisations to prepare submissions to the Review and to that end a Working Party, under the Chairmanship of Commodore Nobby Clarke, had been formed to co-ordinate the Naval case.

All Inquiries: Admiral Mike Hudson tel: (02) 69475258, Mobile: 0411552240, Commodore Nobby Clarke tel: (02) 62863940, Commander Peter Cooke-Russell tel: (02) 62586892.



Letters

Dear Bob,

Thanks for my copy of 'Slipstream' it certainly brings back 54 year old memories.

Three items were of special interest to me -

1. The History of HMAS ALBATROSS.
2. The Bride Ship 'VICTORIOUS'
3. The recruitment of the first pilots from the RAAF.

At the risk of being accused of being pedantic I wish to correct the history of p29 re HMS 'INDEFATIGABLE' and 828 Sqdn.

HMS 'INDEFAT' returned to the UK in the very early months of 1946 and therefore could not be around to take 828 Sqdn in May '46.

828 Sqdn was attached to HMS 'IMPLACABLE', it was 820 Sqdn attached to HMS 'INDEFATIGABLE'. Herewith is an extract from 'Slipstream' Jan.1994, story No.3 relating to the ditching of 828 Sqdn 'AVENGERS'. (see below)

I married my Australian wife Norma on 30 March, '46 in a double Naval wedding at St. Judes, Randwick. The other bride was Norma's sister, Hazel. My Sqdn people in Dress White and the other groom with his shipmates in Dress Blues.

The point of all this is that I returned to the UK with 828 Sqdn on 'IMPLACABLE' whilst the other 3 of the foursome followed later on HMS 'VICTORIOUS' - the 'Bride' Ship.

I have had many discussions regarding the real early

grounding for the FAA of Australia, so I was very pleased to read Bill Wests' letter to RAN FAA Touchdown 4/98, page 11 'Slipstream'. A number of my shipmates on 'INDEFATIGABLE' during a cruise to New Zealand to 'show the flag' in 1945 were ex RAAF Navy Pilots and the names that come to mind are:

Nat Gould, 'Curly' Bryden, 'Bunny' Hare.
all Flying Seafires.

These Flyers should be recognised as the fathers of the modern FAA of Australia!

Whilst on HMS 'IMPLACABLE' I believe we lost two of these Pilots (names escape me), one lost off Flinders Island on 7 March '46 and another spun his Seafire on T.O. from the deck.

Again, thanks for your efforts,

Regards, Ron Sunderland, Chiswick, NSW

Extract from January 1994 'Slipstream'

"The 29th April 1946 goes down as the most infamous date in Fleet Air Arm history.

How so? . . . Well that was the day when 828 Squadron flew its Avengers from Schofields to IMPLACABLE, which was located somewhere outside Sydney Heads. Immediately on landing, they were pushed over the bow and into the drink. A demand made under the terms of the American Lend Lease programme.

This made us all weep as we had become very attached to the 'Pregnant Cow', a beautifully behaved aircraft.

When I say 'All' the aircraft were pushed overboard, one was saved by our Commanding Officer, Lt Cdr 'Bobby' Bradshaw, who asked permission of the Captain to boost it off the catapult. This was achieved whilst the aircraft was at full throttle."

The Editor,

Names of the ALBATROSS R.L.F.C. team are as follows:

Back Row:

Sailor Bill Collings, Shockin Sherman, Bull Talbot, Harry Harkness, Bill Corkhill, Bob Massey, Vince Nolan.

Middle Row:

Boxer Banks, Mick Conquest, Ernie Keech (Captain), Spud Tate, A.J. Vine (goalkicker), John Witt.

Front Row:

R. Hanrahan, Bodgie Edwards, Louie Pashley, Mick Tattersal.

Whisky Dalton, founder of the famous 'RALPHS', isn't too well, he's in hospital in Jayndah, Q. and is compiling a list of all the original 'RALPHS', will send it to you when I get it from him.

Had a great time at reunion.

Regards to all, Boxer Banks, Maryborough, Qld.



Dear Ed,

Regarding the group on page 31 last edition - the guy on the far left is:

Ben Harwood ex NAI AH.

I enjoy your Journal, am a Member of the Qld Division.

Yours faithfully,

Ben Harwood, Bellara, Bribie Is. Qld.

THANKS BEN, ED



To The Editor,

Sir,

Each time I receive the 'Slipstream' there is someone referring to the Ex Service people who marched at the 50th Anniversary (with no band) in Nowra last year.

I get disturbed when I read the people think it was the Spring Festival Committees fault and have been made the scape goat.

The truth is the Committee made several offers to arrange bands for these men and was told by the Naval Committee that they would arrange the bands "we are the Navy and capable of organising our own bands"?

So what could we do? except on the day we were embarrassed for the marching men, but what could you expect?? This was the Navy's doing.

The delay between the Ex-Service men (no bands) and the Navy and bands was so embarrassing. Even the entry to the City was a complete STUFF UP.

I hope this explains to all your people what really happened.

Zoe Blondel, J.P.

Life Member of Shoalhaven Spring Festival Committee

THANK YOU ZOE FOR YOUR CLARIFICATION OF LAST YEARS EVENTS.
ED.



Dear Editor,

Enclosed is a photograph, reasonably old, of a very rare event. So rare in fact I am sure it will never be permitted to happen again.

When I left the Navy in 1959, I went straight to the Australian Atomic Energy Commission as a Technical Assistant in reactor operations. After two years of wandering around the reactor with a chart and pen recording power input, flow rate, which cooling fans were operating together with which pumps were doing whatever, a position at Head Office was advertised. One which I felt sure I could handle and although I didn't have the required educational qualifications (a degree or diploma in science and public relations experience) I decided I had nothing to lose and so I applied and would you believe I got the job. The position was with the Information Services as the Commissions Information Officer setting up a photography and film making section and organising an exhibitions and displays section and assisting the Editor in the production of publications and information brochures outlining the Commissions policies and programmes. We had others in the section with a bit of sea time, one a former wavy navy two ringer and the Director himself a former Purser in the merchant service. Just as an aside almost all the Reactor staff at the Research were ex merchant navy, Chief Engineers, seconds and thirds. In fact the Reactor was run on the same lines as a ship. It was a very happy place to work and as to be expected, a very efficient area.

But back to Head Office. One of our tasks was to produce an Annual Report to the Government of the Day on the progress of the introduction of Atomic Energy in Australia. We used to hold the usual round table conferences each month to see how things were progressing in each others departments, and at this particular meeting we were discussing the production of the Annual Report, in particular, the photographic content. It was decided we needed some new Photographs from a different angle and after some discussion we agreed to hire a commercial photographer of repute and get some overall shots of the establishment from the air. The only way to do this would be from a helicopter. Well it seemed I was the only one at the meeting who had any knowledge of where a helicopter could be obtained and, as I was always sticking the Real navy into those merchant guys, a letter was drafted to the Commanding Officer of Albatross, via the Navy public relations Officer who just happened to be a mate of my boss, requesting the loan of a chopper to do some photography.

No problem and so at the appointed time on the due date the bright boys stared out of their lab windows at the sight of a BIG Navy chopper settling onto the lawn area between the laboratories and the research reactor. They watched in awe as it picked up the photographer and myself (as producer) and we flew up and down the streets at roof top height at my direction and photographed the various buildings. We got some beautiful shots from angles never obtained before. I also got the biggest bottle of my career which was very nearly the shortest career in the history of

the Commission. It seemed I had forgotten to get approval for the flight from the Health and Safety section of the research establishment, as the overfly of the area was an absolute No No, and I believe still is. But I survived, thanks to my Navy training on how to absorb bottles. In fact I was able to throw the ball back into the main complainants court. If, as he claimed, he hadn't been informed about the exercise, how come he was one of the first in line surrounding the area as the chopper landed and that was after a ten minute wait.

But that is all part of history now, if you look at the photograph you will see in the background the familiar shape of HIFAR, which stands for High Flux Australian Reactor.

As this is the only photograph in existence now I would be pleased to get it back. Thank you. Sorry it's a bit battered but it was a long time ago.



Wessex Helicopter at Lucas Heights

John A. Bray, X C.A.F.(A) , Pomona, Qld.

Dear Bob,

For some time now I have been putting into draft form a book detailing HMAS MELBOURNE's (R21) 'operational deployments' in South East Asia which will cover the periods from 1956 to 1966.

If any of your readers has any notes of incidents, photos or any information that relate to these periods of operational service I would be most grateful for a copy of same.

I served in Melbourne on four separate occasions, 1961-63-65 & 66.

I attended the reunion last which was my first and regret not having attended any of the others.

I enjoy receiving my copy of Slipstream and the info it gives out, keep up the good work.

Thank you, I remain,
Yours sincerely,
A.R. (Tas) Browning,
8 Addison Street,
Devonport, Tas.7310



Dear Ed,

First a few names to your mystery photo on the bottom of page 14 of the April issue of 'Slipstream'. Back row left to right are Bill Gault, Arthur Jarrett, Mick Bloomfield. Front row Kevin Mansfield, Max Altham and

dunno. Of the five named three left the service before the expiration of their engagement; some with her majesty's approval and some without. No names no court-martials. Each was members of NA 14 class at Albatross and signed up in Feb/March '49. NA 14 class at Albatross was a bit unique in that something like 90% were West Aussies. It happened thus, NA14 and NA15 passed out from Flinders mid year 49, all except the West Aussies went on mid year leave and the remainder of the two classes were amalgamated into NA14 and posted to Albatross. The others were extremely unfortunate as it was at this time that the government of the day decided to use the military to break the great coal strike of that year and as soon as the troops returned to Flinders from leave they were dragooned into shovelling coal in Victoria.

Having cast my mind back that far reminds me of my first few days in the navy. Up until about 1951 all troops were moved between Perth and Port Augusta by dedicated troop train. After being sworn in at the navy recruiting centre in Forrest Place Perth on the 10 of Feb. 1949 we were all issued with a knife, fork, spoon, mug, two plates and two blankets then embussed to East Perth railway marshalling yards where we were herded onto a very old train for the overnight trip to Kalgoorlie. This train was totally controlled by the army, the only civilians on it were the train crew ie driver, stoker and guard. Next morning we breakfasted in the refreshment rooms at Kalgoorlie and changed trains for the ongoing journey to Port Augusta. There was no standard gauge in those days. The trans Nullarbour train was also totally controlled by the army. The train had a galley coach but no dining coach. Once again we were billeted four to a compartment; find your own bunk. Each coach had to provide on a daily basis a mess cook to help in the galley, a heads, corridor and lobby sweeper. The heads had to be scrubbed out and the lobbys and corridors swept and mopped daily by the duty sweepers. Each compartment was

similarly cleaned by a member of the compartment. Rounds were carried out on a daily basis by one of the army train staff.

Meals were prepared whilst the train was under way but at meal times the train was shunted onto a loop line at some convenient station and the tucker ladled out from benches on the ground. It was a typical military operation with dinner on one plate, duff on a second and tea in your mug, if you could handle it. I don't suppose it was thus but I only remember the meals consisting of sausages and mash for mains and canned apricots and custard for duff. The custard even then was of the consistency that only the military seems able to produce. As soon as serving of meals began a dozen or more aborigines used to appear from nowhere to collect the gash, shades of Jennys side party in Honkers but not as organised, it was every man, woman and child for him/her self. The duty mess cooks washed the galley equipment and each individual did his own traps in a great tub provided for the purpose. If you were late you washed up in soup. The army had a peculiar ritual in those days, at about nine at night the duty cook and one of his offsidiers would come around with a big bucket of cocoa and a box of broken biscuits for supper. We were each allowed one mug of cocoa and two broken biscuits. Not two whole biscuits mind. After cards and reading the main entertainment was to gather a pile of railway ballast onto the coach end platform and see how many of the bottles that lined the permanent way in their thousands, that we could break before the train gathered too much speed. Environmental vandalism I hear you say; well true but the environment had not yet been discovered.

As I recall the trip from Kalgoorlie to Pt. Augusta took three days and two nights. The only bathing facility was the hand basin the dunny. Ever tried to birdbath in a railway carriage dunny? and there was no bathrooms on stations in those days either so by the time we got to Pt Augusta we were well and truly on the nose. At Pt Augusta we handed in our bedding and mess traps and changed trains for the relatively short trip into Adelaide. The Adelaide Melbourne leg was always a bottleneck and in those days the troops could never be sure of when they would move on. On this occasion we were held up and billeted at Lonsdale for the best part of a week. We did however eventually arrive at Flinders and so began for some of us twenty odd years of never to be forgotten nor regretted service.

Jim Parsons, Higgins, ACT

Dear Bob,

The enthusiasm of country towns for their Anzac Day services and the hospitality extended to visitors is to my mind typical of the fair dinkum Aussie.

The first showing of our banner at Howlong, 30k west of Albury, brought a special message of welcome to the R.A.N. Fleet Air Arm from the President of the local R.S.L. Club at the dias of the Howlong Memorial on Anzac Day.

Ex W.O. S.E. Daamian Woodmansey, whose uniform still fits, his daughters Serina and Rachael, myself and granddaughter Haley, made up our small contingent, but from the cheers of the crowd as we marched there was no doubt that our banner was appreciated.

Next year, if I don't smoke too much or fall over a Tiffy, I hope to show our banner at Gulgong with my elder granddaughter.

I am sure, there must be hundreds of Ex F.A.A. Granddads out there who attend Anzac services at a lot of small

country towns throughout Australia. To them I say, get yourself a flag, and walk tall.

Most sincerely yours,

Ron (Butch) Jenkins, Nowra NSW



Dear Sir,

It's some time back, July 1995 edition in fact, on page 22 are three photos of a Firefly incident on HMAS SYDNEY.

These photos in fact depict two different incidents.

The top two are of an incident with VX378 K/218 as follows:

3 Mar 50, McPhee 816 HMAS SYDNEY

"After the 'cut' pilot pulled the stick back and the aircraft stalled. Starboard undercarriage collapsed."

(Off east coast of South Is. of NZ between Wellington & Christchurch).

The lower photo most probably is:

VX383 K/223

19 Mar 51, Hare 816 HMAS SYDNEY

"Approach slightly to starboard, deck pitched suddenly and a heavy landing broke the port deo."

If I'm wrong please put me straight. Is Mr McPhee still around? He would be able to confirm or deny the events as stated.

Another correction (if I may be so bold) page 13 July 1995 edition of Slipstream.

The photo is in fact of XD654/909 as taken from the flight deck of Hermes after her attempt to hover at too great an all up weight. This occurred 4 March 1961.

The St Georges Basin episode occurred 12 October 1955 with the machine ending basically vertical in 4 or so feet of water before being disassembled a little and salvaged (I do have photos of these two incidents). The reason is correct as stated the cyclic pitch control came adrift.

Page 13 October 1995 edition of Slipstream.

The photo of a glider crash - the machine is a Kronuch 2 seater (I'm not sure on the spelling) which was being flown by Lt Harold Kent (Engineering Officer) and passenger/student Nam'E' Michael Winnern and occurred 19 October 1953 approx. 1/4 mile off end of runway '08'. Harold had serious injuries but lived and Michael nothing in fact that's him on the centre left bending over as if using a screwdriver - it seems no one else knew how to disassemble the machine!! I also have another three photos of the incident obtained from Michael.

This is only a small portion of the research that I've done/ carried out on RAN aircraft incidents, but I'm still looking, cataloguing and recording.

Please if you have any photos or information contact me via the following address.

Kind regards,

Nigel Apperley,

375 Princes Highway, Bomaderry, NSW 2541



PHOTOS RIGHT

TOP

l to r: Ron Powell, Bill (Darky) Strahan, Paddy Williamson, Bob McBride, Trevor (Snow) Tite, Des Kelly.

MIDDLE

l to r: Back - Noel Fischer, Eric Cottrell. Front - Bevin Mewett, Ron Baxter.

BOTTOM

l to r: John Ward congratulates Doug Jago on winning the raffle.

Hi! Bob,

Please find enclosed some photos that were taken during the Qld. Div. ANZAC DAY post march re-union, at the Bulimba Army Depot Sergeants' Mess, which you may find suitable for future publication in Slipstream.

The ANZAC DAY march turn out was quite good with about 45 marching and 3 members taking advantage of riding in the Jeep transport. We even got a "Very Well Done, Fleet Air Arm Association" from the Governor. The old Royal Guard training must still influence us 'OLD' fellows.

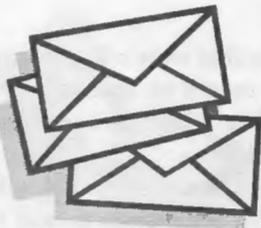
The post march re-union was well attended, with approx. 70 enjoying the hospitality of our Army hosts.

Keep up the good work with Slipstream, as we all enjoy reading it and sharing it with our family and friends. I know space restricts the content of each Slipstream, but perhaps in future editions, more space could be allocated to show photos and snippets of Albatross and the FAA in general, showing the early years of establishing the FAA. Perhaps old issues of the original Slipstream may be a source of information.

Hope you find some space in future editions for the photos enclosed.

Best regards to all, *Mick Blair, Albany Creek, Qld.*





Dear Editor,

Just a few words about my latest escapade. The start of this occurred on the 16th April 1949 when I was still a recruit Skilled Air Mechanic 111 under training at H.M.S. HERON at Yeovilton, Somerset,

U.K. There I met a petite blonde WREN also under training, allegedly under training as an Air Mechanic but in reality under training for a Husband. Well we both passed our training successfully and decided to have our passing out parade in a little church in Edinburgh, Scotland on the aforementioned date. That was fifty years ago and according to modern day thinking that made the sixteenth of April 1999 our Golden wedding anniversary and as in all family events of importance the two families started to make noises as to how it should be celebrated and don't forget to invite Uncle Ernie and Auntie Betty. Well after a couple of months of that sort of badgering I decided that enough was enough and suggested to my wife that we raid the bank account and spend the money on a trip down memory lane, fly to the U.K. in particular Yeovilton visit Heron, see if we could get on the station and see the old Hood Mess where I was billeted and the 'Wailing Wall', where we were forced to say all our good nights outside the WRENS quarters, maybe get a photo or two of how it looks now and then fly up to Scotland and have our photo taken on the church steps as we did fifty years ago.

A sort of a now and then sequence.

When we sat down and analysed the probability of the event it appealed even more and so I started the ball rolling by writing to the CO of Heron outlining our proposal and requesting approval to enter the base to revisit the old spots still alive in our memories and refresh same.

A couple of weeks later we received a letter from a Lt Cdr, M.A. Caws (R.N. Rtd) the Public Relations Officer of the Royal Naval Air Station saying they would be delighted to assist my wife and myself celebrate our Golden Wedding visit, he also added a warning that things had changed a little since we were there, but he would be most happy to assist us to try and find the location of the old Hood Mess, the wailing wall had long gone he added. He even suggested the best day to visit (as the Depot was returning from Easter Leave.) We accepted his suggestions and planned our visit accordingly. Then the fun really started, Passports to be obtained, Planes to be booked, Accommodation in the U.K. to be arranged with the rellies still over there and my dear wife had to give up her Scottish nationality and become naturalised so she could get back into the country unhindered. I just loved that last bit for she had been sticking her Scottish heritage into me and my friends for fifty years - Revenge is so sweet.

And so with all the preliminaries complete we boarded Royal Brunei Airlines flight for Heathrow on the 3rd April with the big adventure ahead of us. In my search of the proposed trip I had failed miserably, I had failed to find out that the Airline was Islamic and therefore no grog could be obtained on board. Twenty four hours of nothing to do except twiddle my thumbs and dream of a nice cool ale for that was as close as I was going to get to a beer, for the ports of call on the way were Islamic also. I must confess I had slipped a hip flask of whisky into my pocket before departure as a night cap before going to sleep, much better

than a pill. And so when the cabin attendant came around with the tray of juices I asked for, and received, a glass of cold water with two ice cubes. As we taxied out to take-off at each port of call the crew would ask us, the passengers, to join with them in seeking the blessings of Allah for a safe trip. After the third call to prayers my wife said as they started the prayer tape, "Oh not again", to which I replied, "Don't knock it, it has got us this far O.K." and so we both went back to our glasses of water and ice. We were fed every two hours day and night. As we approached the Mediterranean and we were told by the pilot that we would have to do a slight deviation to the usual track meaning we would give Bosnia a bit of a by-pass, I agreed whole heartedly with that decision as I didn't like the thought of having to dodge a Scud or two. All in all it increased our flying time by about fifteen minutes.

Our first sight of London was just after dawn when we banked over the Thames River with the Tower Bridge directly below us and then the cloud closed in again, I then called upon Allah to make sure the pilot had kept his instrument rating up to date. He had, for very shortly there was the usual bump which to me felt like he had dropped it down a bit too heavy on his starboard wheels but nothing had broken and so we taxied in. I thought he would never have made a number wire with a landing like that, recalling my goofing days on SYDNEY, but I would have had a good look at the starboard gear as soon as possible. However, nothing seemed to be wrong as we taxied to the terminal, no problem and disembarked into the melee they call Heathrow. It never seemed to be that busy on the T.V. series 'Airport'. Apparently the poof that runs the Aeroflot section has become quite a celebrity since that series. Just as a bit of a stir I asked the first Airport person I saw where was he stationed, I wanted to see for myself if he was really the raging person he is shown to be in the series, but I was told he was at terminal two, we were in terminal three and I sure was not going to walk all around Heathrow airport looking for a poof. End of story.

As we emerged through the exit doors after Customs there was a very welcome sight, my niece, who had driven in from Herne Bay (about 100 miles) to meet us, the time then was seven a.m. and so into the car and the London morning peak hour traffic and off to our new place of residence (temporary) for the scheduled stay in London prior to going to Yeovil. She had arranged a car hire place for us. At my age now most hire companies don't want to know you, but this bloke gave us a good deal - Sat. Sun. Mon. Tues. morning for 60 quid with 250 miles a day free. So I spent the day on the Sunday playing with the Sunday drivers and then early Monday morning into it. Onto the motorways that, according to instructions received from my nieces sisters computer, was the quickest and most direct way to get to Yeovil from Herne Bay which is, by the way, on the road to London from the Channel Tunnel and so at 7 a.m. you can imagine the amount of traffic. I have never had to put up with so many semis and pantechnicons in all the years I have been driving and they were all being driven according to the rules of their port of origin. I did manage a few horn blasts and light flashes, but after three attempts I finally found myself on the right motorway and away we went. WOW. Now I know how they manage to have those big smashes on the Motorways over there. According to the computer print out I should have done the trip in four hours. Six hours later I eventually found Yeovil and our Bed and

Breakfast which was a former rectory but now run as a B & B by the wife of a Major in the Coldstream Guards, it was great, the place was full of Guards memorabilia. A pair of greys in the stables at the rear and a rather large Ridgeback dog as the guard dog. For 20 pounds a night we had a double room and ensuite and our own sitting room with a big log fire and I can assure you I made good use of the room as I settled down to relax with my litre bottle of duty free and cast off the days madness. Up bright and early next morning to a full English breakfast served in our sitting room and then out into the chill of a winter morning with the wind coming off the open paddocks and penetrating every inch of exposed flesh. The expected High for the day was 12 degrees, welcome back to Yeovil.

And so with no further ado it was into the car, on with the heater and out into back lanes of a typical English village in search of the now famous Naval Aviation Museum. I



The Captain's office at HERON

couldn't remember very much of Yeovil but every now and then I would see a place name that rang a bell, such as the Podimore and the Pickerty Witch (a pub that had been the sight of many a great night). But everything had changed so much it was almost confusing. However, after a few wrong turns and missed signs I eventually found myself driving along the boundary fence of the illustrious HMS HERON and to where I remembered the gate to be but yes, you guessed it, it had all changed. The old West gate is now the Main gate and the old main gate is now buried in the maze of new accommodation blocks.

As we drove up to the new Main gate we were stopped by a Naval Policeman escorted by a Royal Marine in combat gear and cradling a sub machine in his arms, the barrel casually pointing in our direction. That definitely was not the old Heron I remembered. "Good morning sir", said the policeman, "would you be Mr & Mrs Bray?" "Yairs," said I "I'm looking for Lt. Cdr. Caws, he is expecting us." I had his

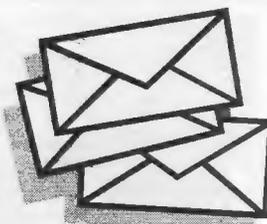


The new N.A.A.F.I. building, still selling a cup of tea and an Eccles cake

letter in my pocket just in case. "Yes", said the Policeman, "he is expecting you, would you please come with me into the guard room and I shall call him and tell him you have arrived." In the guard room it was the usual means of identification. "Please sir, please wear this pass at all times as so it is visible and please put this visitors pass on the dash of your car where it is visible at all times." The thing was a full A4 in size fully plastic wrapped and absolutely unmissable. Then the famous Naval Public Relations Officer arrived slightly out of breath, I had noticed this tall civilian coming down the road at a fast trot and the policeman then introduced us. For those of you who have served at Heron you will remember the guard house was on the left hand side of the road in and the right hand side was the parade ground. Forget it, they don't have a parade ground any more, in fact, according to the P.R.O. they don't have parades any more. Well that stopped me in my tracks, no Divisions? No. My wife flippantly said I suppose you don't sweep out the hangers any more either, to which he replied that's right, we have outside contractors for that sort of stuff. There are also no more mess men and galley staff it's all outside contracts now. I was too stunned to speak remembering my days of duty watch in the mess and toilet blocks.

Well back to the reason for the visit, as for the parade ground that was, it is no more, nor is the old Hood Mess even the WREN's Quarters are no more. All have been replaced with two and three story brick accommodation blocks, even the old NAAFI building has gone. Well that took care of part of my visit and so we went for a stroll to the tarmac area and there were choppers every where. In fact hangars full of them and out front they were hovering and being serviced and the whole place had an air of rush rush. After all, INVINCIBLE had just left for the Bosnia front the day before and so we wandered back to the gate completely stunned. There was nothing to remind us of the days of our youth? Well we were quite young, 20 & 21. And so we said our farewells, handed back our passes and drove out the gate to the northern end of the establishment to the famous Naval Aviation Museum and boy is that impressive.

As you enter the building the first thing that catches your attention is CONCORDE No 002 (Barry Lister, Qld Pres. of F.A.A.A., told me before we left Aus. to be sure and see Concorde for he had worked on it during its early days) What a machine. You are allowed to access it via a visitors ramp, but access to the cockpit is very carefully fenced off with half inch clear plastic, in other words you can look but not touch. Underneath the aircraft there is a smaller display which features the actual wind tunnel test model used in the earlier development of the design and also the prototype aircraft which was built to test the wing shape in actual flying conditions. To give you some idea of it cast your mind back to when you were bored to tears in class and so you folded a piece of paper into a dart shape and threw it across the room when you thought the instructor was not looking. That's the nearest I can come to describing it, or in a word, beautiful. Leaving Concord display I climbed into a display that incorporated a simulator of a ride in a Harrier Jump Jet, at 2 quid a ride it was worth every penny. It was so realistic, even to the bumps as you taxied over the wires down the deck on your way to take off and then wham





The entrance to the R.N.A.S. Museum at Yeovilton, H.M.S. HERON

back into your seat as you were shot up the ramp into the wide blue yonder. A recorded message does tell you to hang on to the steel bar in front of you and off you go, you do a take off have a bit of a ride around them you join the circuit and land on, all the time this is happening your eyes are glued to the huge video screen in front of you. It had only one down side to it and that was a sign which advised people with an epileptic problem not to partake of a ride. I can't remember how much time we spent there. But I do know we went back for another quick look as we headed back to London. And, of course, being my old self I just had to try and smart ass myself and so I asked them where was, or did they have, a Sea Hornet display. Would you believe the answer was NO, Sorry sir, we could look in the files for you if you would like. And there it was, no mention of one of the greatest aircraft ever to grace the deck of a carrier. Of a Squadron that went to America and showed the Yanks, the Blue angels in particular, how to do formation aerobatics. For those of the readers unfamiliar with the Sea Hornet, it was a smaller all aluminium version of the famous Mosquito fighter bomber, especially built for Naval Air Service. The most famous squadron was 801.

And so concluded our nostalgic trip to where it all began for us and so we headed back on the 303 to London where we missed our off road and got completely lost, actually it wasn't really-all my fault for as we reached the ring road around London one devil of a storm broke and I couldn't see the road let along the road signs and next minute I found myself roaring up the famous M1 heading for Scotland and all points north. I couldn't find a road that would get me off and headed in the right direction and so I accidentally did a complete circuit of London, about a two to three hundred mile detour to get back onto the road I should have been on. Then it started to snow, very lightly but it was snow and it had the cold that usually went with it. I wished I was back in Aus. I never was any good at navigation, that's why I could never get my H.E.T. But I did set a record for time taken to go from Herne Bay to Yeovilton and an even better record on the way back. After the laughter died down when I took the car back to the hire place I was told I was not the first person to circumnavigate London. So if any of the readers are planning to do a similar trip take the advice of one who has been and done that and catch a bus.

Well next day we booked a cab and went to the airport and caught a plane to Edinburgh, no more self drive, and as we flew the length of England there was snow every where, very pretty to look at from the air and that was as close as I wanted to get to it. Memories of my days at NAS Culham

during the winter over there came back to haunt me (MY FIRST EXPERIENCE OF FROST BIGHT).

The visit to Edinburgh was to go to the church where we married and have our photo taken on the steps of the church. We had a full day free and so on the way we stopped off at the Royal Yacht Britannia which has been decommissioned and is now on public display at Leith in the Firth of the Forth on the outskirts of Edinburgh. To afford better viewing for the visitors large viewing panels have been cut into the bulkheads of the various compartments to allow you to look but not touch. No photography is permitted inside the ship as everything is still under copyright to H.M. The Queen, outside O.K., but inside, no way. I stood on the wing of the bridge and tried to sneak a photo of inside the bridge through the open bridge door, a little tap on the shoulder and a sorry sir but you are not allowed that, and so the camera went back into the pocket. But what a beautiful ship and its interior, five star would be considered a slum to its elegance. The Royal Barge is housed in a tank in a building at the entrance to the Yacht and believe you me you can comb your hair in some of the brass and silverware fittings on her.

From the yacht to the church where I bribed the taxi driver to do the honours with the camera, and so the mission was completed.

We had done all we had planned in Australia and still had a couple of days left so we went back into Edinburgh and booked ourselves on a tour of the whiskey distilleries for the next day, then a scenic bus tour of Edinburgh and it had also changed, not startlingly so but according to my wife many things had changed. The one thing that hadn't changed to me was the one o'clock gun from the castle. Darn thing went off right on one o'clock just as I was about to try and cross Princess Street. I moved quite quickly.

Next day with our fond farewells said it was back to Aus. with our old mate um Allah. That in itself was a trip to remember. We flew a great circle route which took us out over the channel to Amsterdam thence to Frankfurt, on down to Vienna and then to Istanbul, Athens, in between Cairo and Baghdad and then over Bahrain to Dubai, where we were taken off the plane put into a bus and driven to the terminal which is undergoing construction. Here we alighted and walked through to the transit lounge where we kept walking through customs and immigration where we were watched by a man sitting at a desk with a big machine pistol on the desk. It seemed to me he didn't use a pen that was his writing instrument on the desk. I said G'Day and kept walking and then it was out the door back onto the bus and



The Royal Yacht Britannia at her now permanent mooring at Leith wharf just outside Edinburgh



My wife hamming it up on the Quarterdeck of the Britannia. The windows behind her were part of the sundeck lounge

back to the aircraft. I realise now it was their way of getting everyone out of the way whilst they cleaned the cabin, changed the crew and got ready for the next leg of the flight. Leaving Dubai we passed Bombay and then on to Bangkok passing Rangoon on the way and then over Ho Chi Min City in Vietnam and down to Brunei for our last scheduled stop. From Brunei it was straight across Aus. to Brisbane, here we arrived at 0030 on the 24th April. It was one of the highlights of the trip to see the smiling face of my American neighbour at the Customs barrier. We were invited to spend the night with he and his wife at their city house before travelling on to our little block of dirt at Pomona about 150ks up the coast.

The most pleasing aspect of this part of the adventure was that he has at all times a full fridge of ice cold stubbies and after 5 weeks of unavailability I felt we were going to make a small hole in his supplies.

But back to the trip, I shot a few rolls of film and have included a few selected prints with this little ditty for you to use at your own discretion. I have also included a copy of Navy News, Royal Navy edition, which announces the demise of the rank of Ordinary Seaman in the R.N. as from 1st April, 1999.

I have also included a couple of brochures which advertise the International Air Day 99 to be held at R.N.A.S. Yeovilton in July. Have a look at the Ship I.D. letters on the tail of the Sea Fury in the photo in the third column inside, from memory, N.W. did stand for N.A.S. Nowra didn't it? It seems one of our little birds has strayed a long way from home?

Well I guess that's enough for now, considering the fact that I have just received the mail which included the April edition of Slipstream, so I shall have a little break and read the latest news from the old Albatross and all points of Aus.

Thanks for taking the time to read this,

Regards to all and keep up the good work

John A. Bray, Ex C.A.F. (a) 805 sqd.
Pomona, Q'ld

Dear Bob,

Came across this photo of the late Lyle 'Pop' Stark, taken at the time of MELBOURNE's visit to Yokosuka, Japan in the late fifties.

Members of the Handling fraternity had the happy knack of appearing in the strangest of places and situations at times.

Keep up the excellent work with the Journal.

Regards, Jim Fletcher, Ballarat, Vic.



Dear Bob,

Please excuse the printing as my writing is so awful I cannot read the script.

Thank you for another excellent 'Slipstream' - they keep me in touch with the days of 'long ago'.

Volume 10, Number 2 April 1999 on page 20 - "Smile and Smile" by Pat Lindsay.

Back in 1951-52 I can remember Father Lake writing a few sentences of similar ideas - I was then a bachelor (as was Father Lake) and we shared rooms in the same hut. He had a very keen sense of humour.

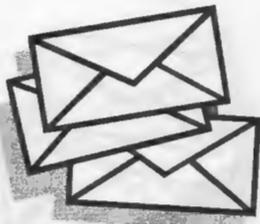
My request is - would you and Pat Lindsay give me permission to include a few of the 'gems' in our Church News - something to give the old Parishioners a laugh or two.

Yours faithfully,

Noel Knappstein, ex 805/808, Sunbury, Vic.

CERTAINLY NOEL. ED.





Dear Bob,

Adding to 'Righteous' Roy Torren's letter published in SLIPSTREAM April 1999, yes we all had a great time remembering those great times from the start at Yeovil 1948. Just

where have THE 50 YEARS GONE?

Enclosing another photo taken during the reunion 1998.

Already we are getting organised for ANZAC Day 2000 in Sydney 'Tug', 'Digger', 'Righteous', Maxwell G. Gant, Ken Spragg, Doug Eastgate, 'Scrubby' Bush plus 'Taff' of course, we parade with H.M.A.S. SYDNEY Association ex Korean Veterans, some did both tours.

Had lunch with 'Scrubby' Bush at Combined Service Club in City last week, food very good and beer, middies \$1.20. 'Scrubby' filled me in regarding his visit to Coolangatta ANZAC Day '99 with R.R. and Maxwell R. - he did not get lost so will not need that bell after all!!

I have this to say to the younger members of F.A.A. - the good mates you make during your service lasts forever as we say, they are 'Fair-Dinkum'.

I always look forward to receiving 'Slipstream' so keep up the excellent work.

Regards from



HMAS VOYAGER Memorial, Huskisson, Sunday 1st November, 1998

l to r: Les 'Tug' Wilson, Leo 'Taff' Evans, Edward 'Digger' Schmidt & Roy (Righteous) Torrens. All ex-Engine Room General Service R.A.N. transferred to Fleet Air Arm via skilled Aircraft Mechanics course at Yeovil 1948.

Leo 'Taff' Evans, ex C.P.O. (A), Vacluse, NSW

Dear Bob,

I have enclosed a copy of a story I wrote in the BULLETIN for our ex HMAS BATAAN Assoc. members.

In view of our Nat. Presidents Report, 'Slipstream' April '99, re life in todays Navy I thought that our members might find it interesting to read in Slipstream about my trip and life aboard todays MELBOURNE.

Looking forward to my next copy of Slipstream, a great magazine so keep up the good work.

Sincerely,

Bill Barry, (ex POAH) L.M.K.

Nth. Brighton, S. Aust.

PS: In case you are confused, I was ships company in BATAAN before seeing the light and transferring to the Fleet Air Arm (the best thing I have ever done in my life!) BB

HITCHING A SEA RIDE

by Bill Barry

In November 1998 I was lucky enough to be included in a group of 22 HMAS MELBOURNE (the Aircraft Carrier) Association Members invited to sail in the Frigate, HMAS MELBOURNE, FFG 05 from Adelaide to Sydney for a four day cruise. The MELBOURNE is the fifth of the latest guided missile frigates of six to be commissioned into the Royal Australian Navy. They are U.S.A. designed, displacing over 4,000 tonnes, and bearing no resemblance to our WWII frigates.

We joined MELBOURNE in Adelaide on a Sunday and were made very welcome by the Captain, XO and crew. Apart from a couple of restricted areas, we had the freedom of the ship at all times, including the bridge and operations room. We set sail for Sydney on Monday morning in company with the Frigate HMAS NEWCASTLE, FFG 06 and the Destroyer HOBART, DDG 39. She was built in the U.S.A. 33 years ago and is still in pristine condition.

Once we cleared the Gulf, the Great Southern Ocean swell set in, but was hardly noticeable except for some pitch - MELBOURNE is fully stabilised, so it didn't take long for us to regain our sea legs.

I first thought that at seventy years of age I might be classed as too old for the trip, but I need not have worried - one of our members was 90. 'Young Herb' joined the R.A.N. in 1922 at the age of 14.1/2. Apart from being a 'Tingara' boy, he served on the original MELBOURNE, a Cruiser. He also served on the Carrier MELBOURNE II and here he was now sea riding on MELBOURNE III. He is working on being around for MELBOURNE IV in 2017. Herb is a living legend and was spoilt rotten by the officers and crew and given the honour of sitting in the Captain's chair on the bridge when coming alongside at GI.

We were billeted in various junior sailors' messes, which are extremely crowded, even when compared with the Carrier MELBOURNE with her squadrons embarked. The bunks are three deep and do not fold up when not in use. There is little room between them - one had to slide in and out and you certainly can't sit upright. If you were unlucky to score a top bunk, you needed the agility of a chimpanzee to get in.

However the messes, in fact the entire ship, is air-conditioned. Locker spaces are on the same flat with adjoining recreation:?! and TV room. They don't have cinema nights as we used to, but movies are shown on a huge TV screen in the main cafeteria. The movies are also relayed to other sets in each mess recreation space, or they watch videos from their own libraries.

Each mess has adjoining bathrooms and toilets. There is an abundance of fresh water, consequently no water rationing. Nobody does their own dhobi-ing as there is a very efficient laundry with its own crew aboard. All ship's company, from the Captain down, wear the same clothing called 'coveralls', which

look a little like flying suits, with rank distinguished by insignia on epaulets. They also wear anti-flash gear and first aid kits in pouches around the waist ready for any emergency and looking very professional.

We were guests one night of the officers in the Wardroom and while it was well fitted out, they also had space problems with three junior officers sleeping in one of the junior sailors' messes. There are 32 female sailors in the ship's company and apart from having their own mess etc. there is no discrimination. I must admit it was a pleasant change to be woken some mornings with the melodious call to 'wakey, wakey' piped by a female Quartermaster.

Discipline is a lot different from the 'Black Gaiter' type in my day, but the crew are a happy lot and go about their duties with quiet efficiency. They all seem to be computer experts. I found them very polite and had to keep telling them, "Don't call me Sir".

The food is excellent with three choices for lunch and two for dinner. Food is served on pre-warmed plates smorgasbord style and eaten in a central cafeteria with red and blue decor in honour of the Melbourne AFL Football Club. Fresh fruit and milk is always available, as well as a soft-serve ice-cream machine, help yourself, tea and coffee 24 hours a day and, of course, a Coca-Cola machine. There is only one galley, officers and troops having the same menu.

The ship is continually doing exercises or playing war games and it was good to hear 'flying stations' piped once again, even though it was for only the single Sea Hawk helicopter carried by the ship. The flight deck was not much bigger than one of the MELBOURNE II lifts and because it is positioned right aft, is subject to considerable rise and fall of the pitch of the stern. As a result of this movement, the chopper sometimes has to be winched down. This is quite a manoeuvre - two men stand on the heaving deck under the hovering aircraft to attach the haul down wire - pretty scary even in daylight. 'Chockman the Brave' please note.

We were given several conducted tours of the ship, including the missile loading magazine. Dummy firing of the launcher was demonstrated - one 'SAM' missile fired every two seconds looks pretty awesome and at \$25 million each, they make sure they don't miss.

The tour of the engine room was very interesting. The ship is powered by two gas turbine engines, similar to those on jumbo jets. The engines sit side by side in a soundproof compartment and are viewed through windows. The ship cruises on one engine, but uses two for extra speed. The engine room is reasonably cool with cold water drinking fountains scattered around the compartment. The ship is driven by a single propeller, with the shaft set at 8 degrees off centre to the starboard side. This enables the shaft to be removed without having to dismantle the rudder but, as a consequence of this alignment and the immense torque from the shaft, the ship has a slight, permanent list to port when under way. This is not noticeable below decks, but becomes apparent when looking at the horizon.

The Captain gave us a demonstration of the manoeuvrability of these ships. We were scudding along at 29 knots when the engines were put into reverse thrust, causing the ship to come to a shuddering halt within 1 and a half ships' lengths - just like sea brakes - then back on full power ahead. In 60 seconds were again doing 29 knots - tremendous power and no vibrations.

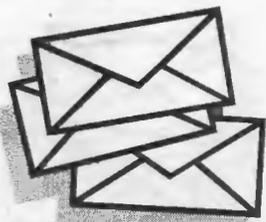
We entered Sydney heads on a bright sunny afternoon and were escorted down the harbour by numerous small craft, which brought back many fond memories of long ago. Rounding Bradleys Head, there was the old iconic Coat-hanger in full view still lording it over the rest of Sydney Harbour and reminding me that this truly is one of the great cities of the world.

Coming alongside at GI, we were given yet another example

of how easy it is to manoeuvre these big ships. Our group was mustered up on the gunnery direction platform for entering harbour and could clearly hear the orders coming from the bridge - 'half knot forward', 'half knot astern' - and with the aid of our side thrusters, we neatly slotted in between HMAS NEWCASTLE and HMAS PERTH with only a few metres to spare either end.

After our farewell to the crew it was ashore - up past 'Harry's Hub Caps' to the 'Rock and Roll' (now called 'Rockers') for a few beers, much backslapping, hearty hand shakes and eventually back home to ever loving Adelaide after a very enjoyable and memorable voyage, compliments of the R.A.N.

In conclusion, I must say that MELBOURNE and her entire ship's company are a very efficient and happy crew, a credit to the Navy and I am sure would do Australia proud in any conflict.



WAKEY WAKEY CALL 02DEC98

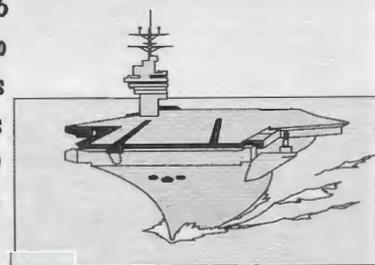
Below is the Wakey Wakey pipe given by the ship's chaplain, on the morning before entering Sydney Heads last December, nearing completion of the 1998 sea trip from Adelaide to Sydney (Olympic version of Sydney):

Show a leg, get out of bed,
another day is here.
Even the birdies are up today,
our last at sea this year.
Let's say thanks to Herb
and all his boys.
We hope you had some fun.
They all came back to sea gain,
to see how things are done.
So have a good leave at Xmas time,
and please don't drink and drive!
Author,
LSSE Jamie HITE

VIVA Le FRANCE French Navy Caught Short

courtesy FESR NEWS

Paris: Sea trials have discovered that France's first ever nuclear powered aircraft carrier, the \$4.8 billion Charles de Gaulle, has a slight problem: its flight deck is too short. Navy officials have confirmed that the carrier, which took ten years to build and was launched amid great fanfare last month, has a flight deck 3.6 metres too short to allow for safe take offs and landing by its compliment of 40 combat and AWACs spotter planes.





Dear Sir,

In reference to an article in April Edition of Slipstream of HMAS MELBOURNE'S ships concert, 1964, I am forwarding a photo of 'us girls' who took part in the

'Preview of the Spring Fashions' . . It really goes to show just how versatile we 'girls' (Handlers) were, working the Flight Deck by day and entertaining the troops by night.

I have also included photographs of HMAS MELBOURNE looking as 'Majestic' as ever, these photos and the ones of the aircraft aboard her were taken circa 1964-1964 in JB and up top.

I hope you can find space to publish the enclosed pics, *All the best, Dave Terry,*

Langwarrin, Victoria



right: L to R yours truly (Dave Terry)
Peter 'Mandy' Girven,
Steve 'Stephanie' Watkins,
Mick Herbert (deceased)
and David 'Tonto' Kerwitz.



left: Yours truly, circa 1999,
just goes to show, age does
weary them



HMAS MELBOURNE



'A CONTEMPORARY PRAYER'

Dear Lord,
So far today, I am doing alright.
I have not gossiped, lost my temper, been
greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish or over
indulgent.
However, I am getting out of bed in a few
minutes and I will need a lot more help after
that.

Amen

"Is it because light travels faster than
sound that some people appear bright
until they speak?"

courtesy FESR News



Women's Business

From Women's Business Editor



Saturday 5th June saw the final curtain come down for Albatross Golf Club. Decisions taken by the Department of Defence had forced the closure of the course at HMAS ALBATROSS.

The final game played on the course was a four person Ambrose - all part of the last day gala celebrations at the Club. Patron Geoff Cole and lovely wife Lynne, who were official guests, together with Club President Mike 'Irish' MacNeill and yours truly, as the last Ladies President, joined a field of 76 players for this event. It was a beautiful sunny day and was enjoyed by all who participated.

Following the speeches and presentation the players were joined by their invited guests and a number of original members, some who had journeyed from as far away as South Australia to be part of this sad occasion. These included our first Ladies Captain Phyl Rogers and first Ladies Secretary Dot Fargher who had made the trip to Nowra specially for the occasion.

Previously, on the 1st June, the Ladies held their final presentation day. Though all were sad at the end of an era we still managed to enjoy ourselves at the luncheon to mark the occasion.

Fortunately the C.O. of ALBATROSS, Captain Geoff Cole, had allowed us enough time to fit in our final championships before the Club closed.

Going back over the records it was interesting to note that we still had an original member (Ena Storey) playing golf with the Club. Ena had been Club Secretary in 1967.

Norma Lee, who many of the readers will know, and yours truly shared the Secretary's job in 1969. Norma took over from me and has held a number of Committee positions, almost continuously, up until 1992 including President (1973), Captain (1972 and 1975), Handicapper (1975-1977), and Secretary (1969-1972 and 1979-1992). Norma and her husband Jim have contributed much to the Albatross Golf Club over the years and both were rewarded with Life Memberships.

I know many F.A.A.A. members who have played golf at Albatross will be surprised to learn of its demise. Times change I suppose and sometimes you just have to go with the flow.

Any of you out there in 'Slipstreamland' with a tale to tell, we will be pleased to hear from you.

Albatross Golf - Final Day



Enjoying the sunshine at the 19th hole are Maureen Brown, Clover Taylor, Marie Dillon, Janet Coupland and Betty Gallaway



Happy group at the 19th hole L to R: Tom Smith, Paul Hawker, John Collier, Bill Harrison (Snr) and Phil Lee ('Battsy' Lee's son)



Lyn Coles showing her style hitting off the 1st



President 'Irish' MacNeill, Ian Bofinger, Ladies President Pat Perkins and Val Bofinger. The 'Boffs' journeyed down from Yamba specially for the occasion.

Albatross Golf - Final Day



Waiting to hit off the 1st are Al. Pheeneey, Marie Dillon, Dave Laird and not to be confused with the Editor of this Journal, Garth Perkins.



The last Club Champion: Paula McKie receives her trophy from Ladies President Pat Perkins



The Ladies Committee meets for the last time: Alice Harrison, Maureen Brown, Jan Perkins, Pat Perkins (Women's Business Editor and Ladies President), Sandra Walters (Yes 'Pancho' Walters wife), Marie Dillon, Marj. O'Driscoll and in the foreground Betty Gallaway.



'Old Girls' reunion - 180 years of Albatross Ladies Golf experience includes Pat Perkins, Colleen Jenkins, Marj Marquis, Kath Nicol, Ena Storey and Maureen Muir.

Albatross Golf club Ladies 1st June, 1999





Dear Pat,

Gosh what a task trying to remember to jot down so many small things to tell you and the lot just floods in.

Don & I were married from Nestor St. M.Q. Brian & Betty French were our best man and bridesmaid. I arrived from Melbourne via Sydney the day before we were married, so I don't remember much about Married Qtrs at the time. The roads were not tarred but there was a bus service because we used it the following day.

We were married on October 4, 1952 at Nowra Methodist Church by Reverend Bray. Our first home together was a very narrow room for 3 pounds a week at Mandalay Guest House. We had the front upstairs room and the bed was in the centre of the room and one had to be very careful when getting into bed because we used to hang our bottoms out the window. We pushed it over against the wall, which were paper thin, thank goodness we were all young and knew what each other were up to.

We had a communal kitchen and dining room and the wives made their hubbies meals in a domestic atmosphere. There were a lot of young couples there Babs & Rick Hammond, Tas & Phil Anning, Bob & Donna Boldock, were among those who come to mind.

We left there and went to Greenwell Point, by this time I was pregnant with John. We shared a home down on the canal with Jackie & Ron Forest, 2 cats and hordes of mice. We grew some vegies in a garden enriched by the buried toilet, we didn't know it was unsanitary because the Chinese had been doing it for years.

But as I got heavier the locals told us that the roads were impassable come winter so we shifted into our first Married Quarters, 55 Bedford St. It was beautiful and we kept it so nice. The roads weren't sealed so the dust was a nuisance.

I went home to South Australia to stay with Robbies people when he left to go on the Vengeance because I was pregnant again with Shane. I came back when Rob came back to Shoalhaven Heads. We lived in a holiday cottage there. I had Shane and we were happy for a while until John started to get breathing problems and we came into 10 Yarra Drive. Charlie Chinnery & Barbara, Mr Gregson & his wife Fay and Ian Kierce & family were among those who lived in Shoalhaven Heads at that time.

10 Yarra Drive was a Nissen hut very comfortable, but we were only able to stay in these places for 2-2.1/2 years, a darned nuisance especially when there was just no where else to go. We had Janine, our daughter, by this time and I had to go back to Adelaide, what I thought was for a short time. Rob was going to sea. When I got to Adelaide I went into a Navy Trust home at Blair Athol.

The Housing Trust of South Australia allotted so many houses to the Navy and once they were filled they came again under the Housing Trust.

I wasn't to get back to being a family again for a year, I saw Rob at Easter, but I had to get back to Nowra. After much huffing and puffing from the Navy, that I couldn't have a move from Adelaide to Nowra - so much red tape - I ended up back at Nowra at Greenwell Point.

I was beginning to go under because of being with 3 kiddies all of the time and the old attitude of the locals when they found that I was married to a serviceman. Why, I don't know, so I kept to myself.

We eventually bought our home in 6 McGuire Street. We have had 5 children, we now have 17 grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren.

Along the way I have made some great friends, Bruce & Betty Farrowel who lived next to me at Walrus Crescent. I still write to them and send cards at odd times. Yarra Drive was taken over by the Army in their great master plan very early in the piece.

The Kindergarten - is it still there? Mavis Plant was the teacher there as long as I can remember. I was involved with the NH Scouts before I left Nowra in 1986.

I used to play golf out at Nowra Hill 1984-85. I enjoyed it and made a lot of friends there. Is there a great master plan that really must use that piece of ground or don't the golfers use the course as often?

We are South Australians and had planned, after our time with the Navy, we would go back to the Riverland we thought. We have tried to live in NSW again and went to Batemans Bay, we often went up to Nowra but we were not able to swing back again and we came back to the Riverland. Rob is an RSPCA Inspector and I am a Justice of the Peace and Secretary for the Senior Cits in Berri.

I grab a game of golf when I can. I don't have anything to prove, I have had many trophies and Kudos for my time as a competitive player in my handicap. I will leave it up to the new young members to bring home the trophies now.

We have an old home on an acre block. It used to belong to a truckie firm and bits and pieces are missing in part, but we are doing it up - in our time.

Rob had a heart attack 2 years ago and has had to slow down a bit. But he is as hale as ever and being 70 likes to think he is Superman, but soon finds out he isn't.

I'd say I have reached my goal where I'm at, where I want to be, it's a great life and, yes, we are happy.

Love to you all, Gwen & Don Roberts



Shiela Zimmer & Norm Fargula at the 50th Anniversary Celebrations



Cindy George left & Tina Partington, hard working helpers take a well earned break during the 50th Anniversary Celebrations

From the Ancient Aviator

Herewith a few more gems of wisdom I have picked up on my travels. I have learnt that:

- Perspective is everything. To a worm, digging in the hard ground is far more relaxing than going fishing.
- The best way to learn something is to teach it to someone else.
- It's worth fighting for causes but not with people.
- The less time I have to work with, the more I get things done.
- After being on a diet for two weeks all I seem to lose is fourteen days.
- A happy journey almost always depends on choosing the right companion.
- Any fool can make a speech and usually does.
- Nothing is really work unless you would rather be doing something else.
- Life is like a toilet roll. The closer it gets to the end the faster it goes.
- It is unwise to publicly state that you would like to be "hung like a nigger". The KKK might hear you and oblige.

Yours aye, The Ancient Aviator

THIS IS A TRUE STORY

The names of the characters are true and correct to protect the innocent. So let's set the scene and tell the story.

You see our most impeccable member Pappy Gault (Yes, the one and only) and his good lady Glad were fortunate to be given the privilege of a weekend (Fri. to Sun.) at the palatial Burswood Casino Hotel.

Now everyone knows that this particular establishment is a five star plus one where the well to do and not so well to know (but well heeled shady type) like to be seen as they wine, dine and play the wheels of fortune as large sums of money changes hands daily.

To arrive as a guest at this hotel is a most splendid ceremonial occasion, alighting from your car onto plush carpet, a commissioner to announce you, a valet to attend on you, a chauffeur to park your car. THE SCENE IS SET.

ARRIVE MR & MRS GAULT: Their limousine!!! 1980 Mini Van, not too well kept, appearance has a lot to be desired (but paid for), in the back amongst the rags cleaning, two large suit cases. The car rolls to a stop, the commissioner opens the door and signals the chauffeur to park the guests car.

PAPPY TO CHAUFFEUR: "You know how to drive these late models mate?" (A look of disgust appears on our drivers face!!) "The brakes are not the best mate". advised Pappy.

VALET TO PAPPY: "I'll take your ports Sir."

PAPPY TO VALET: "Sorlright mate, might be a bit eavy for you, I'll 'andle them me self OK!!!"

Now as the chauffeur kangaroos away in Pappys immaculate mini and Pappy superbly attired in casual shirt, slacks (ex PMG) and thongs, struggles with his two great loaded cases you may well ask yourselves why our guests did not avail themselves of the luxury of being waited on by the eager staff.

Well herein lies the story: You see our stars had been given this luxurious weekend to celebrate the occasion of Gladys birthday, delight, delight!!! until they found out that breakfast was the only meal included in the deal. Now everyone knows how expensive meals are at 5 star hotels - this is where the cunning get cunning and as we all know the Gaults are cunning!!!!!!!!!!!!!! "LETS COOK OUR OWN MEALS".

By now the cunning ones amongst us will have twigged as to why Pappy insisted on carrying his own cases (for an extremely unfit fella, no mean feat). That's right - they were so crammed with tinned food, cooking utensils and portable stove - they would have not only rattled if not carried carefully but been as heavy as lead.

Having experienced that lavish spread at the breakfast banquet (Past FAA Social event) they came equipped with many 'doggy bags'. This enabled them to subsidise their 'home cooked' meals with an abundance of fresh fruit etc. to keep them healthy and regular enabling them to attend the gym, sauna and spa to keep up their fitness to play the gambling machines.

We also have it on good authority that the room service staff still talk about their most strange and unusual weekend guests who had weird drinking habits - they kept sending down orders for more 'metho'. NOT STRANGE REALLY: Thee and me knows that those little metho stoves are always running out of fuel.

ADVICE TO FELLOW MEMBERS AND FRIENDS: If you happen to become guests at this hotel in question and on arrival are attracted by a large photo of a 1980 Mini Van, you would be advised not to acknowledge recognition of it - that would ban your entry by association. The photo is there as a constant reminder to all staff members to run like hell if they ever see it coming up the ramp to the entrance ever again.

NATIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

51ST ANNIVERSARY DINNER

The Dinner will be held in the White Ensign Dining Room at the Naval Museum HMAS ALBATROSS on Saturday 28th August, 1999, the day prior to the Air Day (for those wishing to stay overnight). The Dinner will commence at 1900 to sit down at 1930. Dress lounge suits. Cost \$30.00 per head. Looking forward to seeing everyone there to have what I am sure will be an enjoyable evening. As you know we could

not have our Annual Dinner last year because of all the work involved with the Re-Union so lets make up for it this year. Those wishing to purchase tickets prior to the Dinner (preferable) can send cheques to FAAAA (NSW) Inc. PO Box 28, Nowra, NSW 2541. Those wishing to advise their attendance and pay on the night can ring me on (02) 4441 2901 or Max on (02) 4421 6042.

Mike Heneghan



News from the Divisions

Secretary: Mr Mike Heneghan
PO Box 28, Nowra NSW 2541
Phone/Fax: (02) 4441 2901

NEW SOUTH WALES



Not a great deal of news to pass on this issue, things have been reasonably quiet of late.

The last Museum 'Fly-in' day was one of great disappointment. The fatal crash of the Wirraway was most distressing to say the least. Attendance on the day was down too so that was not the best either.

Our Division is not involved in catering services on airdays now, the Museum has decided to provide and man all the food outlet services itself so we have lost our only fund raising activity which is a disappointment too. We do hold a permit to conduct raffles and it is our intention to send out a raffle book (tickets @ \$2.00 each) to each NSW Division member with the next issue of 'Slipstream'. We have been given an oil painting which will be the first prize on

offer. The painting is of 'The Bounty' framed and is the work of the very talented artist John Downton. I hope members will support the raffle and so help to keep our Annual subs at a minimum. Up until now it was the income from the Airdays food stall that made up the short fall between our income and annual running expenses. The Committee is going to see if the raffle venture can fill the gap so as to lessen the need to increase annual dues.

We are holding An Anniversary dinner this year on August 28th, 1999. Vice President Nev Newbold is in charge of arrangements - hope you can support the night (if you live close enough).

All from me this time, hope all is well with everyone.

Max Altham

QUEENSLAND

Secretary: Trevor Tite,
37 Miles Street,
Caboolture 4510
Ph: (07) 5499 3809

Division address:
Maii. Street Realty,
13A King Street,
Caboolture, Qld.4510

Daily orders tell me that it's time again to write the Queensland Story. Our Secretary, who is Trevor Tite, 37 Miles Street, Caboolture 4510 (07) 5499 3809 keeps giving me little reminders when it's close to the final day.

We had an excellent Anzac Day march in Brisbane. Huge crowd and they gave us a great reception. We (the Navy) were last off so we had a long wait in the sun. A band slotted in behind us with a faster than usual beat. We'd just about mastered the pace as we reached the saluting base. The Qld Governor and Premier gave us a 'well done' etc. - called out to us - probably because we march rather than saunter along.

We were all glad to get to Bulimba Army Sergeant's mess for a few cold ones, I can tell you. The Colonel C.O. welcomed us but couldn't figure out why we go there. I told him that after HMAS MORETON closed, we had to find somewhere by the water. He enjoyed a bit of a joke and they want us back again. There was 65 or so of us there so the Army get outnumbered considerably. The food was nice, albeit a bit slow in coming. It's hard to get it right when other people are doing the job.

Warren Walters was up here and marched again with us.

He had his lady friend, Maria, from California with him and she fitted in very well with our mob. Next year could see a big change in his life!

On Sunday June 13, 40 of us are going out on the steam tug 'Forceful' from the Maritime Museum wharf in Brisbane. It goes out into the bay and after a good lunch heads back up the river. This time there is to be a 'gun battle' with Fort Lytton. A gun of sorts will be mounted on the bow to frighten everyone. A report on the event should follow later in this Newsletter.

Alan Arnell attended the Memorial Service for the USS Frank E. Evans/Melbourne disaster, at Hyde Park, Sydney. It was the 30th Anniversary reunion and held on Thursday 3rd June at the War Memorial and onwards to the George St. RSL Club. Some of those attending from the FAA were: Jim Eagles, Max Altham, Skinhead (Greg) Kelson, Albert Riley, Shady Lane Fred Rubley, Dan McCutchin, Des Rogers, Bob Koumans, Bob Maughan, Stroppey Snow, J.P. Kelly, Mack Dun and Ian Strathfield.



Queensland cont'd . . .

Al spoke to USN CPO Larry Malilay who was the last man to be rescued out of the drink. Guess who the 'lift driver' was? The humble pilot, Albert Riley (remember he was the one who took his Venom for a drink in Sydney Harbour in 1962). Al says they all enjoyed catching up with acquaintances on the day and send his regards to all. Thanks for your report, Alan (Burrie).

John Riley dropped in a copy of a newspaper cutting re the forthcoming Review of Service Entitlement Anomalies in respect of South East Asian Service 1955-75. The Review is calling for submissions from interested individuals and groups, addressed to: The Secretary, South East Asia 1955-75 Review, Department of Defence, Russell Offices R1-1-DO30, Canberra, ACT 2600

No later than 9th July, 1999. The Review will report to the Government by 29th October, 1999. The Report will deal with service as follows:

RAAF Ubon - Thailand

Service with the Naval Component of the FESR (comparing the conditions prescribed for the Naval Contingent with those Personnel of the other 2 services)

RAAF Butterworth and service in Malaysia during the confrontation with Indonesia.

So, we may be moving a bit closer to acceptance. I've already sent a submission to Bruce Scott and will send a copy to the Review to make sure it gets there. I submitted as President of Qld. Division, on behalf of FAA and other Naval Personnel. I went through my Federal Member, Peter Slipper, and he was going to try and arrange for me to have a brief meeting with Bruce Scott. That's still outstanding.

We've decided to press ahead with a mini reunion in Bundaberg next year and I've asked Harry Harkness and Ron Forrest to start checking out availability of the RSL again etc. aiming for around May, 2000. More info as it comes to light. Harry tells me that the Council are very keen to support functions in Bundaberg, being the year of the Games etc.

Had a call from Terry Banks, Maryborough, recently and he tells me he's now an advocate for Vet. Affairs/Defence Dept. matters and that he's having a fair bit of success. Anyone wishing to discuss matters with him can contact him on (07) 4121 3372. Good one Terry.

It was sad that Don Vincent passed on recently. Trevor Tite and others attended the service up near Noosa. Ernie Maud is pretty crook and Bob Peacock had a heart attack and is now home again and feeling better. Rex Day has had a rough time in April. Heart attack and double by pass. They operated on a Sunday. It was that urgent. Sorry for missing you on the list in the Newsletter, Rex. Rex is home again and recovering well.

Shorty Neilsen made it to the Anzac Day do - it was his birthday as well. Well done, Shirley and Peter McDonald for getting the lad there. Shorty has to use a wheelchair now. Marian stayed home, looked after by family and friends. She's not up to travelling. It's been tough for her immobile and weak. One of her drugs (to control seizures) was too high a level, causing a number of problems - speech, weakness etc. We're getting the levels down now and pray for an improvement. My brother, Peter, is here full time which is a godsend. I've sold my Rental Management Section and am endeavouring to sell the Sales Office so I can spend more time at home ASAP. We have a lot of help from the Blue Nurses, Palliative Care ladies and friends. Marian asks me to send her love to all.

Dulcie Blair and Lorraine Tite have organised a couple of ladies days at the Treasury Casino and they're well attended and enjoyed by all.

Ron & Gwen Powell, Paddy & Jan Williamson set off just after Anzac Day on a caravanning trip around the traps. Van chassis strengthened to cope with the extra weight of refreshments. I know they'll be having a great time wherever they go. Had a long letter from Ian & Florence Henderson again. They're in the Centre now and enjoying their tour immensely. Ian phoned me at Bulimba on Anzac Day to say they missed us and were in Port Augusta. Ian marched with the RSL mob there and they had a good day. Ian has finally allowed Florence to drive the rig and she actually overtook another vehicle. I can see who'll eventually be doing most of the driving.

Max Wilson called me to say that Les Allen ex Nam (engines) 1951-57 had passed away. Les lived in Bowen and was quite an identity there. We are sending separate details to Bob Perkins (Ed.) for the Vale section. Max is fighting fit - playing a lot of bowls and sends his regards to all.

Report from Trevor Tite re the day on the 'Forceful'.

On Sunday 13th June, 40 members including family and friends had a very enjoyable day out on the Steam Tug, Forceful. Weather was perfect. An informative commentary was given by the skipper during our tun. On the way out to the bay and on our return a mock battle was staged as we passed the Old Fort Lytton Station. A bit of noise and smoke. Unfortunately the Forceful couldn't mount a gun and were restricted to smoke bombs only. No winner, so a draw being a good result. Overall a very good day was had by all.

Well, that's it for now, so best regards to all.

Barry Lister, President

TRUTH STRANGER THAN FICTION

Courtesy originally Sandgate Sub-Section Newsletter and thence
FESR NEWS



Abe Lincoln was elected to Congress in 1846.

John F. Kennedy was elected to Congress in 1946.

Lincoln was elected President in 1860.

Kennedy was elected President in 1960.

Both names, Lincoln & Kennedy, contain seven letters.

Both were particularly concerned with Civil rights.

Both their wives lost children while in the Whitehouse.

Both President's were shot on a Friday.

Both were shot in the head.

Both were in the presence of their wives.

The Secretary of each warned them not to go to the theatre or to Dallas respectively.

Lincoln's secretary was named Kennedy.

Kennedy's secretary was named Lincoln.

Both were assassinated by Southerners.

Both were succeeded by Southerners.

Both successors were named Johnson.

Andrew Johnson, who succeeded Lincoln, was born in 1808.

Lyndon Johnson, who succeeded Kennedy, was born in 1908.

John Wilkes Booth who assassinated Lincoln was born in 1839.

Lee Harvey Oswald who assassinated Kennedy was born in 1939.

Both their names have 15 letters.

Booth ran from a theatre and was caught in a warehouse.

Oswald ran from a warehouse and was caught in a theatre.

Both Oswald and Booth were assassinated before trial.

. . . .Spooky, Ain't it?





VICTORIA

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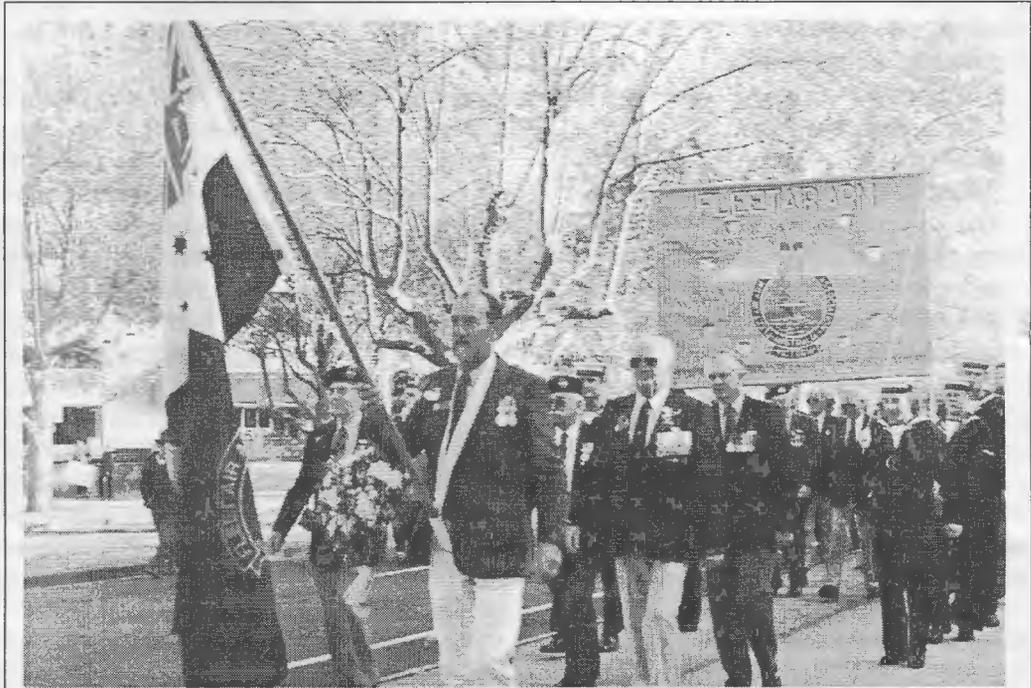


On behalf of the Victoria Division may I convey to all members where ever you may be, greetings and best wishes.

its nautical atmosphere will be very appropriate for the evening.

Another reason this venue was chosen, our Annual RAN

Anzac Day 99, the weather did us proud down in old Melbourne Town, the FAA Contingent was very well represented, with approximately sixty on parade, including a visitor from the Queensland Division, Bernie Brennan. It was pleasing to see some of our newer members participating this year and, of course, all our old hands. Talking of old hands, two notable members missing this year, Geoff Litchfield and Frank Crowe, if my memory is serving me right, it would be the first time these gentlemen have missed the march.



ANZAC DAY 1999 - Victoria Division on Parade.
Flag Bearer: Ian Stanfield, from left to right: John Irkin, Ron Christie, Ralph Mayer, Rob Partington, Warren Kemp & Bernie Brennan

As usual our 'Groupies' followed the march and gave the usual applause and chant 'Up the Birdies' (Rob Partington said to me he wasn't sure what they meant by that chant?) None the less their efforts are very much appreciated by all and I must confess their cheering does stimulate other members of the public to do likewise. Thanks Ladies.

Talking of old hands, on behalf of the Victorian Division I would like to extend a 'Welcome Aboard' to Ivor Janzs and John Mann who joined our Association on Anzac Day and may their membership be enjoyable and long. Also once again our Banner Party was manned by serving members of the RAN from the ships company of HMAS CERBERUS.

The march was followed by the usual Reunion and Spit Roast Lunch. During the lunch one of our newer members, Rob Earle, was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation for his generous contribution to the well being of the Division. The award was presented by the State President, Ralph Mayer. Well done Robert.

A special thank you to our Social Co-Ordinator for organising another successful day. Also thanks to the following members for their generous donations of goods as raffle prizes - Anne Taylor and Robert Earle.

This year the Division will be conducting an Anniversary Dinner on the 28th August, 1999 aboard the MV XANADU, moored at the Western Port Marina, Hastings. A number of members have taken the option of Dinner and Accommodation package on offer. The unique venue with

FAA Memorial Ceremony will take place the following day, the 29th August, 1999 at HMAS CERBERUS, which is only a short distance away.

Final arrangements for the Dinner and Accommodation packages are being compiled at the moment and as soon as they are known, all participants will be notified, but the Memorial Ceremony details are as promulgated in the last edition of Slipstream. Just in case you missed them, here they are again: The ceremony will commence at 1100 at the Our Lady of the Sea Chapel, followed by a brief Wreath Laying Service in the Memorial Gardens. On completion of ceremonies everyone is invited to the WOSSM for light refreshments, but please if you have not already done so, contact the Social Co-Ordinator Val Christie on 9764 5542 if you are attending so as she can organise the catering arrangements. Thank you.

As previously reported the All Ships Reunion at Ulverstone, Tasmania to be held over the 5th, 6th and 7th November 1999, at the present time we have twelve Victoria Division members signed up for our little tour of the Apple Isle.

Till we meet again, Yours Aye,

Ron Christie, Hon. Secretary



Secretary:
Alan Andrews,
P.O. Box 88, Exeter, TAS.7275
Phone: (03) 6394 3448

TASMANIA



A few things have happened since our last mailing.

Meetings and luncheons at various places, ANZAC Day, a

visit by U.S.S. Carl Vinson at Hobart, winter has arrived, old friends contacted and so it goes on.

Firstly one of our luncheon/meetings held in Launceston was again well attended by the same faces and all had a good old yap and the ladies didn't win much money on the money machinery, but it will help to keep the club in the black.

Then came ANZAC Day and the Division fell in and marched at Ulverstone R.S.L. because of the total numbers in this N.W. Coast area are fairly small everyone joins in the one big parade. So in column of six it stretches a long way. A nice day, a good meal, a good chin wag, good company - who could wish for more, eh Gus!!

Our last meeting/luncheon was held in Hobart. Sadly I couldn't be there but it went over well I'm told.

People - Ron Pennington is still having his health problems but he is in good hands at the Royal Hobart Hospital. His determined attitude alone will see him through. Ron is a good bloke - keep it up mate we wish you well.

John Nobes is well after his hospital jaunt in Melbourne for throat cancer and has made a full recovery. Our best wishes to John.

Just recently, in Launceston, I chanced upon two old mates - Walter & Clifford Bachelor both Nam (E). Walter still lives in Launceston. Clifford whom I haven't seen since Nowra 1957 did live in Melbourne but is now living in N.Z. He is in Tassy having treatment for an ailment that had him in a wheel chair. But not now thanks to the right treatment by the right medicos and the right guts and determination. I can still remember the big black Humber Super Snipe car they had at Albatross and the many extremely comfortable trips to Sydney and back. Those days they knew how to put comfort on the road and as solid as a brick out house.

U.S.S. CARL VINSON visited Hobart on its way home to U.S. from a deployment in the Gulf. Thanks to our permanent naval friends in Hobart, our President, Geoff Singline, was able to get 5 of our members a guided tour of this massive vessel. Geoff Singline, Bill Lowe, Alan Andrews, Les Cube and myself. The ship anchors at Ralphs Bay about 10 miles south of the city, remember she's a Nuke powered ship. Navy supplied the boat ride down and back in the old pussers work boat - complete with the screaming 'Gray Marine' engine - a 6-71 GM. There can't be many of those old 42 footers left now. Anyway 45 minutes and we

were down there. To describe her as massive will have to do till they invent another word. Up around 100,000 tons, flight deck 1100 feet long (Sydney & Vengeance 690ft) I can't remember her width. The angled deck length is 700ft. She carried 6000 crew, 86 aircraft, 6 squadrons. Aircraft include FA18 Hornets, F14 Tomcats, Intruders, Airborne Early warning A/C, half a dozen big choppers. Handled by 4 catapults.

Our guide was Lieut. Scott Seyfarth from Nebraska. He drives a Hornet.

Speed of a Hornet off the catapult is 170 knots 160 feet, land on 145 knots.

I've sent some photos if some can be published it would help. A lot of other stats were spoken but I can't remember them all.

When she goes back to U.S. all her A/C and crew will go to various establishments and the ship goes into dry dock for major refit. Expected to take around 2 years.

After about a 4 hour inspection and guided tour of what we were allowed to see for all the A/C and equipment - spare engines - wing sections - motor boats - and A/C lifts - huge 40 ton mobile crane etc. Nothing seemed to be crowded, plenty of space, certainly all neatly stowed and in its place. But room to move.

If ever the chance comes your way to have a look at one of these giants, don't let it slip by - the might and power is certainly there.

I'm jumping around a bit here but at the ANZAC Day celebrations at Ulverstone we were able to get a photo of our oldest member Stan (Fishy) Mackrill and one of our youngest members Ken Allen. Our oldest member served on the original Albatross in 1937, went to the U.K. in her and took delivery of HMAS HOBART - light cruiser. He served all through WWII then went to Japan with the Occupation Forces.

A good bit of news this time, they say all things comes to them that wait.

All our best from Tassy.
Jake (Matt Jacobs)



l to r: Ken Allen & Stan Mackrill



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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Kalamunda, WA 6076
Tel: (08) 9293 0229

Secretary:
Colin Bushe-Jones,
PO Box 8336, Stirling Street,
Perth, WA 6841

Hello Australia, have a beautiful and comfortable winter, snug wishes to all our fellow members and a thank you to all people who keep our Association together, particularly the fastidious gang who put together this journal.

First of all, must thank Bevan Daws for standing in for me last issue, though I think the word should be 'skidded', not conned. Anyway, well done. Whilst on the subject of Bevan, it was whispered to me that he and Kaye were seen screaming at a certain stage show . . . that man . . . Hot August Night . . . with fellow member Lou Burns and wife.

Down to business. Anzac Day has come and gone again, all too soon. We had a beautiful roll call and some fifty members, shoulder to shoulder, six deep, stepped off and some forty minutes later passed the dais, eyes right and onwards to the form up in the area of all the divisions. Super weather, super and bigger again crowds from last years' service. So the papers lead us to believe, but anyway it's just great to have the special day to remember the fallen and us, our fellow mates, still around. "Lest We Forget".

The address by the president of the R.S.L. (W.A.) was controversial, brought a public outcry from ex members and public. As stated, just to name a couple of issues, Government spending on defences should be increased and the show stopper, use of the defence forces to help stop the flow of illegal drugs into the country and their distribution on the streets.

On a lighter side, some new faces appeared at the march. First timer, ex CPO (AE) Bob Gilliam, not sure if you went higher in rank from when we last served together. Bob, please forgive me if I demoted you. A great member of the Albatross Rugby Club, very smart on the field at ducking and weaving. Bob lives with wife and family in the suburb of Kingsley. Bob works with Qantas Airways. Still a spanner man.

Another visitor was a Nowra I.D. Pancho Walters, who travelled over here before Anzac Day to stay with Theo and Amy, down Rockingham way for a few days. Actually he was passed around a bit, a few days with Keith Murdoch and Pat, also Kerry Sojan and wife. By the time for him to return home he looked fit and well with so many slaps on the back, not to mention the good old Swan Lager etc. etc. By the way, Pancho, that photo album was very well received. Come back one day with the wife. Welcome is our claim to fame, and that goes for anyone visiting W.A. just give a ring.

So many other faces were present, but like all around me, if not written down, one forgets. While on the subject of vets, an interesting news item was written in the Australian Newspaper 22.4.99. In short, by D.D. McNicoll . . . more than 8000 WWII servicemen are fighting their last great battle to overturn a fourteen year old Government ruling that prevents them from claiming full TPI pension rights . . . It goes on a Mr Dening, is calling members to subscribe to \$50 each to build up a fighting fund to lobby the veterans minister, Mr B. Scott. He got almost 100% support. I suggest contact your local R.S.L. club and also go to local Australian

Newspaper office to check on the whole story.

W.A. social life has been on the low side so far in '99, apart from Anzac days. Hotel luncheon is coming up within the next couple of months. Members will receive a letter giving venue, date and cost in due course.

I would like to try a new idea of having guest input to our section of the WA news in Slipstream and the lucky people are . . . Keith and Sue from Mandurah, a seaside resort about 60km from Perth.

Information regarding the activities of Keith Doncon and Sue Grovermans. Since Sue moved to the West to take up life with me, life has been very busy catching up on long lost friends. We recently had Phil Simms (ex writer of Albatross from Queensland) staying with us. She attended the communications reunion at Fremantle with 300 other members of the communications branch, Australia and world wide. While Phil was here we had a mini reunion attended by the following: Kipper Britain (O), Barry Dunbar (AE), Mal Goss (AVN), John Green (AVN), Mick and Diedre Horne (TIFFI and RO), Jenny Roger (RO), Kerry Sojan (AE), Noel O'Leary, (AE), Lorraine Mahnkoph (MTD) nee Burningham, Bevan Daws (AE). We had a great day and are planning to hold future smokies. To end up on that smokey, the name Mahnkoph is the other half of Lorraine, the great Morrie, who didn't make it due to being on the sick list at that time. Get well and keep well mate.

We have just returned from a three week tour of the eastern states and while there visited other Ex's, mostly from SA. First up Laurie Rinehart (ex ABQMG) and wife Leslie (Muir). Also in touch with Rodney Venning (AVN) and Bev Campbell (ex cook). Last but not least, Mike Stubbington (AE). If anyone is interested in our get togethers, our phone number is (08) 9581 1947. Address K. Doncon 43 Sandiland Avenue, Mandurah WA 6210.

Over to me: Before I end off, I must give praise, and very high praise to two founding members of the Fleet Airarm Association for their very hard at it, nose to the grindstone sort of stuff, over the many years they have held office. Theo Bushe-Jones, Secretary et al and Ron Tate, who has been handling the dollars . . . treasurer. Both stood down at the last AGM, and may I add, both are not in the best of health, but we are in great company, what with their record. Both still attend our meetings, just being on the sidelines for a change, and liking it! Thanks again, Theo and Ron, Bravo Zulu.

One more new face has joined from the eastern states, Ron Forbes (WOAVN), with wife. Welcome. Still on the home run, a few well wishes are in line. First of all I would like to mention a warm thanks to Brian Joss and wife Elva and Keith Murdoch and wife Pat for the well stocked platters they brought to the club on Anzac day.

Amy Bushe-Jones, on behalf of all the members, best wishes and well being and that goes for anybody else on the sick list.

Colin Bushe-Jones is our new secretary and, yes, is the brother of Theo . . . No more said! Welcome on board, Colin. Address: PO Box 8336 Stirling Street, Perth WA 6841.

One more member of WA needs a thank you and that's Harry Webster. A kind and gentle man is our Harry who or what is never too much to ask of, also Harry's wife, Maureen.

Well done!

Wishing Rose Swanson cheerios - straight down the middle Rose, interesting story!

Last bit, at our branch meeting it was decided to hold our next meeting on a trial basis, for a numbers game. So the story goes, on the 8th August. A Sunday meeting. First

up a BYO, BBQ and drinks will be held at 1100 to 1330. Hold the meeting, then carry on regardless. If any enquiries or information is needed call me. By the way families and friends are most welcome.

That's it! Once more for this quarter, from all members and wives, sunny WA, God bless and may he be with you in force.

John Green

PS, Please ring with any dits or any news or to say hello, Ph: (08) 9330 7386.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Secretary: Dinsley Cooper,
17 Athol Avenue, Blair Athol, SA 5084



Having struggled to clear the gutters after the big down pour we had in May, I've just about brought the house up to winter conditions which includes stacking a few Slipstreams in a pile along side the fireplace ready for sorting and storage. The TV is getting the big push and catching up on correspondence is the order of the day. A large welcome to winter for all our readers and I do include that odd bloke that sits in the back of the meeting room most meeting nights.

The State Association did itself proud on ANZAC DAY last, we had a good turnout and the new route wasn't that difficult to follow. The weather was fabulous and those who could squeeze into their winter uniform looked a treat. Grant Jesser and Peter Coulson got into their winter uniform with medals flashing in the early morning sun and led our Division at a brisk pace. I have an excellent photograph of Grant, Peter and the whipping boy taking the salute with the Division right behind and more importantly, all in step!

After the Service we all gathered at the Hotel Adelaide with exception of Peter who made up a lame excuse of having to stay with and be attentive to the Senior Naval Officer for SA, Sandy Coulson. Anyway he missed a good lunch with good company to boot. One thing that has come out of this years march is the fact that we badly need a new and colourful banner. Given that the TV camera commentary is limited to about 20 seconds, we need to display just who we are particularly with that knuckle-head Philip Satchel calling us The Fleet Arm, can't even read his fact sheet correctly. So, things are on the boil regarding Banners.

Over May we had the privilege of spending some time with the 723 Squadron officers and men and one lovely girl who is a learner pilot would you believe. Peter invited the CO Steve Elms and his mob who had flown in RAAF Base Edinburgh on exercise to join us on a visit to the aviation museum at Port Adelaide followed by a BBQ lunch at the Keswick Barracks. What a great lot they were too and I believe they enjoyed the time together. Oh yes! I have another photograph of our member Graham Rohrsheim with arms moving in all directions whilst telling of his many experiences to those very young looking pilots and crew one of whom is cradling his logbook. While at the museum the President presented the PR person Mrs

Gaynor Tilley, a collection of text books covering the newly acquired Wessex helicopter number 34. And yes, we will definitely be spending more time with functions etc. at their delightful aviation museum.



The following Saturday Dinsley had organised a winery bus tour up in the Barossa Valley for all those interested and included the 723 Squadron members as well. I believe the day was a great success with a good lunch at the Tanunda Hotel followed by a lazy bus ride home via several distractions.

The executive committee have acted on those changes we all voted for in April regarding changing our regular monthly meeting to a bi monthly meeting. Our next meeting, will be held at Naval House on the third Friday of July, do come along.

I caught up with Peter Penny while at the museum and I figure he won't hang around for our next meeting as he has to discover Australia. I believe our member John Saywell and Moyra are also planning to get away and see the sights and I conclude that, as our ex treasurer, he has finally discovered how to transfer our vast holdings out of the Bankco De Brazil.

The Association are planning to be involved in some way with the 817 Squadron presentation on the 25th July 1999 at our local township of Goolwa. It appears that the township have adopted 817 as their own.

And finally, a quote to close off with all be it soccer season and all . . .

"The FA are still optimistic about England's bid to stage the World Cup in twenty thousand and six". Peter Snow, BBC2
Roger Harrison, Hon whipping boy



SA members Des Reardon and Graham Bailey with visitor Peter Penny from Nowra at the Keswick Barracks BBQ

Establishment of Australia's First Naval Air Base HMAS ALBATROSS

Conclusion

Stan Lehmann joined PENGUIN at Nowra on 7 August 1948 and was one of the commissioning crew. He recalls his introduction to the Motor Transport branch and became the first station bus driver:

"I was employed at the Base in one of the hangars which had been converted to a garage. We had a couple of cars, a few motor bikes and light trucks. There were very few cars around the town in those days.

After a couple of weeks an old bus was sent to the Base so that personnel could be taken into Nowra for shore leave. The problem was there was no-one to drive it. I had never driven anything but an old farm tractor, never held a licence or driven on a public road. But I put my hand up and said that I could drive the bus.

The Petty Officer in charge of the garage got me to drive it around the hangar a few times and seemed satisfied. He then took me to the Captain and told him that he had found a bus driver. The Captain promptly wrote my name on a licence and signed it and thereby I became the first Base bus driver."

Under the command of Commander H.J.F. Lane OBE RN, HMAS ALBATROSS was commissioned, the White Ensign was broken from the control tower flagstaff on 31 August 1948, just three days after the 20th CAG commissioned half a world away in Northern Ireland. Captain R.G. Poole DSC RN who was delayed in England, assumed command of ALBATROSS on 27 September 1948 and continued preparations for the Air Group and their aircraft to arrive. This arduous work involved making the living quarters and workshops habitable, cleaning and painting the tin huts, setting up offices and restoring the electrical and mechanical fittings. When it rained during this period; access to the airfield was recommended only to those wearing gum boots.

AND WHAT DID THE PRESS HAVE TO SAY?

The following article appeared in a local newspaper in the first week of September 1948.

"HMAS ALBATROSS Commissioned

On Tuesday morning, in glorious sunshine, at nine thirty promptly, HMAS ALBATROSS, the first Royal Australian Naval Air Station, was commissioned and a beautiful White Ensign flew proudly from the control tower of the Nowra Aerodrome.

The Officers and men, under Acting-Captain, Commander H.J.F. Lane, OBE, RN, saluted the flag as it floated out on the breeze after Yeoman Napier had called the hour of commission. It was indeed an historic moment for Australia, when Australia came into line with the other great powers of the world and provided the nucleus of its own Naval Air Arm.

Residents of Nowra, who have a warm spot in their hearts for the crew of the SHOALHAVEN, will be interested to know that Commander R. Rhoades, DSC, RAN, had the silk Ensign, which was used on Tuesday morning, presented to him when he was the Captain of the SHOALHAVEN. He is now stationed at Nowra as second in command and was present at the official ceremony.

Other leading officers present were Commander (E) A.S.J. Banks, Air Engineer Officer, with Lieutenant Commander The Hon D.W.E. Chubb, RN and Lieutenant Angell, secretary to the acting-captain.

Commander Lane will control the drome until the arrival of Captain R.G. Poole RN, who is expected in late September.

All the familiar terms of the RAAF will be used when speaking of the drome, such as taxi-ways etc, and there will be a special part of the drome where the pilots will learn to land their aircraft the same as on the deck of a carrier. For the Nowra drome will be an essential training ground for the Naval Air Arm and the first fifty recruits are expected next week. These will be technical recruits, and all phases of technical teaching, such as meteorology and the mechanical side of aircraft handling, will be taught at the drome.

It is expected that early next year about one thousand officers and men will be in training here and the number is expected to rise to fifteen hundred in 1951. The exact number will depend on how aircraft materials are available and the expansion of the Naval Air Arm. Present ship's company is about one hundred and forty,

including Officers, Chief Petty Officers, Petty Officers and Naval Ratings."

The task of setting up a training environment; providing classrooms, accommodation, galleys, stores support; and additionally having to make the necessary provision for married personnel was enormous. The small township of Nowra simply could not cope with the influx of personnel and the normal assimilation problems were encountered — and eventually solved.

On top of that the newly commissioned Air Base had only 7 months to prepare for the 20th CAG disembarkation in Jervis Bay.

Notwithstanding the magnitude of the task, Naval planning called for the establishment of the following schools at ALBATROSS. It also called for the eventual establishment of engineer long courses at HMAS NIRIMBA.

School of Aircraft Maintenance-Engineering.

School of Aircraft Maintenance-Electrical.

School of Aircraft Maintenance-Radio.

School of Aircraft Ordnance.

Photographic School.

Meteorological School.

School of Aircraft Handling.

Motor Transport Driving School.

Motor Transport Maintenance School.

and

Pilot and Observer Training Schools.

As part of the Aircraft Handling School a Dummy Deck was painted on concrete replicating an aircraft carrier flight deck. This now forms part of the main deck of the Australian Naval Aviation Museum.

In October 1948 the RAAF transferred 14 Supermarine Spitfires to RANAS NOWRA to be used to train technical sailors on maintaining aircraft and later they were used to train Aircraft Handlers on the Dummy Deck. They arrived in large boxes and were put together by the original batch of loaned Air Mechanics from the RN.

In the latter part of 1948 the first of the Wirraway's and also a Tiger Moth arrived to keep the pilots busy. Four Vought Vengeance aircraft arrived by road from RAAF Richmond and soon put into good use at the Fireground by the Aircraft Handlers.

Brian Dunne (L/A Phot) recalled these times:

"Long before the arrival of the SYDNEY and the 20th Carrier Air Group with the first of the Sea Furies and the Fireflies, the student airframe and engine mechanics ran up the (Spitfire) engines for practice. These aircraft were later given to the aircraft handlers to push around the dummy deck and also to expose them to the dangers of operating near aircraft with engines running. The final indignity was when the aircraft were doused with AVGAS (aviation gasoline, usually contaminated) and set alight for the fire crews to practice putting out aircraft fires. If only someone could have foreseen that thirty years later a Spitfire in flying condition would be worth a million dollars."

Training Schools were opened in the hangars. What we now know as 'C' Hangar became The Technical School under the command of Commissioned Aircraft Officer Harold H. Kent, RN while next door in 'D' Hangar was the Air Ordnance School under Commissioned Air Ordnance Officer R.W. Dunne, RN.

Jim Napier was one of the first students to enter the hallowed halls of the School of Aircraft Maintenance as it became known and tells his story as he remembers those days:

"When I joined up in 1948 I went off to Flinders Naval Depot to become de-civilianised and become a proper sailor. On completion of our three months New Entry training I was posted to HMAS ALBATROSS. As there was a coal strike on it took us two days to arrive at our destination.

Flinders Naval depot was renown for its three climates a day weather. We all thought it would have better weather at Nowra but to our surprise it was just rain with local floods and the rail line

washed out at Coalcliff.

On our arrival at the base we all lined up at the guardhouse, which is still in the same area. From there we started off on our 'draft in Routine' - marching in the rain on muddy unsealed roads. To get to your hut you walked on duck boards as there were no paths.

We used to say dress of the day was 'Sea Boots and Lanyards'. We had all been issued with sea boots and we certainly needed them.

Our accommodation was in the Recruit Huts down near the soccer field, where Hunter Block is now. They consisted of tin huts and held 20 sailors: they were renowned for their wind tunnel effect. There was a toilet at the end of the hut and showers outside. The showers seemed to be miles away on cold winter days and nights. Hot water depended on the Duty Stoker to keep the boiler up. The nights were very cold during the winter.

On the corner of Roc Road was the wet and dry Happy Hawkins Canteen. The wet canteen was out of bounds to the Recruits. Down the road lived Master at Arms, Frank Edwards and his wife where the Power House is now.

Our first meals were in a temporary galley situated where the Dry Cleaners later set up shop. The new Galley was built opposite the Sick Bay.

After settling in we were put into three watch's for duties which included messmen duty, 1st Lieutenants party, church party on Sunday, shore patrols in Nowra (leave expired at midnight), security patrols on the Air Station (usually on foot) and runway patrol clearing livestock and Kangaroo's off the runways before flying could start. While waiting for our Basic Course, which could be anything up to six months, we worked for the First Lieutenant mowing lawns, cleaning heads; painting anything that did not move.

Daily routine was to fall in on Roc Road then be marched to our place of work."

The Safety Equipment and Aircraft Handlers School were opened under the command of Commission Pilot Bill Crozer, RN who was a Rating Pilot during the war. He was the Walrus pilot embarked on board the battlecruiser HMS REPULSE when, with the *Prince of Wales* was sunk by Japanese torpedo bombers off the east coast of Malaya. Fortunately for Bill, REPULSE catapulted her Walrus off just before the Japanese aircraft struck. Bill watched the battle from the air. During his time in ALBATROSS Bill helped plan the layout of the Dummy Deck, where later most of the disembarked aircraft handler training was carried out with outstanding results. During the whole time the RAN operated carriers (1948 until 1982) no aircraft handler was killed on the flight decks of HMA ships, a record not equalled by any other Navy.

In 1949 NAS Nowra was beginning to look and operate more like a Naval Air Station. Beecroft Range had now been taken over by the RAN to be used as a bombing and gunnery range by the Fleet Air Arm. One of the many problems at that time was the welfare of the men and in particular that of providing amenities when ashore in Nowra. At that time the pubs closed at 1800 and the only entertainment available was the Roxy Cinema. There was no place where a sailor could go and relax in town.

The following article appeared in the Shoalhaven News on 19 April 1949:

"PUBLIC MEETING SEEKS WAYS AND MEANS OF PROVIDING AMENITIES FOR ALBATROSS"

A public meeting was held at The School of Arts on Wednesday 13 April with the objective of establishing an amenities centre in Nowra for the benefit of the personnel of HMAS ALBATROSS.

It had been felt for some time that something of this kind would be of great benefit to the men of ALBATROSS, as so many of them have nowhere to go and little to do when on leave. The idea is to have a centre to which men can go when in Nowra, to play games, write letters, read, or rest, as they feel inclined.

The Shire President (Councillor Cox) who convened the meeting occupied the chair and after briefly stating the object of the meeting, extended a welcome to Lieutenant R. Jolly RN and Mr W.T.J. Crozer (Commissioned Pilot) RN, of HMAS ALBATROSS, invited those present to submit suggestions.

He reminded those present that: 'HMAS ALBATROSS brings about development from which the whole area directly benefits. From the national stand-point, he said we feel that it is a duty to welcome all personnel and offer the hand of fellowship to them. We want to make them happy and feel they are at home among us and in some small way, bring them happiness.'

Lieutenant Jolly, on behalf of Captain R.G. Poole RN (Commanding Officer of HMAS ALBATROSS) expressed gratitude that something was being done in this way. He said Captain Poole appreciates very much the move on the part of the people of Nowra to provide amenities for the personnel of the Station.

He mentioned, however, that all labour must be voluntary, and that as far as huts are concerned, those at the Air Station are all earmarked and cannot be used for any other purpose other than that for which they have been marked. He expressed warm appreciation for the kindness extended by the Nowra RSL to the personnel at the Station at Christmas and said all were very grateful Lieutenant Jolly took the opportunity to appeal to those who are in a position to do so, to offer hospitality to the sailors when on leave. He said if someone would provide accommodation for these men when they get their seven days sick leave, it would be very much appreciated.

Mr Crozer reminded the meeting that this was no temporary arrangement and that the numbers at the Station are going to increase. For those reasons, something of more or less permanent nature is needed.

As a result of this meeting a committee was formed consisting of two representatives from each of the thirteen organisations present."

The Shoalhaven Naval Centre became a reality, located behind what we now know as the Red Rose Cafe. It closed within seven months due to lack of support because of limitations placed on its use and lack of finances. A few months after the Centre opened its doors a PIX Magazine reporter visited Nowra and the Air Station and interviewed the Club Secretary who said:

"Our committee of 30 decided that the running of the club was a job for men. We have a paid manager and the town's business people make donations. There is money to run the club but no real sympathy for it. The townspeople are scared of a big influx of Navy personnel. Women are permitted on the premises only on special nights. When the PIX reporter asked why this was so, a Nowra publican fixed the reporter with an angry eye and demanded: 'Have you got a daughter?'"

It was the attitude at the time and looking back at both sides it was no wonder the Centre failed. Fortunately over the years times and attitudes changed. It was not until 1954 that the sailors got an appropriate amenities centre when the White Ensign Club was opened on Bridge Road, in a building which had once been the Nowra Maternity Hospital.

On 12 April 1949 HMAS SYDNEY sailed from England for Australia and preparations were well advanced to receive the aircraft, personnel and stores when they landed at the Jervis Bay wharf at Huskisson. Surveys were carried out of the route by road leading from Jervis Bay to RANAS Nowra, resulting in widening of the bridges and cutting down trees.

HMAS SYDNEY had eventually arrived and anchored in Jervis Bay on 25 May, ready to unload the Carrier Air Group as well as stores and the other aircraft. The two Supermarine Sea Otters were lowered over the side and took off from the sea to be first to land at RANAS NOWRA. The remaining aircraft, 27 Fairey Firefly Mark 5s and 27 Hawker Sea Fury Mark 11s were landed by aircraft lighters. From all accounts this operation, known as Operation Decant, went well. Commissioned Aircraft Officer Kent, in charge of hoisting the aircraft up from the decks of the aircraft lighter, with his doughty crew of crankmen working the handraulic crane, smoothly got the aircraft ashore. The aircraft were then towed to Jervis Bay airfield before being towed by road in convoys of eight to NAS Nowra.

The last convoy reached the base on Sunday 29 May and HMAS ALBATROSS was in business.



South Australia
President Peter Coulson
presenting The Aviation
Museum PR person Mrs
Gaynor Tilley with text
books covering the
Wessex helicopter.
Behind him can be seen
the CO of 723 Sqdn,
Steve Elms with Graham
Rohrsheim, Tony Reyne
Senior Pilot and others.

South Australia
President joining in on
one of Graham
Rohrsheim's exploits as
a pilot in the FAA
surrounded by
attentive listeners.



A group of 723 Sqdn
personnel checking out
the newly acquired
Wessex helicopter at
the Museum in Port
Adelaide.

