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Slipstream

Established HMAS Albatross 1957



723 Squadron 'Taipan Black'

Photograph by LSPHOT Brad Fullerton - RANAS Photographic Section



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PRACTICE RUN
FIREFLY, R.A.N.
John DOWNTON, F.B.A.S. F.R.A.S. A.S.M.A.



TAIPANS OVER THE SHOALHAVEN

(see Front Cover)

'Taipan Black', a formation of ten Navy Squirrel helicopters recently soared over the Shoalhaven area. Taipan is the callsign given to helicopters from 723 Squadron at HMAS Albatross. Not since 1987, when the Royal Australian Navy flew the Wessex helicopter, has a formation of this size been spotted in our skies.

The Navy helicopter training moved from Canberra to HMAS ALBATROSS two years ago and 723 Squadron is now responsible for the conversion of all Navy aircrew from conventional fixed wing aircraft to more complex helicopter operations.

The return of three helicopters and their crew from Wagga Wagga had allowed the squadron to attempt this large formation flight. A feat carried out due to the high degree of professionalism and dedication of all Squadron personnel, but particularly the Engineering Section.

A steady increase in the demands placed on the Defence Force coupled with the introduction of the Kaman Super Seasprite has seen a corresponding need to increase aircrew numbers in the Royal Australian Navy. 723 Squadron has displayed that they are well placed to meet these training needs.

723 Squadron is a multi-role squadron operating Aerospatiale AS350BA Squirrels.

The AS350BA Squirrel helicopters are for aircrew training and utility duties and support of Air Capable Ships within the Fleet.

Today the Squadron's duties include limited fleet support in range clearances and flight deck procedural training, and some embarked support on major warships. The squadrons primary role is Naval Lead In Helicopter Training (NLIHT), phase 2 Observer training, and Basic Aircrew course training.

AS350BAs operated from all helicopter capable RAN ships during the 1991 Gulf War. Sporting a new grey camouflage paint scheme they were fitted with updated avionics and a door mounted machine gun. Employment included shipping surveillance, top cover for helicopter boardings, mine searches and light logistics support.

EDITOR'S CORNER



As this edition prepares to go to press, the Australian Museum of Flight is preparing for the unveiling of the upgraded display by the Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral C A Ritchie AO RAN. The invitation to the event reads: *'This occasion will mark the completion of an extensive redevelopment of the displays which should greatly enhance the benefit of a visit to the Museum by members of the public. The date, 17 December 2003, marks the Centenary of Flight commemorating the first successful powered flight by a heavier than air machine by the Wright Brothers near Kittyhawk, North Carolina USA.'*

I consider this to be a very noble sentiment indeed, *'to greatly enhance the benefit of a visit to the Museum by members of the public'*. It may get kudos from the uninformed and succeed in getting people through the turnstiles, but at what cost to the thousands of ex-Fleet Air Arm personnel whose history the Museum is supposed to record and represent?

Judging by the number of complaints I have received relating to the paucity of display items relating to the FAA, I would suggest that the balance between 'Joe Public' and the Veterans, is very much in favour of 'Joe Public'.

In saying this, I have full respect for the efforts of those who have put in so much time and effort to bring the Museum to its current standard. However, there is a most apparent breach in what has been achieved and what the Museum's primary goals are supposed to be. Let me quote the five opening paragraphs of the Australian Naval Aviation Museum Memorandum of Association:

'The name of the Company is The Australian Naval Aviation Museum Foundation.

The objects for which the Company is established are:

(a) (i) To take over the funds and other assets and liabilities of the "Heritage Trust of the Royal Australian Navy Fleet Air Arm" the object of which Trust has been to ensure that as the years pass the story of the development of Australian Naval Aviation is faithfully recorded, preserved and presented with energy, thoroughness and dedication for the benefit of Australia and the Royal Australian Navy.

(ii) To ensure that the story of Aviation in the Royal Australian Navy is recorded by various media and that it will continue to be so recorded.

(iii) To ensure that the history of Aviation in the Royal Australian Navy of yesterday and today which is essentially the story of the deeds and sacrifices of many naval men and women who have served their sovereign and their country, in peace and in war, is preserved for the benefit of the people of Australia.

(iv) To ensure that the Naval Aviation Museum at the Royal Australian Navy Air Station, Nowra in the State of New South Wales ("the Museum") is preserved, maintained and expanded in furtherance of the objects of this Company.

(v) To ensure that the Museum will always contain, and serve as, a memorial to those who have lost their lives in the service of Naval Aviation in peace and war.'

The name of the Museum had the word 'NAVY' removed from its title, but this is no excuse to diminish the 'NAVY' in the exhibits.

It has been mentioned to me that there are very few ex-FAA volunteers at the Museum. Well, once upon a time there was a plethora of such people who descended upon the Museum at various intervals to clean the exhibits and scrub the decks. These people were not just locals, but from Sydney and Canberra. They were pleasant occasions with great camaraderie, unfortunately, the intimation that they were 'not required' didn't help in any shape or form. This has also been true of many non-service volunteers who wanted to be of help. The comment made by one Museum Director that, *'Ex-Fleet Air Arm personnel have to realise that the Museum is not a repository for their 'old tat', did nothing to further the cause either.*

Museum Director, Neil Ralph, has mentioned that the Museum may require some help in lobbying the Government to obtain aircraft that are coming out of service. NO ONE should have to lobby Navy or the Government. It should be automatic that such items pass to the Museum, after all, as the Memorandum states, *'is preserved for the benefit of the Australian people'*. I don't see any mention of scrap dealers or those endowed with more money than sense.

It's about time there was a round-table meeting of interested parties to clear the air and get some matters resolved. That time is **NOW!**

PLEASE NOTE MY NEW EMAIL slipstream@pacific.net.au

Season's Greetings to you and yours. Be kind to each other. Ed

NEXT DEADLINE - 03 FEBRUARY 2004



Dear Ed

I would like to commend all those associated with the planning and execution of the 2003 Reunion.

I was fortunate to have friends from Canada (ex-Canadian Navy) as guests and they were overwhelmed with the courtesy and genuine friendship shown to them during their visit to Nowra. We attended most functions so feel justified in our judgement of the success of the undertaking.

A special mention must be given to all those who catered for us, to the Museum of Flight staff and to those associated with the bus services provided.

The aim of the Association, to provide people with the opportunity to catch up with old shipmates and to make new friendships was well and truly met.

Best wishes to all and take care.

Don McLaren

Dear Ed

I think I might be able to shed a bit of light onto John Crawley's questions surrounding the circumstances of the photo of the upturned Sea King in the last issue of *Slipstream*, 2/03. I have already provided this information to John but maybe your readers may find it of interest as well. Whilst I was not on 817 Squadron at the time of the first Sea King ditching (906), I was there for the second (904). I was a 'sprog' Observer undergoing No 1 Sea King OFT at the time, along with SBLTs Adrian Cass (O), Terry Morgan (P), John Edwards (P), Neil 'Boots' Forbes (P) and Chris 'Pyro' Townsend (P).

The first point to clarify in John's records is that they were not both lost in 1975. Although I wasn't on the Squadron for the first one, Dave Jones (who was the observer of the rescue crew) has told me his logbook entry puts 906's ditching date as 21 Oct 1975. This accords with an entry in Ross Gillett's book *Wings Across the Sea*, which also indicates that 906 ditched on 21 Oct 1975 (p108). However, I do know that the second aircraft (904) was lost on 30 Nov 1976. I am certain of the date because my logbook tells me that I was in the Sea King that was launched immediately to assist on-scene, with LEUT Ken Voë as the aircraft captain (this aircraft was 909 which later was destroyed when it crashed near Bamaga in FNQ on 30 Jul 1997). Confusingly, *Wings Across the Sea* incorrectly lists 904 as ditching on 30 Apr 1976.

My other involvement with 904's ditching was that I was programmed as the observer for that particular flight, which was a CASEX just outside Shoalhaven Bight. However, LCDR Lofty Kimpton, who was my OFT instructor in the Sea King Simulator at the time, asked if he could do the flight because he was not getting much in the way of flying hours. So being the decent chap that I was (plus it being the case of a midshipman versus a two and a half!), Lofty got the flight. After they ditched I don't think he ever quite forgave me for swapping!

It is interesting to note John's records as stating that Ivan Misfeld was part of 906's crew. I find this unlikely (unless he was just 'along for the ride') as Ivan was not Sea King trained until 1980 - I was his instructor/course coordinator during his conversion to Sea Kings.

Another point to clarify is that the pilot of 904 was LEUT D. Anderson (Dave, or 'Daisy'). I think the other pilot was (then) LEUT Barry Costa. (I'll let Daisy and Baz argue over just who was the captain and who the co-pilot!)

I believe that the photo in *Slipstream* that John is inquiring about is 906. This is because of the circumstances of 904's ditching and subsequent loss. I recollect that 906 was finally towed in to CRESWELL and eventually recovered to NAS. After the BOI had finished with her she was stripped and what wasn't worth keeping was disposed of - I remember her cockpit being around the old museum in later years but am not sure where it is now. In the *Slipstream* photo you can see that the aircraft is alongside a planked wharf - almost certainly CRESWELL's.

904 was a different matter. She ditched during daylight in the northern part of Shoalhaven Bight. *Wings Across the Sea* has a photo taken not long after the event, on p107. I have enclosed a copy of this photo taken not from Ross' book but from an original I have. Ross' caption, which doesn't do justice to the subsequent recovery debacle, states: "One of the positive features of the Sea King is its ability to remain afloat in calm waters after ditching, allowing extra recovery time."



The second photo I have enclosed was taken a few hours later and shows the aircraft alongside the DDG HMAS PERTH, during the 'recovery' process. (I acquired both of these photos when I was a 'gofer' for the BOI). Someone onboard PERTH had decided that insurance lines were needed onto the aircraft in case it went down. Here things went horribly wrong. The ship manoeuvred too close; a rotor blade broke against the ship's side in the swell; the broken blade then punctured a flotation bag and the aircraft rolled inverted. Things then went from bad to worse! A decision was made to tow the aircraft (backwards, inverted, underwater!) by minesweeper to Port Kembla where suitable craneage was available to cope with lifting the weight of the aircraft plus water.



During the towing evolution, the drag of the aircraft through the water caused the towing hawser to become so taut that the sailor on towing watch became concerned to the point where he took to the hawser with an axe. That was the last anyone saw of 904. A very sad conclusion when one considers how beautifully she had been floating for so many hours.

I recall an offer made early in the 'recovery' process by Dave Anderson to just 'put a new filter bowl on, top up the gearbox, I'll start her up and taxi her in to Seven Mile Beach.' A pity his offer was not taken up!

Thanks for your efforts with *Slipstream*. It is an excellent read which I look forward to receiving very much, and you should be commended for its consistently high quality. *Brazo Zulu*.

Captain Paul Folkes RAN

Dear Ed

The photographs and letters from Pete Adams and John Selby about the wheels up landing of Gannet XG796, side number 815, in the last edition of *Slipstream* certainly stirred some memories. By the time your readers get this some forty years will have passed since the dramatic end to what was my third Gannet flight on 10 Jan 1964. In fact I was still to formally join 816 as I was finishing a rushed OFS and joined the squadron some 3 weeks later despite Toz Dadswells reservations about the luck I was bringing with me. I seem to recollect some other in-flight emergencies.

I was aware that we were facing a wheels-up landing but early in Pete's attempts to shake the gear down by some rather unorthodox manoeuvres my intercom lead became disconnected. The Gannet helmet and aircraft leads were both rather short and I was rather long. During Pete's first approach there was enough time to undo my harness, find and connect the intercom lead and I was therefore well prepared to compete with Al Pring-Shambler for the 08 short course sprint.



As John Selby noted Pete's skills and the torpedo doors limited the damage to the aircraft and XG796 returned to 816 Squadron re-badged as side number 858 when we were disembarked in late 1965. My log book records my next encounter with XG796 was on 17 November 1965 when I flew four sorties in the space of 24 hours in it. I then didn't come across it until early 1966 when I flew another four sorties in XG796 during the pre-embarkation work-up.

My tenth and final encounter with XG796 was on the night of 24 February 1966 when we launched from MELBOURNE for a sortie that was to conclude with Albie Fyfe's night deck landing



qualification. The weather was closing in and after a few touch and goes Albie was given down hook for his first night arrest. As we crossed the round down Albie thought the ship was turning and initiated a last minute wave off. This was in the era of no Landing Signals Officers!

However, as we rotated, XG796 engaged no 6 wire with the result that the aircraft went over the port side of the flight deck. The aircraft came to a precarious stop suspended by a combination of the hook/ arrester wire and the aircraft being partially embedded in a sponson below the flight deck. As MELBOURNE came to a stop, the aircraft moved slightly but remained suspended, pointing vertically towards the water. This was very different to 1964 as it was not pre-planned or covered in our very slender SOP's or Pilots notes.

We communicated briefly with the ship and between ourselves before I asked Albie to turn off the electrical system as I was soaked in fuel from the main fuel tank.

A decision was made to abandon the aircraft before any attempt would be made to recover the aircraft. The rear aircrew-man, Tom Lindsay, was recovered back on to the flight deck with the aid of a length of line. Albie and I were in a slightly more difficult situation as we were inaccessible from the flight deck.

We were also hanging in our harnesses and did not wish to upset the delicate balance of the aircraft by jettisoning our canopies. By carefully easing out the safety harness straps I was eventually able to gain a foothold and release my safety and parachute straps. I was then able to force my canopy open until it locked in the open position. This allowed me to ease myself out of the cockpit and to perch on the edge while Albie did the same some six feet below.



An attempt was made to reach us using the flight deck crane but this was not possible and we elected to jump into the water. Fortunately, the double propellers had stopped in a perfect cross giving a relatively clear arc to jump through. To avoid hitting each other, Albie jumped first and when he was clear I followed. We then swam to the sea boat, which was waiting clear of the aircraft, and were recovered on board and taken to the sick bay and kept there overnight for observation and many beers.

While I did not directly observe it, an attempt was then made to recover the aircraft. The flight deck crane was attached to the aircraft lifting point but when this point was put under load in a direction of almost ninety degrees from its design load it pulled out. This was enough to disturb the balance of the aircraft and it fell into the sea and XG796 sank very quickly and never made another attempt on my life.

Albie and I finally completed his night qualification in April of that

(Continued on page 6)



year and continued to fly together regularly until the end of the Gannet era. In fact we led the last flight of four Gannets at the Air Day on 8 October 1967. By then I had flown 550 Gannet sorties for a total of 640 hours, the majority embarked, and certainly had more experience than on the day that I first met XG796.

I had another four postings to 816 culminating in an all to short period as CO when we were operating a detachment from Darwin and took the S2G's to sea for the first time with the AQA7 system fitted. Over the years, I think sat through the initial night quals of about another dozen pilots and while some were also memorable there was never another XG796.

This year I had the pleasure of being involved in the trials of some new aircrew equipment and it was most reassuring to witness AMAFTU using the HUET to address the issues of safety equipment interface with the aircraft and escape from unusual attitudes. Perhaps the trial aircrew wondered why I showed such a personal interest

Peter Coulson

Dear Ed

Slipstream Volume 14 Number 2 contained a letter to the Editor of Slipstream from Neil Ralph, in his capacity as a "member of the Board of Directors of the AMoF" (Australia's Museum of Flight), in which he explained the reasons behind the change of the name of the Museum from "The Australian Naval Aviation Museum".

Neil's detailed explanation was of great interest to me and, no doubt, to other members of the Fleet Air Arm Association and I certainly agree that every reasonable measure should be taken by the Board of AMoF to ensure the financial survival of the repository of so much of our Australian Fleet Air Arm history. It was particularly pleasing to read that, notwithstanding the name-change, naval aviation remains, as a matter of policy, the principal theme of the museum. Also that the AMoF Board acknowledges the need to have the ongoing support of the Fleet Air Arm Association and seeks to improve the relationship between the two organisations.

I would like to comment on certain aspects of the name-change and the marketing of the Museum as a tourist attraction.

Firstly, whilst members of the FAA Association who read Neil's letter in Slipstream may (now) better understand that the AMoF remains the naval aviation museum in Australia, members of the public who see the current name of the museum could be excused for not appreciating that fact, particularly those who may have a particular interest in naval aviation and seek, through directories, etc, a museum having a name which reflects that interest. I suggest that the AMoF could clarify the situation, and better promote naval aviation, by adding: "Incorporating the Australian Naval Aviation Museum" to the name of the museum, and on letterheads, brochures, etc, even if in smaller type. This would be a legitimate means of preserving the well-known earlier name and a way of informing the public of the "principal theme".

Secondly, whilst I understand that the AMoF is widely advertised in the South Coast/Shoalhaven region as a tourist attraction, this is aimed at an audience who are already visiting or living in the area. I live in Sydney and have yet to sight any advertisement for the Museum in any readily available Sydney publication. Sydney has a huge population and with the improvement in the highway system to the South Coast, a day trip to Nowra on the weekend to visit the Museum is now a very reasonable proposition. Most of my non-service Sydney acquaintances, however, have never heard of the Museum. If more "bums on seats/through the

turnstiles" are needed to ensure the viability of the AMoF, I suggest that advertising, etc, in Sydney could bear further investigation, expensive though it may be.

Thirdly, should an interested person seek information about any Australian naval aviation museum from the internet, logging on to the current website (www.museum-of-flight.org.au) could be a little confusing. Under "Australia's Museum of Flight-History", the reader could be forgiven for thinking that the Museum is still named "Australian Naval Aviation Museum"! Some updating of the site seems to be warranted, including correction of a few "typos".

Finally, like many others, in the early 1990s I contributed an amount of money to the "Australian Naval Aviation Museum Society" and was subsequently "admitted as a Foundation Member" of the Society and issued with an impressive "Certificate of Membership". I wonder what the current status of such Members is, now, in respect of the AMoF? I certainly have not been contacted by the AMoF in that regard.

John Da Costa

Dear Ed

With reference to the photo at the bottom of page 7 of the last edition, it is almost certainly General Sir Dallas Brooks Royal Marines, Governor of Victoria, inspecting the Guard on the quarterdeck of HMAS MELBOURNE in Melbourne at Williamstown. The Guard Commander is probably Matt Taylor. Regrettably, the names of the members of the Guard have dimmed over time. (Note how impressive the .303 rifles with fixed bayonets look when compared with the glorified pea-rifles of today)!



The ship was in Melbourne for use as a backdrop during the filming of Neville Shute's "On The Beach" starring Ava Gardner, Ava Gardner and Ava Gardner (plus a few others of lesser interest to me and the rest of the Ship's Company). I think it was in early 1959.

Matt Taylor

[A little bit of trivia... At the time of filming, Ava said that she couldn't think of a better place to make a movie about the end of the earth. Ed]

Dear Ed

As a Royal Naval participant and survivor of the Bari Italy tragedy on 2 December 1943, I have had my book, 'POISONOUS INFERNO', published by 'Airlife Publishing' Shrewsbury United Kingdom.

During and after a German air raid, described afterwards by the RAF as 'one of the finest executed air operations by the Luftwaffe in that theatre of war to date'. Seventeen Allied merchant ships, including US, British, Polish, Norwegian and French ships were blown up and sunk and liquid mustard gas released into the harbour water causing 2000 casualties. The whole episode was censored for thirty years and little is known about it even today.

If you, your comrades and friends are interested, please visit Amazon's or Barnes & Noble's web-site to view a brief summary of the book. This book can also be purchased/ordered from all good bookshops.

Captain Robert McQueen RN Ret.CBE... 'Once started this book is impossible to put down'.

S.A. Coltman, OBE Ass Gen. Sec. Blesma.... 'As one gets deeper into the story, it is hard to put this book down'.

I am a member of the Royal British Legion, Royal Naval Association, HMS Collingwood Association, George Cross Island Ass. and an Honorary Citizen of Valletta (Malta).

George Southern BEM (Mil).

Dear Ed

This has got to be one of the best singles ads ever printed. It appeared in The Atlanta Journal.

'SINGLE BLACK FEMALE seeks male companionship, ethnicity unimportant.

I'm a very good-looking girl who LOVES to play. I love long walks in the woods, riding in your pickup truck, hunting, camping and fishing trips, cosy winter nights lying by the fire. Candlelight dinners will have me eating out of your hand. Rub me the right way and watch me respond.

I'll be at the front door when you get home from work, wearing only what nature gave me. Kiss me and I'm yours.

Call (404) 875-6420 and ask for Daisy.'

Over 15,000 men found themselves talking to the Atlanta Humane Society about an 8-week old black Labrador retriever.

Mak Fritzen

Dear Readers

The Australian War Memorial has done a first class job in restoring a Sea Fury which is now on display in the FAA section of the Bradbury Hall. Unfortunately the aircraft is lacking one final detail, its Hook.

This is a plea to anyone who might have been lucky enough to win a Fury hook when they were all scrapped, to make the supreme sacrifice of donating it to the AWM.

Should you be willing to do so, please contact me and I will arrange the necessary ceremony for the handover etc.

Norman Lee

Phone: (02) 6288 2285

or nlee@netspeed.com.au

Dear Ed

Many thanks for your permission for the Derbyshire Branch of the FAAA to use articles out of the Journal, we will give full acknowledgment to the writers of anything we use and to the Journal.

Here's one piece you may be able to find a space for.

In the winter of 1940 no uniforms being available the Wrens were buying up all the available blue serge to make their own uniforms consequently there wasn't enough material available for the matelots uniforms. A signal was sent from the Admiralty to all Commander in Chief's as follows:-

'Wrens clothing is to be held up until the needs of the Fleet have been satisfied!'

Once again, Thanks and Best wishes

Roy Pym - Derby UK.

Dear Ed

The latest edition has a letter from John Crawley regarding the photograph of the inverted Sea King. His assumption that the aircraft was c/s 906 and the identity of the crew onboard is correct, however it is actually along side at JB wharf after being retrieved by the 'Stalwart' following a couple of weeks on the bottom of Shoalhaven Bight in 207 feet of water. I have attached a photograph that will show a later stage of the recovery process.



The incident occurred on the night of my 'night emergencies' check ride at the end of the Sea King conversion with the 'Sea King Flight' commanded by Cmdr Eddy Bell (HS817 re-equipped with the Sea King on 1 January 1976 - I think it was). The aircraft actually rolled over on landing in the 10 foot swell that was running that night and floated inverted for about 20 minutes before sinking. I can assure you that it is still very vivid in my mind all these years later as anyone who has experienced a 'night ditching' will attest - the most realistic emergency check I have ever had!!

Unfortunately, we lost a few more aircraft (including 904, mentioned in the letter) to this problem before it was resolved.

I really enjoy your publication, it's great to see all the faces and/or hear the names of those that made my time in the FAA an experience second to none! Keep up the good work.

Greg Rogers

Chief Pilot - Channel 7 Brisbane

Dear Ed

What a top job to get skidded for.

In the last edition of *Slipstream*, the upturned Seaking on page 8 was landed at HMAS CRESWELL some time late in 1975. The edge of the SAR wharf and the tyre roller fender are clearly evident in the photo.

As a crusty Mid, I remember walking to the waterfront to use the telephone (which responded kindly to a certain kick) and recall seeing the hulk dripping alongside the boatshed.

The crane used to haul it out was removed from the CRESWELL waterfront some time ago, but it was mounted on piles to the east of the SAR wharf.

I cannot remember all of the details, but I distinctly remember the noises emanating from the aircraft as corrosion began to destroy it. It was popping and fizzing as the salt water went to work on reactive alloys. I don't remember how long it was there, but within a few days it was hauled out of CRESWELL by road.

(Continued on page 8)

My timing may be out, but I seem to recall that the east coast was undergoing severe power restrictions at the time and much of the Shoalhaven was experiencing nightly blackouts. I hope this helps leading to solving the mystery.

Derek Frew

And... forwarded by Warren Walters in the USA

This truly is a miracle; two heavily damaged aircraft. The pilots would have been justified in "punching out" but instead, they chose to bring the jets in. This endangered their lives but saved the taxpayers about 80 million dollars. What is especially intriguing is in picture 03, notice the radome, radar and all of the avionics equipment, everything, in front is gone. This created several problems for the pilot: aerodynamics, eventual loss of hydraulics due to loss of fluid, navigation, and probably the most amazing, as the pieces fell away, some debris had to be ingested by the engines (F.O.D.) and he still was able to bring it home!

The story behind them is: Two F/A-18 Hornets from Top Gun were dog-fighting and made a head on pass, just a bit too close. One got home with part of the left wing and left vertical fin and rudder missing, while the other jet is missing everything forward of the cockpit pressure bulkhead - and is a flying convertible because the canopy is shattered too. These guys are lucky. It shows how rugged these aircraft are...Also shows how good the pilots are.



Dear Ed

Attached is a report from a young lady, Alanna Cresp, who recently sailed a leg on the sailing ship *Young Endeavour*.

Alanna is a Legacy Ward and her trip was organised by the Legacy Club of Canberra and partly sponsored by Maritime Services Australia. She is a year 12 student at Hawker College in Canberra and hopes to go on to study medicine.

Her dad was one of us (sort of); he was a General Service 'greenie' who served 20 odd years and paid off as a CPO. He saw service on DDG's on the gun line off Vietnam during that conflict, as well as deployments with the Far East Strategic Reserve. He died in 1995.

The purpose in submitting Alanna's report is to indicate to the readers some of the services provided to the dependants of returned service people (both male and female), and to also remind members that a large number of the dependants of our members will be eligible for support from Legacy. I would also like to advise that eligibility for Legacy has been expanded. It includes not only the dependants of those who have seen active service, but also dependants of those who have died through injury, or illness caused whilst undergoing hazardous service or in training exercises for war.

Jim Parsons

ALANNA'S STORY...

On July 18th, after finally completing my packing, I departed Canberra for Cairns where I was to join the *STS Young Endeavour* and participate in a 10-day sail to Townsville.

Young Endeavour is a sail training ship given to Australia in 1988 as a Bicentennial gift from the United Kingdom. Through the 'Young Endeavour Youth Scheme', young people from all around Australia are given the chance to participate in voyages aboard her to teach them Communication, Teamwork, and Leadership. But really, it's much, much more than that!

After a late arrival in Cairns, the President of Cairns Legacy, Legatee Geoff Royle, greeted me. Although exhausted I spent an enjoyable night with Geoff and his partner, Mavis, before stepping onto the *Young Endeavour* the following afternoon. My incredible trip was about to really take off.

The early days on board were spent learning about teamwork, rope handling, sail theory and, of course, safety. We were separated into our watches immediately after joining the ship and it was within these watches that our strongest friendships were formed.

Although many of the youth and staff were seasick in the first few days, I was fortunate not to be counted amongst them, in fact I gained my sea legs very quickly. This phase passed in a couple of days and we were able to get to know each other much better once people stopped running down leeward every few minutes.

We had our first climb aloft on the first day. After that, I was raring to attempt the next platform and in no time I was sitting on top of the topgallant yard watching the sunrise. It was an absolutely overwhelming and spectacular experience, one that I shall never ever forget and very grateful to have been given the opportunity to witness.

Although it seemed that we spent every waking moment (this includes the many times we were woken in the middle of the night) flaking out and making up lines it was something I never got bored with. This was, I'm sure, thanks to Sal, my Watch Leader, who always seemed to make each task fun and original right up to the last day when we were attempting the hard task of harbour furling the square sails.

Our visits to land were warmly welcomed by all of us and our first stop, Dunk Island, proved as beautiful as we had been told. We could finally swim! After seeing almost only water for three days we were all keen to jump in and have some fun in the water rather than on it.

Three days later we stopped at Orpheus Island, it was intriguing, however, with the multiple reefs surrounding the island, a few people managed to cut themselves on the coral before we left. This gave Polly (the cook and first aid specialist), a chance to show off his Betadine and band aiding skills.

One of the most memorable occasions was the half-day sail on our second last day aboard the ship. For 4 hours we hosted a group of 40 people, consisting of disabled children, and young people and their families. During this time we motored out of the channel and were able to actually set sail and perform a quick tack before having to draw and furl the sails for the very last time. We received help from many of the kids, checking and heaving, and it was incredibly rewarding observing their eyes light up as they watched the ship come to life.

Command Day, the anticipated day everyone spoke of, presented us with atrocious weather, choppy seas, constant rain, and winds of 25 knots gusting to 30. The seasickness returned and chaos and confusion reigned. I was appointed to the position of Watch Leader and was blessed with an entire watch of seasick sailors. After being woken up four times throughout the night to make sure the ship kept its course, I was glad when it was over.

However, in saying that, each one of us definitely learnt a lot from what had been a trying day. This became quite evident in our discussions and debriefs. One thing that was felt, particularly by the leaders of the day, was a deeper appreciation of the staff crew and their ability to keep everything safe, happy and fun. Those guys really were special.

Amongst all the hard work the old salts and our own new chums constantly entertained us. We never knew what the staff was going to surprise us with next. Kate certainly never expected to get creamed by her own birthday cake! We looked forward each morning to Paige, the Salty Sea Dog's sometimes dubious explanations of nautical terms.

The night after Command Day they even put on a disco for us, complete with shocking 80s music and strobe lights. Actually that makes me wonder whether it really was for us, or if the staff just needed an excuse to 'get down and boogie'.

After the frantic exchanging of contact details and a sad goodbye, I left the ship with a feeling of utter bliss, not because I was leaving, but because I had done it.

In Townsville I had the pleasure of spending the night with Mrs Kerry Donald and her daughters Emma and Aleena who all managed to make my time there both comforting and enjoyable and, along with Geoff and Mavis, I thank them for their support.

The Tall Ships experience is said to be one of 'challenges and self-growth'. However I think that on top of that, it is meeting and working with the people that really make it special. I believe the most memorable aspect of my voyage were the individuals I shared it with, both staff and crew. I have made friends with people of different ages, backgrounds and locations and I am confident they are not relationships that will easily be torn.

All in all, my entire voyage was one of achievement, excitement, animation, humour and genuine joy. It has made me so appreciative of the opportunity I have been given by Canberra Legacy and Defence Maritime Services.

Thank you, particularly to Mr Marshall who considered me worthy enough to be recommended for this honour. I hope many more people are provided with the chance to enjoy the amazing and fulfilling journey that is *Young Endeavour*. *Alanna*



Dear Ed

With reference to Volume 14-Number 2-Page 10 of Slipstream. If John Selby thinks that he is the unidentified body in the photograph, this will put his mind at rest, a good frontal shot taken at the same event.

Frank Donnelly



R & R Banyan at Pulau Langkawi 1965
L-R Frank Donnelly - Brian Sargeson - Peter Clark - John Selby

Dear Ed

The recent Handler's (AVN) Reunion held at the Prince Alfred Hotel, Booval, was such a great success that it has been decided to hold another one at the same venue in 2004. The date for your diary is **06 November 2004**.

Don't forget - your partners are more than welcome to attend.

Ken Staff - Editor 'Hands to Flying Stations'



Dear Ed

I wrote to you 30 October 2003 about the Australian Museum of Flight (AMOF) and proposed that the museum was not recording, preserving and presenting the story of our Naval Aviation Heritage in accordance with the vision when the museum was established. I also proposed that the relics and documents that form our heritage appeared to be exposed to significant risk in the event that the organisation ceased trading. I also wanted to be informed of the FAAAA's position regarding AMOF and its collection, as the situation is not within my direct capacity to influence.

I have written to the governing Board of AMOF and asked the following questions;

- Who owns the Navy and ex-Navy assets available for display in the museum including those gifted to the museum by ex-Fleet Air Arm (FAA) personnel and previously official or semi-official documents?
- Is title clearly documented, legally sound and does that reflect the current status of AMOF? and
- If AMOF now owns the ex-Navy assets, in the event that the organization ceases trading, is there provision for ownership to revert to the Commonwealth so that the collection, in whole or in part, will not be dispersed?
- Why are the Commonwealth's only complete Firefly and only potentially complete Sea Fury, not displayed in the museum?
- What is the strategic plan as it covers the display to the public of historic and obsolete aircraft now held by both the HF and AMOF?

In my letter to the Board of AMOF I also proposed the following;

- AMOF should urgently review and upgrade its coverage and record of the last about 20 years of Naval Aviation history.
- Reference to Navy and preferably Naval Aviation should be reintroduced within the museum's title even if that is merely amended to include the words "incorporating the Australian Naval Aviation Museum".

In its reply to me AMOF provided the following information (in summary);

- Ownership / title of collection. There are three categories – The first is former naval assets and assets of private origin gifted to the museum. These are owned by the Foundation (the same that operated the ANAM). There are also Navy assets on loan to AMOF. Within the third category are privately owned assets on loan to the AMOF. AMOF inferred that the status of each item in terms of its category, is known and documented (That might not be the case). In the event of the AMOF winding up the "Memorandum of Association" is stated by AMOF to make provision for the disposal of its property after any debts and liabilities are met. Neither gifting documents nor the Memorandum, require Foundation owned items to be returned to the Commonwealth.
- Displayed Fleet Air Arm aircraft. AMOF explained that this was an internal Navy matter and that the museum would like to be able to display a complete Fury and

Firefly (the aircraft I mentioned) but that was not an option that was currently available (as these are held by Navy's Historic Flight).

- Display of Recent Naval Aviation History. AMOF explained that the organisation would like to display more but has little capacity to design and set up these displays. The museum explained that the development of a display which appealed to the Naval visitor was contrary to the AMOF's policy that endeavoured to capture a wider visitor base (ie there was an implication that the two objectives are mutually exclusive)
- Reintroduction of reference to "Navy" in the AMOF's title. The proposal was not directly addressed by AMOF. But AMOF explained that before the name change the museum was viewed as a Navy owned organisation and as such not a community based entity. This had clearly negative implications for funding applications to Government and for potential donors. Therefore the decision was implemented to "broaden" the display and to make the museum more community relevant and appealing. That initiative included the change of name. AMOF advised that prior to the change, Navy had distanced itself well away from the museum and that the new name, as a visible indicator of its true status, was commercially necessary. The AMOF reported that no complaints about the change have been received directly.

More broadly, in its response AMOF reported that the organization received a low level of assistance from the former FAA community.

I am uncertain of whether the FAAAA is in a position to influence the AMOF and Navy on the matter of Naval Aviation Heritage (as that is distinct from its commercial concerns). And AMOF may not be in a position to provide further information. But I propose the situation needs to be clearly understood for what it is. That appears to be that the AMOF and more centrally, our Naval Aviation Heritage are at some risk. In view of the apparently urgent situation (and it may not be as I see it) I thought that I would propose some questions so these could be considered with this next issue rather than the subsequent *Slipstream*, still some months away. The main questions seem to be along the following lines;

- Who are the stakeholders of the AMOF and what responsibility and accountability does the AMOF have to this group?
- The Director and Curator of AMOF have on several occasions been reported as saying that the current situation of the AMOF is not sustainable. Is there a formal report including a Business Plan available to explain this position including the management strategy? and
- Is there a risk management plan available to stakeholders covering the protection of Naval Aviation Heritage items including documents in the course of AMOF's daily business and in the event of the company ceasing trading?

I propose that the questions should be best covered by AMOF in a public meeting. As the FAAAA appears to me to be the main stakeholder group-apart from those in uniform and the broader Australian community, I propose that the Association should

request the AMOF to convene such a meeting to discuss the issues outlined. The information arising if the matters above were addressed, should provide for an informed understanding of the true situation as it applies to our heritage and the also the status of AMOF as the custodian.

Yours faithfully,
Cris George

Dear Ed

On 22 April 2003, Naval Airmen (Aircrew) Course 8, celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of their joining the RAN, with a dinner at the Australian Club, Sydney.

I have enclosed a print of those who attended the function. All those who graduated as either Pilots or Observers were present.

I include their rank on discharge from the RAN.

Back Row L-R: Bruce 'Pud' Smith LT (P) – David 'Bos' Howells LT (P) – Bill Vallack LT (O) – Brian Farthing LT (O) and Douglas 'Pusser' Anslee LT (P)

Front Row L-R: Doug 'Pappy' Curtis LT (P) – Les 'Lax' Anderson LT (O) – Mal 'Blackie' Barratt LT (P)

Doug 'Pappy' Curtis



CAN YOU HELP?

Dear Ed

Whilst at the Airshow during the recent FAAA Reunion at Nowra, I lost, misplaced or loaned a book about Typhoon Ruth entitled – 'Goodbye Tomorrow'. Included with the book were several photographs relating to various people I served with in the FAA.

I am desperately seeking their return and any help would be most appreciated.

Ray 'Stalky' Maley

4 Rushby St. BATEAU BAY 2211 - Phone: (02) 4332 5605

Dear Ed

In June this year I accomplished something that I have only dreamt about – I trekked the infamous Kokoda Trail.

It was a professional tour with Air Nuigini tours, but it was an Australian Historical Tour with an Australian guide who gave us information on the battles that took place as we came upon the various sites.

The group consisted of the guide, twelve trekkers and twenty

porters. It took ten days and nine nights to cover the ground from Owens' Corner to Kokoda village. The weather was perfect and we only had a couple of showers, which fortunately only occurred after reaching the night stopover point.

It would have to be one of the most memorable events that I have ever participated in. All the trekkers had the same idea – it was a pilgrimage to honour those that fought and died on the trail.

Day one was a solemn occasion when we visited the Bomana War Cemetery. It was absolutely awesome! In front of us there was over two and a half thousand graves with headstones lined up with military precision. It was a stark reminder of the price of freedom they were prepared to pay. Walking amongst the headstones and reading the age of the grave's occupants, 18 – 19 – 20 – 21 and so on. Some marked 'UNKNOWN' others 'KNOWN ONLY TO GOD' – all so young, yet so brave and willing to die for their country. It was very moving for all of us.

I found 'Butch' Bissetts grave, the brother of Stan Bissett, who organised the 'Last Parade' of Kokoda veterans at Isurava in 1998.

I also found Bruce Kingsbury's final resting-place, the first and youngest person to be awarded the Victoria Cross (posthumously) for gallantry on Australian soil.

After paying homage to these gallant heroes, we moved on.



Bomana War Cemetery PNG

Time and space limit the amount I can write. The whole idea was to walk the trail that these heroes had walked and died on. Walking in their footsteps and trying to imagine the hardships they encountered.

THIS CEMETERY WAS BUILT AND IS MAINTAINED BY THE COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM, CANADA, AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, SOUTH AFRICA, INDIA AND PAKISTAN

Not a day passed that we didn't comment on aspect of hardship that they would have met. The 'trail' itself was a constant reminder of what they endured.

We would pass an Australian foxhole (built for two) on one side of a ridge, then a Japanese one (built for one) on the other side. Their location meant that the lead-scout from either side would have a virtual death sentence.

The ups and downs along the trail were totally exhausting to traverse, some days being worse than the others. The ridges were deceptive, you would think you were reaching the top, then turn a slight bend and find that you were still going up. One such ridge had eleven extra ridges to climb before reaching the top. It was a

(Continued on page 12)

real 'heart breaker'. You would feel totally exhausted and be ready for a break (which we had), then we would think about how the Diggers had fared. That thought process usually stirred us up and kept us going.

Our guide was very well informed and kept up a running commentary as we reached certain areas. Two of the major battles he mentioned have really stuck in my mind, One was at Brigade Hill (lost to the Japanese and subsequently regained), and Isurava where the turning point of the war occurred. Many, many were killed on both sides. Isurava has been dedicated as a Memorial Site and commemorates the campaigns and those who participated.

Another highlight was meeting Ovuru Ndiki, one of the last surviving 'Fuzzy-Wuzzy Angels' at Naduri Village.



Kevin Camm and Ovuru Ndiki

To complete the trek was a major plus to me, being the oldest in the group (64). I figure that I did OK to cover the ground that is now part of our history. It was hard, exhausting, and extremely physical, but above all, emotional. Every inch of the track had a tale to tell and I am justly proud to have experienced and completed it.

Kevin Camm

[What Kevin neglected to mention, was that on his return he arranged for the collection of disabled aids for those he had met on his travels. Ed]

For your information...

KINGSBURY Bruce Steel



Unit: 2/14th Australian Infantry Battalion
Date of Action: 29 August 1942
Place of Action: Isurava, Kokoda Trail, Papua
Conflict: World War 2
Posthumous

CITATION: In New Guinea, the Battalion to which Private Kingsbury belonged had been holding a position in the Isurava area for two days against continuous and fierce enemy attacks. On 29 August, 1942, the enemy attacked in such force that they succeeded in breaking through the Battalion's right flank, creating serious threats both to the rest of the Battalion and to its Headquarters. To avoid the situation becoming more desperate it was essential to regain immediately lost ground on the right flank.

Private Kingsbury, who was one of the few survivors of a Platoon which had been overrun and severely cut about by the enemy, immediately volunteered to join a different platoon which had been ordered to counterattack. He rushed forward firing the Bren gun from his hip through terrific machine-gun fire and succeeded in clearing a path through the enemy. Continuing to sweep enemy positions with his fire and inflicting an extremely high number of casualties on them, Private Kingsbury was then seen to fall to the ground shot dead by the bullet from a sniper



hiding in the wood. Private Kingsbury displayed a complete disregard for his own safety. His initiative and superb courage made possible the recapture of a position, which undoubtedly saved Battalion Headquarters, as well as causing heavy casualties amongst the enemy. His coolness, determination and devotion to duty in the face of great odds were an inspiration to his comrades.

(London Gazette: 9 February 1943.)

Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels -By Bert Beros

Many a mother in Australia when the busy day is done
Sends a prayer to the Almighty for the keeping of her son
Asking that an angel guide him and bring him safely back
Now we see those prayers are answered on the Owen Stanley Track.
For they haven't any halos only holes slashed in their ears
And their faces worked by tattoos with scratch pins in their hair
Bringing back the badly wounded just as steady as a horse
Using leaves to keep the rain off and as gentle as a nurse
Slow and careful in the bad places on the awful mountain track
The look upon their faces would make you think Christ was black
Not a move to hurt the wounded as they treat him like a saint
It's a picture worth recording that an artist's yet to paint
Many a lad will see his mother and husbands see their wives
Just because the fuzzy wuzzy carried them to save their lives
From mortar bombs and machine gun fire or chance surprise attacks
To the safety and the care of doctors at the bottom of the track
May the mothers of Australia when they offer up a prayer
Mention those impromptu angels with their fuzzy wuzzy hair.



[Introducing new member, Eric Collings.]

Dear Ed

Just a few bits of information about myself and a few photocopies which may be of some interest to you.

I joined the FAA in July 1942 and came to Australia in February 1945 as a Leading Air Fitter (Engines), later rated to Petty Officer in July 1945.

I served at HMS Golden Hind (Warwick Farm), Nowra (HMS Nabbington - Monab 1), Jervis Bay (HMS Nabswick - Monab 5), then to Kai Tak (HMS Nabcatcher - Monab 8).

I was demobbed on 30 June 1946 in the UK, and emigrated to Australia in 1949.

After such a long time I find I have forgotten the names of my mates in the pictures I've enclosed. The fellow on the far right, in the one showing a group of five at Bombay, is the only one I've met since leaving the Navy. I met him at Cowes, Isle of Wight, at the Saunders Roe Aircraft factory in 1948. At the time my trade was repairing and selling office machines and I was there on business.

I am 80 next birthday so many of my friends would probably be older if they're still around. Sorry I can't provide you with any exciting memories, apart from my time in UK and during D-Day when we had many air attacks and a great deal of bombing.

The rest of my time in the Navy, though interesting (to me), was just routine. During my initial training for Engine Fitter we were stationed for six months at Fulham, London. It was in a Gas Works that had several very large gasometers close to our Mess and workshop. All full of gas! It was a bit of a hazardous place to be during an Air Raid. Luckily, we survived.

Eric Collings

Dear Ed

I have enclosed a copy of a photograph that I took in 1968 and thought it may be of interest. I can recall the basics of the situation but my memory is not what it used to be. I'm sure the readers will be able to fill in the details.

Some hints to help solve the challenge.

1. As you look at the photo the person next to the American Officer, on the right, is NOT a Serviceman.
2. The photo was NOT taken in N.S.W.
3. NONE of those in the photo were in the crew when it departed from its previous airport.
4. The pilot flew the aircraft, alone, from this site to a neighbouring airfield where we later joined him.

Dino Gedling (Phot. 1964-73)



Eric Collings second from right



Accommodation at Golden Hind



This letter follows a request regarding a memorial at Babinda, North Queensland.

Dear Ed

In Volume 14 Number 1 of this year, you published a request from me regarding memorials dedicated to the three services. In that letter I asked if any of my shipmates could give me any advice or thoughts on the subject. As expected, the response was a big, fat, zero!

Since that time one shelter has been erected to the right of the Cenotaph at a cost of \$9,000 – it is still to be paved. I was way out in my assessment of what \$10,000 would buy.

However, all is not over yet, the Council has agreed to do a similar construction on the opposite side next year.

We, the RSL Sub-Branch at Babinda, still haven't managed to obtain an anchor or propeller, hopefully we will be able to locate the items in the not too distant future.

We suggested to the Council that a memorial should also be erected to our early pioneers and the indigenous people of the area. They have agreed, but this will take some time to do.

So PLEASE – if you have any ideas as to where we can obtain an anchor, prop, plaques etc. to signify the three services, please drop me a line.

Kevin 'Roger' Raddatz

PO Box 329, Babinda QLD 4861 - Phone: (07) 4067 1762



REMEMBRANCE DAY 2003 AT BABINDA

Kevin Raddatz (L) and Babinda RSL President, Errol Wiles (Ex-RAAF). The new construction to the right sheltering the children who attended the ceremony

2003 REUNION COMMITTEE - 10 NOV 2003

To members far and wide, please accept our thanks in the way you cooperated with the raffle run to help finances of the "2003 Reunion". Your assistance ensured that the finances were in place to provide what was a very successful get-together.

It was pleasing to see that the prize winners were distributed across the country, and our congratulations go out to them.

We trust that the substitution of cash vouchers (for an increased amount) enabled the winners to select things to their individual taste, it certainly made transporting the prizes so much easier.

THE PRIZE WINNERS

1st Prize Mrs Gwen Power, 98 Greenbanks Grove, Culburra Beach NSW 2540

2nd Prize M K Prescia 18 Siddons Way, Booragon WA 6154

3rd Prize B Mewett, 4 Loftus Place, Sandstone Place, QLD 4511

A letter forwarded by our member in Florida USA...

In a message dated 11/23/2003 *Samuel Thompson* wrote:

I don't believe in Santa Claus, but I'm not going to sue somebody for singing a Ho-Ho-Ho song in December. I don't agree with Darwin, but I didn't go out and hire a lawyer when my high school teacher taught his theory of evolution.

Life, liberty or your pursuit of happiness will not be endangered because someone says a 30-second prayer before a football game. So what's the big deal? It's not like somebody is up there reading the entire book of Acts. They're just talking to a God they believe in and asking him to grant safety to the players on the field and the fans going home from the game. "But it's a Christian prayer," some will argue. Yes, and this is the United States of America, a country founded on Christian principles. And we are in the Bible Belt. According to our very own phone book, Christian churches outnumber all others better than 200-to-1. So what would you expect - somebody chanting Hare Krishna?

If I went to a football game in Jerusalem, I would expect to hear a Jewish prayer.

If I went to a soccer game in Baghdad, I would expect to hear a Muslim prayer.

If I went to a ping pong match in China, I would expect to hear someone pray to Buddha.

And I wouldn't be offended. It wouldn't bother me one bit. When in Rome...etc.

"But what about the atheists?" is another argument. What about them? Nobody is asking them to be baptised. We're not going to pass the collection plate. Just humour us for 30 seconds. If that's asking too much, bring a Walkman or a pair of earplugs. Go to the bathroom. Visit the concession stand. Call your lawyer. Unfortunately, one or two will make that call. One or two will tell thousands what they can and cannot do. I don't think a short prayer at a football game is going to shake the world's foundations.

Christians are just sick and tired of turning the other cheek while our courts strip us of all our rights. Our parents and grandparents taught us to pray before eating, to pray before we go to sleep. Our Bible tells us just to pray without ceasing. Now a handful of people and their lawyers are telling us to cease praying. God, help us. And if that last sentence offends you, well.....just sue me.

The silent majority has been silent too long. It's time we tell that one or two who scream loud enough to be heard that the vast majority doesn't care what they want. It is time the majority rules!

It's time we tell them, you don't have to pray. You don't have to say the pledge of allegiance, you don't have to believe in God or attend services that honour Him. That is your right, and we will honour your right, but by golly, you are no longer going to take our rights away. We are fighting back and we WILL WIN! After all, the God you have the right to denounce is on our side!

God bless us one and all, especially those who denounce Him...

God bless America, despite all her faults. Still the greatest nation of all.....

God bless our service men who are fighting to protect our right to pray and worship God...

May 2003 be the year the silent majority is heard and we put God back as the foundation of our families and institutions.

Keep looking up..... In God WE Trust

WELCOME HOME PARADE

On 16 August 2003 Shoalhaven City Council hosted a Welcome Home Parade for personnel who either engaged in or supported recent overseas operations, namely Operations BASTILLE, FALCONER, RELEX and RELEX II.

The parade was held through the streets of Nowra and was followed by a BBQ lunch for participating Defence personnel and their families at Harry Sawkins' Park. HMAS CRESWELL provided a Guard of Midshipmen to lead the parade and the three local Australian Cadet Units were invited to participate. The parade was reviewed by COMAUSNAVAIRGRP, Commodore Geoff Ledger.

Special guests included the Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence, The Honourable Danna Vale, MP; the Federal Member for Gilmore, Mrs Joanna Gash, MP; the State Member for South Coast, Mrs Shelley Hancock, MP and Shoalhaven City Mayor Greg Watson.



'OPERATION CATALYST' A NAVAL AVIATION PERSPECTIVE

LT Stan Buckham RAN (Flight OPSO) with input from LCDR Simon Bateman

"Hands to Boarding Stations, Hands to Boarding Stations". The familiar pipe rings throughout HMAS NEWCASTLE stationed in the North Arabian Gulf (NAG). You could be mistaken for thinking that the ship is still involved in enforcing UN sanctions against Iraq, as was her role during OPERATION SLIPPER. This is not the case. It is October 2003 and the ship now forms the maritime element of Australia's contribution to OPERATION CATALYST. The aims of this operation are to develop a secure environment in Iraq, assist national recovery and facilitate the transition to Iraqi self-government.

NEWCASTLE plays a lead role in the development of a secure environment in the maritime approaches to the Iraqi coast. Together with her USN, Royal Navy and Italian Navy counterparts she patrols the littoral waters ensuring that there is no untoward activity and that commercial traffic into Iraq's main waterways the Khor-Al-Arab (KAA) and the Shat-Al-Arab (SAA) is organised and controlled. The units in the NAG are also responsible for providing security to Iraq's main offshore Al-Bakr oil terminal (MABOT). This terminal provides one third of Iraq's oil exports so it is imperative that it remains open and keeps funds flowing back into the beleaguered economy. As an example of its importance one supertanker will on-load the equivalent of nearly USD\$ 56 million dollars worth of oil. There are generally two tankers on MABOT at any one time with a turnaround of two to three days.

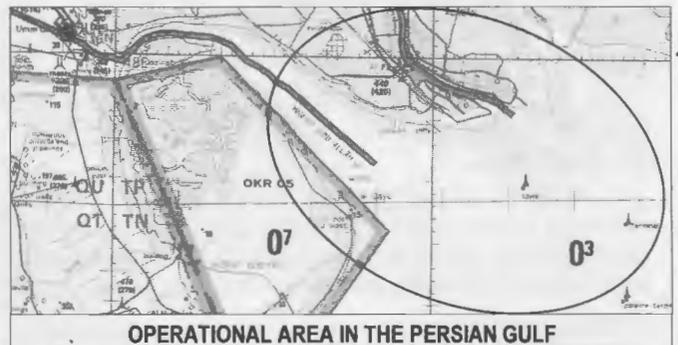
The embarked S70B-2 Seahawk, callsign "Coldsteel", plays an important role in these operations. It provides NEWCASTLE with an extended sensor that can probe and clarify the surface picture all the way up the KAA and to a smaller extent the SAA. Part of the Coldsteel's daily mission is to conduct a patrol of the waterways leading up to Umm Qasr, Iraq's most southerly and most used port. Any vessels of interest are reported to command and then if required the aircraft will conduct an airborne query of the vessel on Channel 16. As you can imagine with the language barrier this can be quite an evolution. Based on certain criteria the vessel of interest will then be boarded by NEWCASTLE's Boarding Teams via ribs whilst Coldsteel provides "Top Cover", a safety unit against hostilities and an immediate medical evacuation facility.

Another role NEWCASTLE's Seahawk conducts is of a support nature and relates to RASing (Replenishments at Sea). Often the most efficient way to transfer stores and victuals from ship to ship is via VERTREP (vertical replenishment). This can be done in conjunction with refuelling and considerably reduces the manpower required as compared to a heavy jackstay, which requires full ship participation. As NEWCASTLE is operating in a two-watch system, Defence Watches, this makes VERTREP the preferred method of replenishment. In addition to VERTREPing, Coldsteel is often used for logistic transfers of personnel to and from the surface units. These range from Basra, 100 nm inside Iraq, Kuwait and to Bahrain 200 nm south in the Central Arabian Gulf. Compared to our US cousins, the SH60's, our aircraft has more seats available and is more suited to conducting this tasking.

Coordination of maritime security falls to the NAG Commander otherwise known as 'Sierra Juliet'. Australian personnel have fulfilled this role on regular basis, as does NEWCASTLE's Commanding Officer, CAPT G.D Christian have this responsibility.

He is responsible for coordinating all the assets in the area, which besides for NEWCASTLE generally include a number of USN ships (including Coastguard cutters), and British and Italian units. The task is a difficult one as it involves the monitoring and tracking of hundreds of contacts ranging in size from small fishing dhows right through to 300,000 tonne supertankers. From a Naval Aviation perspective this means that NEWCASTLE Flight Crew, commonly the FLOPSO, Flight Operations Officer, fulfils the role of HEC (Helicopter Element Controller) for the whole of the multinational force. Not indicative of the title, "FLOPSO" conducts at times a difficult and demanding role. He is responsible for coordinating all organic aircraft operations, ranging from aircraft types such as Australian and US Seahawks, RN Lynx and Italian Seakings. This job requires dedication and superior interpersonal skills as many hours can be spent in the Operations Room either on a headset or computer terminal ensuring all flying operations are compatible and fulfil the tasking required for each day.

Overall the RAN is making a valuable contribution to OP CATALYST. The maintenance of security and order along Iraqi waterways and coastline is imperative. If rehabilitation is to occur and a return made to a stable economy it is important that trade is recommenced through Iraq's main ports. NEWCASTLE and the other Coalition vessels, and in particular to this article, Naval Aviation, play a vital role in this rehabilitation process.



OPERATIONAL AREA IN THE PERSIAN GULF



Mag 58 shoot



Subject: UNCLASSIFIED**Military Justice Audit Team Report**

RAAF Worst of the Three Services - A recent report by the Military Justice Audit Team has found that allegations of "a culture of widespread bastardisation and brutality" within the Australian Defence Force are, in the most part, unfounded. The audit team, which travelled to every Defence establishment across Australia and interviewed staff from all three services, found surprisingly few cases of unfair treatment and bullying within the Army and Navy. When it came to the RAAF, however, the report told a different story. Complaints to the MJAT came from a total of 13555 RAAF members, compared with three from Navy and just one from Army.

While this statistic is alarming in its own right, it becomes horrific when one considers that each complaint represents a sad story of abuse, mistreatment and neglect. As one senior RAAF officer put it, "Each story is, in itself, a sad indictment on the Air Force. When taken as a whole, however, they demonstrate a reprehensible lack of regard for personnel on the part of RAAF managers at all levels."

One young pilot from Adelaide told of having to spend two nights in tin city accommodation, despite the fact that there was an empty five-star hotel just 10km away.

Another said that he had been forced to endure a gruelling 2.4km run every year since he joined in 1997.

One airwoman alleged that she had been overlooked for promotion on numerous occasions, simply because she was fat, lazy and stupid.

An aircraftman from Amberley stated he had been refused permission to wear civilian attire to work, despite the fact that his uniform clashed with his eye colour. Another had been forced to wear uncomfortable safety boots for periods of up to eight hours straight.

A number of personnel complained of having to attend courses that were not relevant to their jobs, such as rigorous ground combat courses and drawn-out lectures on occupational health and safety. To add insult to injury, a young corporal was even ordered to pack up chairs in the classroom after one such course.

The huge backlash against treatment of Air Force personnel should provide senior ADF officers with a vital clue with regard to the massive retention problems experienced by the RAAF in recent times. Over the past two years, Defence has spent some \$19.8 million looking into the issue.

Not all of the Air Force's hierarchy, however, is upset by the revelations. Said outgoing Chief of the Air Force, Air Marshal Errol Flynn, "I'm delighted with the result. I am very happy that our retention problems are due, in the most part at least, to something as harmless as bastardisation. I thought everyone was leaving because of me."

'The Northern Australiana Times'

Briefing - The Gunnery Chief is briefing the recruits:

"For the next ten weeks the commanding officer will be your father, and I will be your mother. Incidentally we are not married, so you know what that makes you..."

Barber - A new recruit had to have his long hair and sideburns cut. As he sat down in the barber chair, the barber asked, to his surprise, if he'd like to keep his sideburns. "Oh, yes!" he said gratefully. Whereupon the barber cut off the sideburns and said, "Here — catch!"

HOW THE MILITARY HAS CHANGED FROM 1945 TO 2003



- 1945** - NCO'S had a typewriter on their desks for doing daily reports.
- 2003** - *Everyone has an Internet access computer, and they wonder why no work is getting done.*
- 1945** - We painted pictures of girls on airplanes to remind us of home.
- 2003** - *Do it now and see what happens!*
- 1945** - If you got drunk off duty your mates would take you back to the barracks to sleep it off.
- 2003** - *If you get drunk they slap you in rehab and ruin your career.*
- 1945** - You were taught to aim at your enemy and shoot him.
- 2003** - *You spray 500 bullets into the brush, don't hit anything, and retreat because you're out of ammo.*
- 1945** - Canteens were made of steel, and you could heat coffee or tea in them.
- 2003** - *Canteens are made of plastic, you can't heat anything in them, and they always taste like plastic.*
- 1945** - Officers were professional soldiers first and they commanded respect.
- 2003** - *Officers are politicians first and beg not to be given wedgies.*
- 1945** - They collected enemy intelligence and analysed it.
- 2003** - *They collect your pee and analyse it.*
- 1945** - If you didn't act right, the RSM put you in the slammer until you straightened up.
- 2003** - *If you don't act right, they start a paper trail that follows you forever.*
- 1945** - Medals were awarded to heroes who saved lives at the risk of their own.
- 2003** - *Medals are awarded to people who work at headquarters or relaxing in a hotel.*
- 1945** - You ate in a mess, which was free, and you could have all the food you wanted.
- 2003** - *You eat in a dining facility, every slice of bread or pad of butter costs, and you better not take too much.*
- 1945** - If you wanted beer and conversation you went to the Canteen, SERGEANT'S or OFFICERS' messes.
- 2003** - *The beer will cost \$7.75 (if available), membership is forced, and someone is watching how much you drink.*
- 1945** - ASCO (Australian Services Canteens Organisation) had some bargains sometimes for soldiers who didn't have much money.
- 2003** - *You can get better and cheaper merchandise at Big W.*
- 1945** - Mouth off to a sergeant and get thumped.
- 2003** - *Do it now and get handed a "time-out" card.*
- 1945** - We called the enemy names like "Krauts" and "Japs" because we didn't like them.
- 2003** - *We call the enemy the "opposing force" or "aggressor" because we don't want to offend them.*
- 1945** - Victory was declared when the enemy was defeated and all his things were broken.
- 2003** - *Victory is declared when the enemy says he is sorry.*
- 1945** - A commander would put his arse on the line to protect his people.
- 2003** - *A commander will put his people on the line to protect his arse.*
- 1945** - Wars were planned and run by generals with lots of important victories.
- 2003** - *Wars are planned by politicians with lots of equivocating.*
- 1945** - All you thought about was getting out and being a civilian, again.
- 2003** - *All you thought about was getting out and being a civilian, again.*

The ORIGINAL Naval 'Birdies'



As a matter of history, the U.S. Navy, late in the 19th Century, sent Professor Francis Marion, U.S. Naval Academy, to Belgium to obtain information on the care and training of homing pigeons and as a result in 1899 the U.S. Navy's *Manual for the Care and Training of Homing Pigeons* was published. This manual required that a flying book be kept on each pigeon and recorded such information as number of flights, length, and rate of miles per hour. According to a Bureau of Navigation (now BUPERS) enlisted code book of 1919, pigeon trainers (or Pigeoneers as they were known) were a part of the Quartermaster rating and were identified as Quartermaster (Pigeon), Q.M.(P).

The advent of radio tended to dampen interest in pigeons. However, as late as 1926 the pigeon service in the Navy consisted of 12 lofts and approximately 800 birds. Pigeons at that time were used only in the aviation branch of the Navy inasmuch as they were dependent upon a fixed base or house. As late as 1942, orders were issued to expand the flock for use between dirigibles and their naval air stations.

During World War II, the Pigeoneers were identified as Specialist X and had the abbreviation SPX(PI). On 1 January 1948, when the Navy converted to a peacetime rating structure, the SPX(PI) was changed to the Exclusive Emergency Service rating of ESX and identified by Navy Job Classification Code 87200 and later ESX-9792. When the new peacetime rating structure was promulgated, the separate identity of the Pigeoneers was lost as far as full time active duty was concerned and personnel were transferred to one of the peacetime general service ratings (now called general ratings). Because of this, the last date possible for a person in this specialty to be identified, employed as a Pigeoneer, and on active duty would have been 1 January 1948.

All exclusive emergency service ratings (except one) were disestablished by the Secretary of the Navy on 10 January 1961. That is the official date for the deletion of the ESX-9792 (pigeon trainer). The reason the Rating Review Board gave for recommending disestablishment was the lack of written requirements for anyone with that skill.

As a matter of interest, the following is quoted from the Director, Naval Communications, to the Bureau of Navigation in 1921: "It has been brought to the attention of this office that occasionally men who have been made expert pigeon trainers have been transferred by commanding officers to other duties, and the work and care of training the birds is left to inexperienced hands." The Bureau of Navigation in Circular Letter #88 of 10 March 1921 to all commanding officers responded: "All men who have qualified as expert pigeon trainers will be immediately assigned to such duty and will not be transferred to other details without reference to the Bureau of Navigation. In case expert pigeon trainers are now attached to air stations on which there are no pigeon lofts, please report to the Bureau."

Finally, duties of the Pigeoneers were to feed, train, and otherwise care for the various strains of pigeons for use in communications, night flying and homing.

Roxie Laybourne

- Ornithologist -



Roxie Laybourne, who died on August 7, 2003, at the age of 92, made a significant contribution to aircraft safety as a forensic ornithologist., her special expertise was in identifying the birds which had been sucked into jet engines.

Her chief contribution was to develop a new methodology for the identification of bird feathers. As a result of her work, airports took steps to discourage certain species, and engine manufacturers made appropriate adjustments to their products.

In October 1960 a Lockheed Electra aircraft taking off at Logan Airport Boston, ran into a flock of starlings, many of which were sucked into the engines; 42 people were killed when the plane crashed. In November 1975 a DC-10 leaving JFK at New York caught seagulls in its engines; the 139 passengers and crew survived after the take-off was aborted, but the aircraft, caught fire and was destroyed. Two months earlier, a flock of Canada geese had brought down a US Air Force radar plane in Alaska, killing all 24 crew.

These were dramatic examples; but the Federal Aviation Administration in the US was receiving thousands of reports of bird strikes on aircraft every year, while the Air Force was losing on average, one plane annually.

Increasing concern led the civil and military authorities, as well as manufacturers such as Pratt and Whitney and Rolls-Royce, to approach the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History in Washington, where Laybourne and her colleague, Carla Dove, set about identifying birds involved in such incidents.

Working with the tiniest of fragments – often charred or mutilated feathers – they identified the birds and built up data that could be used in preventive action; it was Laybourne who identified starlings as the culprits in the Boston disaster. The manufacturers were soon strengthening their fan blades while the military introduced stronger fighter canopies to cope with bird strikes.

Roxie Laybourne was born at Fayetteville, North Carolina. She graduated from Meredith College at Raleigh, North Carolina, studied zoology at North Carolina State University and later took masters degree in Botany at George Washington University. She worked for the National Fisheries Laboratory in Beaufort, North Carolina, and the North Carolina State Museum before joining the Smithsonian in 1944, working in the bird division for 40 years until her retirement She oversaw the division's collection of some 650,000 bird specimens.

As her expertise became more widely known, she was invited to undertake forensic work for the FBI, helping to solve crimes ranging from murder, robbery, and kidnapping to vandalism. She appeared as an expert witness in criminal trials, on one occasion matching fragments of feathers found on a bullet extracted from a dead man, with the feathers in his wife's pillow, which had been used as a silencer.

She also taught biology at George Mason University as an associate Professor.

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Des Kelly - Charlie Bye and Trevor 'Irish' Bolitho



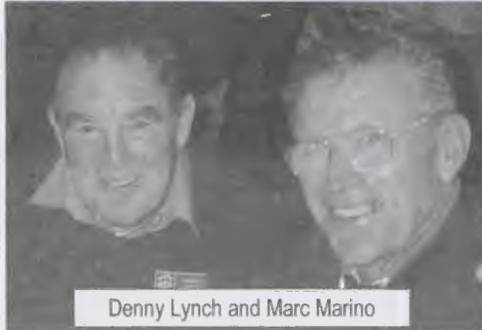
Ron Pink - Ian 'Spike' Jones - Frank McPherson and Kevin Camm



Bill Strahan and Bruce 'Kanga' Bounds



John and Avis Gorin - Greg and Anne Kelson - Kay and Bevan Daws



Denny Lynch and Marc Marino



DEMPSTER CUP GOLDEN OLDIES - 'Skinhead Kelson - Mick Hunter - 'Moose' Massey - 'Yak Yak' Clark - Alec Hudson and 'Lockey' Melville



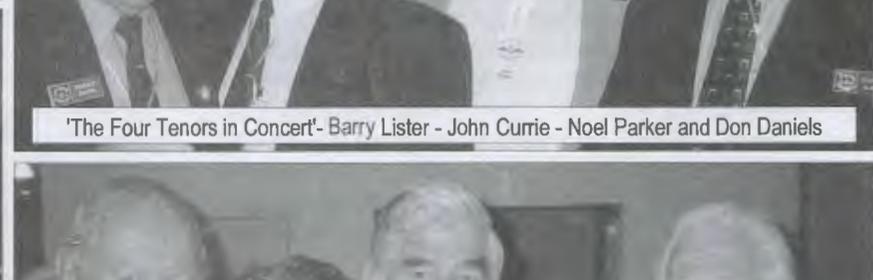
Ian Henderson and Bernard J Butler



'The Four Tenors in Concert'- Barry Lister - John Currie - Noel Parker and Don Daniels



John Stewart and Ray Murrell



Mick Stubbington - Alec Hudson and Kevin Doyle

FLEET AIR ARM REUNION 2003
A SELECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN
DURING THE VARIOUS EVENTS OVER THE
WEEKEND.

*Photographs courtesy Greg Kelson and
Kevin Longford and Brenda Arnold*



Gordon Edgecombe - Albert Riley and Kevin Longford



NSW FAAA DINNER

Gwen and Toz Dadswell



Rob Earle - 'Jet Pipe' Fields - Jim Eagles - Athol Laing - Neville Cowgill



NSW FAAA DINNER

Eric & Joanne Bruce - Bill & Edie Kerr - Jim & Norma Lee



Ray Burt - Don Parkinson - Ian Jones - Bob McDermott (R) - Jim Eagles



NSW FAAA DINNER

Phil Blakemore



John F Clark - Bill Barlow and Peter Clark



Alan Arnell



John & Brenda Arnold - Mike & Jane Heneghan



Ex-WRANS Ann Taylor and Meg Taubman



'Paddy' Williamson and 'Sunny' Sundstrom



NSW FAAA DINNER

Greg Wise and Captain Simon, Cullin CO RANAS

ACCIDENT & INCIDENT REPORT

Since the untimely death of Rob Partington in December 2002, many members have asked what caused the accident. To answer that question, the following is the accident report that was recently released on the Federal Government web site. Ed



FACTUAL INFORMATION

History of the flight

The Lancair, registered VH-CIV, was a homebuilt aircraft operating under an experimental certificate of airworthiness. The owner had recently built the aircraft and had commenced a test flight program. The aircraft departed with a test pilot occupying the pilot seat, and the owner/builder occupying the right seat. Witnesses reported seeing the aircraft flying in the Drysdale area before descending steeply. It subsequently impacted the ground and the two occupants were fatally injured.

The pilot departed from Point Cook and flew along the coast, southwest of Point Cook aerodrome, at altitudes between 3,000 ft and 4,000 ft. After crossing Port Phillip Bay to the Bellarine Peninsula the pilot climbed the aircraft to between 5,000 ft and 6,000 ft. Recorded flight data indicated that the aircraft was slowed, and stalled at an altitude of 5,200 ft. The pilot recovered from the stall, but the aircraft entered another stall during the recovery at 4,950 ft. The pilot recovered the aircraft from that stall, and then repositioned it and entered a third stall at an altitude of 6,200 ft. The aircraft rolled at the initiation of the stall, and continued to roll as it then descended rapidly, accelerating to approximately 150 kts at an angle of approximately 40 degrees from the horizontal, with low engine power. The engine power increased shortly before the aircraft impacted the ground.

The aircraft impacted the ground upright, with the wings level, at a pitch angle of 40 degrees nose down. The landing gear was retracted at the time of impact, and the flaps were either completely or nearly retracted. There was no indication of any mechanical failure prior to impact. The accident was not survivable.

Flight crew

The pilot was an experienced ex-military pilot with 6,500 hours total aeronautical experience, including experience over many years in aircraft with a wide range of performances.

The owner/builder was a private pilot with 352 hours total aeronautical experience in a range of general aviation aircraft with a level of complexity and performance up to four-seat single-engine aircraft, with a constant speed propeller and retractable landing gear.

Aircraft

The aircraft was originally being constructed to comply with the requirements of Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) Civil Aviation Order (CAO) 101.28. During construction, the experimental designation concept was developed and the aircraft construction was subsequently changed and completed in accordance with the experimental designation under Advisory Circular (AC) 21.4(2) issued September 2000. The certification requirements in the experimental category were less prescriptive than those in CAO 101.28 as experimental aircraft are not type-certificated. 'Experimental' is not a category but rather a designation. It is also important to note that an experimental certificate does not attest to an aircraft being fully airworthy (Civil

Aviation Safety Authority Advisory Circular 21.1(1) - Aircraft Airworthiness Certification Categories and Designations Explained - Revised December 2000).

The aircraft was based on a Lancair IV-T kit plane that was originally designed to use a high-performance piston engine. The owner/builder decided to replace the engine with a turbo-propeller engine and sought assistance from a number of people to redesign the aircraft to accommodate the new engine.

Documentation indicated that during construction, numerous changes had been made to the original design, including the engine type and the design of the aircraft from the firewall forward. The propeller had been modified by removing 20 cm of the propeller tips. No evidence was found to indicate that any form of risk assessment had been undertaken to consider the safety implication of these aircraft design changes. A risk assessment was not required for aircraft constructed under the experimental designation.

Aircraft equipment

The aircraft was equipped with an integrated electronic flight information system (EFIS) comprised of a number of data acquisition units and three liquid crystal multi-function display (MFD) units, that could be configured to present operational information in different ways. The instrumentation system received data from a variety of sources, and integrated that data to present operational information to the pilot. Each MFD also contained a memory unit that recorded information that was sent to it. This information was used by the ATSB to determine the flight profile prior to the accident.

The MFDs could be selected by the pilot to display primary flight information, navigation information, or engine system information. The primary flight information consisted of an electronically generated artificial horizon display upon which a number of other information displays were overlaid. Indicated airspeed (IAS) was also displayed on the left side of this display. The IAS was presented as a vertical tape display of airspeed with a range of approximately 100 kts, in increments of 10 kts. The actual airspeed was also displayed numerically on the left side of the artificial horizon display, adjacent to the IAS speed tape display. The airspeed tape display contained a number of coloured regions to indicate various speed ranges and included the stall speed of the aircraft. The stall speed was dynamically generated and changed with varying flight loads on the aircraft. The displayed stall speed was known as the G-corrected stall speed. The EFIS derived the G-corrected stall speed from the aircraft's static 1G stall speed. The 1G stall speed had to be manually entered into the EFIS. The aircraft instrumentation system had been programmed with a 1G indicated

DETAILS

Final Report : 200206005

Release Date: 04-Nov-03

Occurrence Type: Accident

Location: 6km NE Drysdale

State: Victoria (VIC)

Occurrence Date: 20-Dec-02

Time/Zone: 1630 ESuT

Highest Injury Level: Fatal

Investigation Category: 4

Aircraft Manufacturer: Neico Aviation Inc

Aircraft Model: Lancair IV-T
Aircraft Registration: VH-CIV

Type of Operation:

Miscellaneous,
Experimentation

Damage to Aircraft:
Destroyed

Departure Time: 1530 ESuT

Departure Point: Point Cook, VIC

Destination: Point Cook, VIC

Crew Details:

Role : Pilot-In-Command

Class of Licence: ATPL 1st Class

Hours on Type: 1.8

Hours Total: 6500

stall speed of 69 kts with flaps and landing gear retracted.

The aircraft was also equipped with a video camera mounted on the ceiling just behind the two front seats, which was aimed at the instrument panel. This camera operated for some of the test flights, and some of the recordings were recovered from the camera after the accident.

The original aircraft design (with a piston engine) had a declared indicated stall speed of 84 mph, or 73 kts with flaps and landing gear retracted. The Comparative Aircraft Flight Efficiency (CAFE) foundation test flight of this version of the aircraft type recorded a stall speed of 78 kts with flaps and landing gear retracted. That test flight was conducted with a calibrated pitot/static boom, so the indicated airspeed would have been accurate in that instance. A theoretical aerodynamic calculation for the accident aircraft indicated a stall speed of 82 kts. Recorded information indicated that the aircraft stalled at 82 kts at the commencement of the accident sequence.

A flight path marker symbol, in the centre of the primary flight display, indicated the current pitch attitude of the aircraft. At an airspeed of 20 kts above the G-corrected stall speed, an amber pitch limit indicator symbol appeared above the flight path marker. The pitch limit indicator symbol moved down toward the flight path marker symbol as the airspeed decreased towards the stall speed. At 5 kts above the stall speed, the pitch limit indicator symbol turned red. At the point of stall, the pitch limit indicator symbol overlaid the flight path marker symbol. Coincident with the pitch limit indicator symbol changing to red, an aural enunciator would repeat a voice warning of 'stall' and a red stall flag symbol would display in the bottom left corner of the primary flight display.

The aircraft was also equipped with an angle of attack sensing device that used pressure information from two ports on the upper and lower sides of the left wingtip to derive the angle of attack. This instrument could have indicated when the aircraft was approaching a stall. The investigation did not determine if it had been calibrated before the accident flight.

During a test flight on 9 December 2002, the test pilot had decelerated the aircraft until it was approaching the stall as a part of the test flight program. Written records from that flight noted:

'A/c [aircraft] becomes laterally unstable below 80 Kts.'

Recorded flight data indicated that the aircraft stalled three times during this flight, from speeds of 72, 75 and 76 kts. The test pilot had also noted:

'Close to stall at 75 Kts with 10 [degrees] flap Close to stall at 72 Kts with full flap'

Video recordings from the flight indicated that the aircraft had stalled, and rolled 45 degrees to the left, and then 45 degrees to the right of horizontal during the recovery from the stall. Stalls were not a part of the test flight program for the flight.

Test program

A friend of the owner/builder developed a program for the flight testing of the aircraft. That program followed the guidelines in the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Advisory Circular 90-89A - Amateur-built Aircraft and Ultralight Test flying Handbook. The CASA Advisory Circular 21.4(2) - Amateur Built Experimental Aircraft - Certification, advised that CASA:

'...most strongly urges [Amateur-built experimental aircraft builders] to make detailed reference to [this document], prior to their flight programs commencing, and [to] follow the guidance provided.' (section 14.4).

The test flight program was detailed, and was clearly developed in accordance with the recommendations of Advisory Circular 90-89A. Neither the advisory material, nor the test flight program considered action to be taken if aircraft handling or performance produced unexpected results.

CASA Advisory Circular 21.4(2) stated:

'14.5 Those undertaking test flight programs may also derive benefit in consulting the following additional references, as applicable to the class of aircraft involved:

'(a) CAA publication dated January 91, Flight Test Guide for Certification of CAO 101.28 Category Aeroplanes...'

This document recommended calibration of aircraft flight instruments, so that the limits of the flight envelope could be accurately determined. The test flight program for the accident aircraft did not include the in-flight calibration of aircraft flight instruments, including the airspeed indicator. Comparison of the recorded airspeed from the satellite navigation system, fitted to the aircraft as part of the EFIS, with the recorded airspeed from the pitot/static system showed no inaccuracy in airspeed indication.

There was no evidence that any significant risk assessment was undertaken during construction of the aircraft and in the development of the test flight program. Such a risk assessment could have examined the planned activities and considered any potential hazards for their likely impact on the aircraft's safety during test flights.

The friend who developed the test program stated that he conducted the first two flights of the aircraft, but subsequently did not participate any further in the test program. Prior to those initial flights, he conducted an operational pre-flight briefing with the owner. These briefings included hazards and potential actions. The investigation did not determine whether the test pilot for the accident flight conducted similar operational pre-flight briefings for subsequent flights.

There was no evidence that any significant re-evaluation of risk was done during the subsequent conduct of the test flight program. Such a risk assessment process could have examined the results of test flights for hazards that became apparent from analysis of observations and data from each flight. This could have allowed for a considered assessment of any risk mitigators for their likely impact on the aircraft's safety during subsequent test flights, as the aircraft flight envelope was expanded. For example, if unexpected handling characteristics had been encountered during a stall sequence, then previously identified mitigation procedures, such as moving the centre of gravity forward, could have been considered.

Aircraft design

An aircraft operated as an experimental aircraft does not have to comply with any specific design. Builders may comply exactly with a design, or may deviate from that design as much as they wish, or may build an aircraft independent of any previously developed design.

If an aircraft is built mainly in accordance with an established design, but with some design differences, then it may perform differently from an aircraft built exactly in accordance with that established design. If design differences are incorporated one at a time, then it is possible to measure the effect of any single design difference. If many design differences are incorporated at one

(Continued on page 22)

time, the effect of a single design difference on the behaviour of the aircraft may be impossible to predict due to the compounding effect of other incorporated design differences. The accident aircraft had been constructed with many differences compared with the original Lancair IV-T design.

Required persons on board during test flights

A CASA delegate had issued a special certificate of airworthiness authorising flight in accordance with the test flight program. The approval included operating limitations for the test flight program, such as geographical limitations, minimum weather conditions for flight and the maximum number of persons to be on board the aircraft.

Test flights are hazardous compared with normal flight. Accordingly, there is normally a requirement for only operational persons to be on board an aircraft during a test flight. The special certificate of airworthiness under which the accident flight was made stated 'Only personnel essential for the conduct of the testing may fly on board the aircraft. The carriage of passengers is prohibited.'

This aircraft type was normally flown as a single crew operation, and the cockpit of this aircraft was configured for single crew operation. There was no evidence that the test flighting required two persons on board.

ANALYSIS

Planned activities on the 9 December 2002 flight had indicated that the aircraft became laterally unstable as the aircraft approached the stall speed. Recorded flight data indicated that the aircraft also entered a stall during the flight on 9 December, even though this was not planned. It is possible that this stall was an unplanned activity. There was no evidence that any of the aircraft's performance and handling characteristics encountered in this unplanned stall, such as stalling airspeed, were considered when preparing for the flight when the accident occurred, when stalls were part of the test program.

Lateral instability, as the aircraft speed approached the stall speed, had been experienced and noted in a previous flight. The test flight program did not include a lateral stability test for the flight and the recorded aircraft data did not indicate that a lateral stability test had been undertaken on the flight. It is possible that the notes referred to a tendency for the aircraft to drop a wing as it approached the stall, or stalled, as similarly experienced during the accident flight.

During the flight when the accident occurred, the aircraft departed controlled flight from a deliberately induced stall during a test flight. The aircraft then descended rapidly, at an airspeed that was not consistent with a stalled or spinning configuration.

The aircraft instruments displayed a stall speed that was significantly below the actual stall speed in that configuration. It is possible that the stall occurred before the flight crew expected it.

The aircraft was based on an established aircraft design, but had significant design changes from the original. Those design changes were likely to have changed the performance and handling characteristics of the aircraft and the cumulative effect of those changes would have been hard to predict.

The test flight program had been developed in accordance with some of the approved advisory material. The advisory material gave detailed guidance on what was to be done, and how it should be done. It did not give detailed guidance on defining what

should be expected during the test program, and what to do if something unexpected occurred during the program. As an example, a particular aircraft design is normally expected to stall at a particular airspeed for a given configuration and flight condition. The particular handling characteristics as the aircraft approaches and passes through a stall should also be predictable and expected. When these characteristics are examined during a test flight, they would be expected to fall within a defined range. The guidance material did not detail what to do if any of the performance or handling characteristics were outside the expected ranges.

There was no evidence of a significant risk management process, other than pre-flight briefings conducted by the pilot of the first two flights, throughout the design, construction, or test flight program development for the aircraft. Such a program could have assisted in identifying hazards and their attendant risks, and for managing them appropriately from initial construction through to certification. While there was no requirement for an owner/builder to have a risk management process, such a process would have been prudent considering the significant changes made to the aircraft.

The test program did not incorporate flight instrument calibration and therefore the accuracy of the flight instruments was unknown. It would not have been possible to confidently establish the exact speeds at which the aircraft's handling and performance were assessed.

The test flight program only required one person on board the aircraft for test flights. The investigation was not able to identify an operational reason for the owner/builder to be on board the aircraft.



A similar Lancair aircraft

	<p>ADELAIDE 2004</p>
<p>June 2004 will bring the 35th anniversary of the fateful USS Frank E Evans, HMAS Melbourne collision. The proposed memorial reunion will take place in Adelaide, June 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, 2004</p>	
<p>Please register your intentions, by forwarding numbers of persons to attend, ASAP. This will aid in venue booking and pricing.</p>	
<p>Once numbers are known, you will be informed of all necessary information relating to the reunion.</p>	
<p>Contact: Philip Trenaman, 78 Lennox Drive, Paralowie 5108 SA Phone: (08)82813446 - frankeevansmelb04@iprimus.com.au</p>	

<p>DID YOU SERVE IN KOREA? - US NAVAL COMMENDATION RIBBON</p>
<p>The United States Naval Commendation Ribbon has been awarded to the US Seventh Fleet and ALL attached Units. All RAN personnel who served in Korea between 25 June 1950 and 27 July 1953 are eligible to wear the ribbon.</p>
<p>Further information can be obtained from: Mr Ken Moseley, 31 Rowells Road, LOCKLEYS SA 5032 - Phone: (08) 8443 8817</p>

FIREFLY (WB-271) CRASHES IN THE U.K.



UK Newspaper report...

The pilot and a passenger in a Fairey Firefly AS.5 were killed when the aircraft crashed during the *Flying Legends* warbird airshow at Duxford Airfield, England, on July 12th 2003.

The victims were identified as LTCDR Bill Murton, 45, a 21-year Royal Navy pilot, and back seater, Neil Rix, 29. Murton had been with the Historic Flight for three years; Rix was a mechanic who'd been with the RNHF for five years.

Witnesses among the 25,000 people at the show said the plane was climbing after doing a roll when it suddenly lost altitude and crashed into a wheat field beside the airfield. According to witness, Graeme Bowd, "The pilot appeared to be struggling to regain control but he didn't have enough height."

The pilot nearly recovered but was too low and pancaked into the ground. The impact of the crash threw one of the men out of the cockpit and split the aircraft in two, officials said.

The Firefly was operated by Britain's Royal Navy Historic Flight. One of only two airworthy examples of the type in the world, it was based at RNAS Yeovilton.

The former carrier-based attack aircraft was built in 1949.

Although the field was closed immediately after the crash, the airshow resumed on Saturday afternoon and Sunday. Despite all the flying, witnesses said the mood of the show after the accident was "sombre."

Firefly crash - BBC Report ...

Officials at the Imperial War Museum airfield are to examine airshow safety after the crash of a World War II bomber on Monday - the third crash there in two months.

Two men had a lucky escape when the Bristol Blenheim bomber crash "belly-flopped" on the grass near the busy M11 motorway.

Experienced pilot John Webb and a crew member walked away from the damaged historic aircraft after it developed engine trouble as it came into land at its base at the museum at Duxford near Cambridge.

It was unclear why the plane's wheels were not deployed but Ted Inman, Duxford's director, said the men were "very fortunate" to have escaped injury.

The extent of the damage to the plane has yet to be assessed.

Meanwhile, an inquiry has been launched by the Air Accident Investigation Branch.

The crash landing, which happened at about 2015 BST on Monday, was the third historic aircraft accident at the airfield this summer.

Two men were killed on 12 July when a vintage Fairey Firefly crashed during an airshow.

Three weeks later, a two-seater L39 Albatross came down in fields close to the museum. The pilot escaped injury.

And on 2 June 2002, a privately-owned former Soviet air force two-seat L-39 military jet trainer aircraft came to rest on the M11 after going through the boundary fence at Duxford.

Mr Inman said: "We've got to take a hard look at what we do to see if there is anything more that can be done to improve safety.

"We have been having a very bad time of late and we understand the concerns of local people. We are doing what we can to reassure them.

"The standards we employ match those and in certain areas exceed those set down by the Civil Aviation Authority.

"We are ready to announce a number of changes to airshow operations after consultation with the CAA.

"Obviously we will look at what happened to the Blenheim but we still intend to announce those changes before our next airshow on 6 and 7 September."

The Bristol Blenheim was returning from a display at a private function in Ringwood in Hampshire when it crash landed

Pilot John Webb is an experienced commercial pilot who has also specialised in flying the Blenheim, which is operated by the Duxford based Aircraft Restoration Company.

Fatal crash plane had illustrious heritage

By Andy Mann - Cambridge

A former serviceman who spent hours cleaning and, polishing the Fairey Firefly involved in the weekend's fatal crash at Duxford, has told of his affection for the vintage plane.

L/Sea Bev Gray said the 1949 Firefly took pride of place on the deck of HMS *Victorious* and was shown off to visiting dignitaries after being discovered redundant at an Australian naval base.

Mr Gray, 59, of High Street, Gravely, said he was saddened by the death of LTCDR Bill Murton and navigator: Neil Rix, and at the loss of the plane which held many special memories for him.

The plane was discovered in a disused state at the Australian Naval Air Station, Nowra, during a visit by HMS *Victorious* to Sydney, Australia, in 1966. It was found by the commanding officer of 814 (helicopter) squadron, LTCDR Mike Apps.

Mr Gray said: "With the help of many of the officers on the *Victorious*, he bought the plane from the Australian Navy.

"The first the ship's crew knew of this purchase was when a large lorry carrying an old fashioned aircraft. With its wings folded, came alongside the ship.

"It waited for the ship's crane to lift the aircraft onto the flight deck. This caused a lot of amusement to the crew and the press, as it seemed to be the first time that the crew of a carrier had bought their own war-plane."

The Firefly was stowed in the hangar alongside the high-tech planes of the time including Sea Vixen Jets and Buccaneer bombers.

Mr Gray, who was part of the helicopter squadron, said: "This thing took pride of place. When the *Victorious* travelled from one port to another, the Firefly was wheeled onto the flight deck with the other aircraft as our mascot for entering the harbour. It was eccentric and very British.

(Continued on page 24)

Mr Gray added: "When the *Victorious* entered Portsmouth harbour in June 1967 after a year in the Far East, the Firefly stood proudly on the deck of an aircraft carrier for the last time.

"Sadly it was also the last time HMS *Victorious* was to enter harbour. After a small fire on the ship later in the year, the Ministry of Defence decided to scrap the *Victorious* as a cost cutting measure."

The plane was then given to the Fleet Air Arm Museum based at the Royal Naval Air Station, Yeovilton, in Somerset, where it flew as a Navy display aircraft.

From 1997 it was removed from service for a major restoration project which was completed in 2002.

FLEET AIR ARM ARCHIVE UK reads...

The most well known Firefly is that of the Royal Naval Historic Flight, Fairey Firefly, MK5, WB-271.

WB-271 entered service with 814 Squadron at RNAS Cudrose, in Cornwall, in July 1949 and spent nine months at sea in HMS *Vengeance* before going to Fleetlands for maintenance and afterwards to Korea.

She was then transferred to the Royal Australian Navy and served in the carrier HMAS *Sydney* before conversion for target towing duties in 1957.

Put up for disposal in 1966, her purchase price of £160 was raised by the ship's company of HMS *Victorious* and the aircraft was brought home in 1967 and presented to the Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovilton.

In 1972 she was restored to flying condition and joined the Historic Flight. She is now [was] painted as "204" in the Korean War markings of 812 Squadron from HMS *Glory's* air group.

[Originally there was a gentleman's agreement that the aircraft would show an 'R' on one side of her tailplane in honour of HMS *GLORY* and on the other side a 'K' for HMAS *SYDNEY*. It was changed and wore an 'R' on both sides of the tail plane.

According to what I have read, this leaves only ONE airworthy Firefly flying in the world, this is also an ex-RAN aircraft.

This raises the question of what has happened to the Firefly in our own Historic Flight that left RANAS some time ago for restoration. If anyone can enlighten the readership as to its whereabouts, and the proposed plans for its future, I would be delighted to provide space in this journal for a definitive answer.

After losing so many aircraft in such a short time, I feel sure that the people at the Royal Navy Historic Flight must be giving some thought as to the wisdom of flying historic aircraft when there is a chance of irreplaceable loss, both of life and exhibit. Maybe there is something we can learn from other people's experiences. Ed]

Saatchi straightens out droopy ensign

London: The Royal Navy has paid the advertising agency Saatchi and Saatchi about £100,000 (\$240,000) to straighten out its White Ensign.

When the navy told the agency that, as the most senior of the three armed services, it was not well enough regarded, it was told its logo needed "refreshing".



The old logo, a fluttering White Ensign on top of the words "Royal Navy", did not put across the full range of the navy's capabilities, the agency said. The ensign also fluttered

down slightly instead of standing proud. The ensign on the new logo still flutters but does not droop. The only other change is the replacement of a neutral background with a blue one. The Telegraph, London

**The Sunday Times (UK)
SUN 15 JUN 2003**



Devil's landlord plans to house refugees on warship - Carrier could hold 1,000 asylum seekers - BRITAIN'S most notorious landlord, Nicholas van Hoogstraten, is looking to invest in a scheme to house 1,000 asylum seekers on an aircraft carrier moored off Kent. In a bid to revive his business interests, the.....

This was the heading of an article in the UK Sunday Times that I found in the Times' archives. Not being a subscriber, I was unable to check the story further from that source.

However, when the latest edition of the British FAA Association newsletter, 'The Airey Fairey', crossed my desk, I discovered that one of their members had made mention of the article and wrote as follows:

HMS Vengeance - Is this some kind of (bad) joke?

Incredible as it seems (according to a report in the Sunday Times of June 15, 2003), Nicholas van Hoogstraten (sentenced to ten years for manslaughter earlier this year) is to purchase this vessel, more recently the ex-Brazilian 'Minas Gerais', for use as a floating centre for asylum seekers staffed by 300 Category D prisoners.

The Sunday times reported that Hoogstraten's legal advisors have offered to buy the vessel for £2.25 million to act as an offshore asylum centre and have written to the prison service with respect to staffing with Category D prisoners. It would appear that the Home Office thinks the idea has merit but are uncertain that Category D prisoners would be allowed to work for the immigration service looking after asylum seekers.

This is more than a hint of the surreal here; a convicted felon (who was also jailed in the 1960s for his part in a hand grenade attack on a business associate) owning a centre staffed by Category D prisoners supervising asylum seekers!

**Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence Media Mail List
Thursday, November 27, 2003
MINASSIST 61/03**

FAKE VETERANS TO FACE IMPRISONMENT

People fraudulently claiming to be a returned soldier, sailor or airman could face six months imprisonment under proposed laws passed through the House of Representatives today. Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence Mal Brough said anyone falsely claiming to be a returned service man or woman should face the force of the law.

"It's a disgraceful act that warrants a strong penalty," Mr Brough said. "Many Australians have served our country proudly and wrongly claiming to be a veteran is an insult to those men and women."

Along with a maximum prison term of six months, the fine will increase from \$200 to a maximum \$3,300.

The Defence Legislation Amendment Bill also increases the penalty for the wearing of medals to which an individual is not entitled.

Be who you is, not who you ain't, cause if you ain't who you is, you is who you ain't.

AUSTRALIA'S MUSEUM of FLIGHT

by Neil Ralph – Board Chairman

The period since the last report has been largely spent preparing for the final hangar display upgrade for the unveiling by the Chief of Navy on 17 December, marking the centenary of flight. Most of this effort has been in the preparation of aircraft and lifting equipment for suspending the remaining aircraft to be hoisted, namely, the Heron, Macchi and Skyhawk.

Certifying the aircraft as safe to hang, specifying the design and capacities of the lifting apparatus and fabricating this has been a thorough process. Civil, aircraft engineers and specialist rigging engineers have been used so as to minimise the risk of accident. The process has been completed and the hangar is ready to be turned over to the exhibition designers for their part of the upgrade.

The Macchi became available courtesy of the RAN Historic Flight - we have it on loan from them and therefore it is a complete aircraft that could be returned to flying status. Also temporarily on loan from the Historic Flight is the Sea Fury, which has added significantly to the hangar display. It is to be returned to the Flight shortly, but it was here for the very successful FAAA of A reunion in October.

Readers will know that the Sea King and Squirrel helicopters are to be paid off within a few years and we hope to be able to obtain one of each. We might need the Association's help in persuading the Minister for Defence that these should come to this Museum.

A very successful Air Day was conducted with Navy help on 05 October. The CO of *Albatross* gained waivers of Defence costs for the occasion that made the event a financial proposition. We are always most grateful for Navy support on these occasions, it is not something that we take for granted and many Navy personnel put

themselves out at long weekends so that the Museum can run air days. There are many volunteers in the Museum team who also give freely of their time to conduct the air days with safety and good organisation.

John DaCosta has sent an advanced copy of his letter which appears in this edition of *Slipstream*, which asks whether the Museum's title could include, '*incorporating the Naval Aviation Museum*', to signify its origins and its main theme. It is a sound and appropriate idea. The Board did give this idea serious thought at the time and found it difficult to keep the logo of AMoF simple with so many words. It opted instead to include reference to the Australian Naval Aviation Museum in the brochure and also in the letterhead that says that the Museum is '*Operated by The Australian Naval Aviation Museum Foundation*'. This is not a full expression of the idea, but an approximate and, we think, practical way of incorporating the connection, the idea will be reconsidered to see if a better way has been missed in the process.

John also queries the status of the ANAM Society. In looking into this, it seems that there has been very little traffic on the Society over several years and perhaps the Museum has not met its obligations in this regard. We intend to breathe new life into it to revive it and invite members and former members to become active again. There has been no change to member's 'benefits' as set out on the membership card.

We also thank John for his thoughts on advertising and the web-site, these are matters that obviously deserve attention and some re-organisation of staff duties will direct attention to these important aspects.

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NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT



The 2003 national Reunion has come and gone and from the many letters and phone calls I have received those who attended have voted it the "Best Reunion Yet". This is most gratifying to the Reunion Committee who put a lot of hard work into the project. Most events went according to plan although the wet weather resulted in the cancellation of the ceremonial sunset. However that did allow a little more time for drinking so not many complaints were heard.

As usual it was great to catch up with so many friends and acquaintances from the past. The results of the most successful raffle are to be found elsewhere SLIPSTREAM and I congratulate the lucky winners, and I sincerely thank all those who supported the raffle by buying tickets. The proceeds of the raffle meant that the balance sheet for the Reunion was in the black.

It is impossible for me to cite the names of all the workers and sponsors who contributed to the Reunion but I do take this opportunity to collectively thank them all. Your reward is the outstanding success of the event.

The Annual General Meeting was a success with all delegates approaching the items on the agenda with constructive contributions. We have decided to précis the AGM matters and

put them on the website so all members will have the opportunity to see what was discussed and decided. One matter which was drawn to our attention was the difficulties being experienced in the field of support for members who are having health problems. The Executive, in conjunction with the Divisions, will be looking into this most important matter.

All will be delighted to learn that John Arnold has agreed to continue as editor of *Slipstream* for the time being. As you know John's health has not been the best over the past few years and we are most grateful to him for continuing his great work under difficulties.

The Executive is making greater use of the FAAA Website and I urge Divisions and members to do likewise. It is there for all to use and already we are getting favourable reports back from those who keep abreast of developments by reading the news items.

The Christmas Hamper project will continue this year and the FAAA will award Medallions of Merit early in the New Year. Our Navy faces a difficult time ahead but we have confidence that the men and women of our beloved Service will continue to perform their duties at the highest level of excellence. We wish them all the best in their endeavours.

As that time of the year is fast approaching Gwen and I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and may the New Year be everything you wish it to be.

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NATIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT



Now that the reunion is completed, I would like to thank all who assisted, one way or another, to make it a great occasion. Most of all, I thank the members who attended. State Secretary's that require any further Membership Forms, other than the ones I placed in the folders, or any other material please let me know.

All best wishes for the Festive Season.

Mike Heneghan

A.C.T. DIVISION



Greetings once again from beautiful Canberra. We really are having a mixed bag weather-wise, with cold winds, showers and light snow across the Brindabella Ranges.

At the time of writing we are all aware of the tragedy of Bali one year ago and the terrible grief associated with this terrorist attack. Let us all pray to God that nothing like this will happen again. Our thoughts and prayers go out to all those families and friends affected.

It was great to be able to attend the Reunion in Nowra as I had undergone surgery only 12 days earlier. I only attended the Cocktail Party and left the following morning to go back to Canberra. I was disappointed that there wasn't at least the Navy band to accompany the get-together.

With thoughts on the "Last Farewell" section in *Slipstream* - each time I read that someone has died, it brings back memories of friends and associates that I had the privilege of working with - i.e.

Col. Wheatley, as a friend and associate many years ago.

"Bomber" Brunswick - I will always remember him as he twirled that great silver baton ahead of the Navy's Blue Jacket band (he did it so well).

My thoughts and prayers go out to their families.

May I take this opportunity, on behalf of the President and Members of the ACT Division to wish you all a very merry Christmas, surrounded by all those you love - from near and afar. God bless.

Beryl Green - Secretary

NSW DIVISION



The time has passed quickly since the last report. Our reunion is finally over, much to the peace of mind of the organisers. We can now relax and appreciate the good memories that were rehashed and the old compatriots we renewed acquaintances with. Speaking for myself, at our mini-reunion [SE] we met up with mates that none of us had seen for over 30 years. Subsequently, the division now has some new members.

Membership for our division is still on the rise and each time we get another member we become stronger and more friends come

back into the fold. So, if you run into any shipmates who aren't members, give them a membership form and get them to fill it out. The fact that they receive four copies of *Slipstream* a year is worth the cost of membership. The application forms can be downloaded from our web page at www.faaa.asn.au. - if you want to, you can fill it out online, or send by 'snail mail'.

Our Annual Dinner was a great success. The numbers were swollen by the attendance of many visiting state and interstate members and friends and this just added to the night. The total number for the night was 150 and we are sorry for those few that couldn't make it. Our thanks are extended to Joanna Gash MP and Captain Simon Cullen for entertaining us with some local naval 'gossip' and direction of policy towards the ever-evolving *Albatross*. A very good night was had by all that attended.

The AGM for the FAAA of Australia was held in conjunction with the reunion and, for a change, it was a peaceful affair with membership fees being a main topic. We realise that costs just seem to escalate, but our committee try hard to keep things in control. I am pleased to report that the Association general registration fee [joining fee] will stay at \$15, and State Divisions will control their own annual fees.

With the help of our members, we have managed to run a very successful raffle to cover the increased costs and our annual fee will remain unchanged. We hope to adopt the same course of action next year.

At the annual dinner, we had on display the art prizes for the current raffle - these are even more splendid than last year. Our sincere thanks go to our honorary member, John Downton, a well known artist who painted them and virtually donated them to our cause.

The second prize will be of particular interest to a lot of us, being a picture of a Firefly. The artist selected this painting to produce a limited edition of prints, these will be made available to the readers for a very nominal sum. They will be available framed or unframed. Further details can be found at the end of this report, with the details of the raffle. If anyone from another State wishes to partake in this raffle they can contact the NSW secretary. We are not trying to attack the finances of other State Divisions, but many interstate members did ask about obtaining tickets at the dinner.

Losses of old shipmates never seem too far away and among the many I would note that of Tony Penno. I would like to add to the Association's thanks for the initiative he showed in rekindling our beloved *Slipstream*.

To the family and friends of others who have 'sailed their last trip', we extend our sincere condolences.

Following a request from our Welfare Representative, Ray Burt, the Division has purchased, and donated, two 'Wedding Chairs' and kneelers to the *Albatross* Fleet Air Arm Chapel. Pauline Burt, (daughter of the late 'Duke' Denehy) is to be thanked for the needlework involved with the kneelers. As soon as Chaplain Kryns returns from overseas, they will be officially presented to the chapel.

RAFFLE INFORMATION

FIRST PRIZE: An oil painting "*Rhapsody in Blue*",
Blue Mountains of NSW.
Size 18" x 24" - 45.7 x 61cm.



SECOND PRIZE: An oil painting *"Practice Run"*, Firefly, RAN.
Size 14" X 18" – 35.6 x 45.7 cm.

THIRD PRIZE: An oil painting *"Spirit of the Bay"*, Jervis Bay.
Size 3 x 7" x 7" – 3 x 17.8 x 17.8cm. This is a triptych.

All are professionally framed and the prizes will be delivered to the winning ticket holders. The draw for the prizes will be made at the AGM on the 14th March 2004 and results will be published in the 'South Coast Register' and the next edition of *Slipstream*.

Limited Edition Print

Beautiful limited edition prints are hand numbered and signed by the artist, John Downton, F.B.A.S. F.R.A.S. A.S.M.A.

Special inks used by the manufacturers are said to be fast for 100 years Therefore your limited edition print will become even more valuable in time and become a much sought after collectors' item.

Title: *'Practice Run'*, Firefly, R.A.N. Image: 25.5cm X 30.5cm.

By cutting costs wherever possible we are able to offer you, **Print only** ready for framing: \$100.00 + \$8.00 P.P. Total \$108.00; **Magnificently framed print** \$280.00 + \$18.00 P.P. Total \$298.00;

Send your order with your name and address (Please Print) with a cheque or money order to:



VICTORIAN DIVISION

Attention on the flight deck!

I'm on the road at the time of the rendering of this report, which handicaps my access to any membership input.

Another AGM has been brought to a fairly harmonious and successful conclusion. Fair warning has been given by the National President, Toz Dadswell, of his intention to vacate the chair at the 2004 AGM. Time enough then to congratulate him on his meritorious service and to thank him for strengthening the bonds and raising the status of our Association within the Naval and civilian communities. An unenviable task has been presented us all to nominate a worthy successor.

The success of the 2003 reunion won great credit for the tireless organisers. How refreshing it was to be amongst old shipmates again in such familiar surroundings. A great pity that so many more who live within striking distance, chose not to attend - a sad reflection of their diminished pride of association, perhaps? Such growing indifference does little to boost the morale of the faithful minority who, in their own way, strive to keep alive that spirit which identified the Fleet Air Arm as a proud and elite branch of the armed forces.

Addresses by Albatross CO, Captain Simon Cullen, on behalf of Commodore Geoff Ledger, familiarised AGM attendants with most recent FAA activities over the past 12 months. Iraq, the Solomons, air-sea rescue and the horrendous bushfires nearer home involving men and machines of serving squadrons helped to reassure us of the continuing worthy activities of our air arm.

Reassurances were a welcome offering by Captain Tim Barrett



of our Associations representation on the Board of Management of the museum as all endeavours are aimed at the successful survival of this first-class exhibition against towering odds. Reduction of a trading deficit, a government grant from the Centenary Foundation, a relatively large anonymous donation and other business adjustments are having positive effects as Stage 5 of the museums development progresses.

Concern is widespread for the survival of the Tasmanian Division as its 27 members fail to attend meetings in sufficient numbers to form a quorum. It is hoped that a planned AGM of that Division in November will attract enough members to ensure its revival. Good luck, John Nobes! Meantime my fly girl and I are enjoying some self-revival in the sunshine on Macleay Island, Queensland, whilst refreshing many friendships with the locals in anticipation of the trial of a rapidly approaching Xmas.

May you and yours extract maximum joy from family reunions over the coming festive season and enjoy good health and good fortune throughout 2004.

Carry on!

Geoff Litchfield - President

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN DIVISION



The SA report for this period has got to be short. We are still smarting from the drubbing inflicted upon our two AFL teams in recent finals. Some of the Crow fans are coming around but the Power followers have gone into hiding forever. We hope! The winter has not cheered us up. I can remember the balmy weather in Queensland with the odd FAAA reunion held at dumps like Mooloolaba. Still we remain cultured and always boast of our free heritage.

We have had meetings at the Airport Club every couple of months and average about 10 members for each meeting. Not bad for a division of 50 members. Ken Adams from Kapunda even turns up. Ken has a farm near Kapunda in the mid north of the State.

The meetings are at all times serious and grave decisions continually made. The latest one of note was that we were making so much money with the monthly sausage sizzle at Salisbury that we have downgraded our efforts to only six a year. Dinsley Cooper is still the manager of the project which means he has to buy the victuals and cut up the onions.

Hauling the weighty BBQ goes to the slowest person in the ranks. Most disappear quickly at the mention of such a chore. Our treasurer Mike Cain (who was last seen heading East to attend the reunion) sits up many nights counting our money and at the last count reported that there was more than \$5000 in the kitty.

There was a groovy day held at Mike and Kathleen's Strathalbyn residence on Sunday the 18th Oct. About 18 members turned up and enjoyed a BBQ cooked by Mike, with Des Reardon helping. The sun was shining, for a change, and the day was one of agreeable fellowship. Strathalbyn is a trendy town nestled in the Adelaide Hills and is known as an 'Antique Town'. The town is old but the reason for being described as antique is because antiques are sold there. Most of us remained in the confines of Mike's

(Continued on page 28)

residence in case we were auctioned off as antiques. There are also wineries in the district but we did not need to visit them because of our own supplies. It was a good day. Thank you to the Cain family.

There is much excitement surrounding the building known as the Torrens Parade Ground. Millions have been spent in upgrading the building and the RSL and Air Force Association are soon to move in. All sorts of rumours about the splendid appearance of the final product are circulating and it is hoped that we, as a junior association, may be able to find a home there. The heartening reports are that there will be a bar open on most nights and most likely, kitchen activity. We will soon see because it is very close to being completed. If the building turns out as we have anticipated it is possible at one of our divisional serious meetings we will talk about hosting a Federal Council meeting in the future. October in Adelaide is usually good.

Our membership is remaining constant. Health is always a threatening thing. However, by and large, at the time of this report all seems well.

It is good to note that the web site is on the move and receiving many hits. SA has pride that we got this tool going. We are sure that as time goes on it will get better and better.

By the time this is published the October Federal Council meeting will be completed and the reunion over. Those of us in SA that could not get to either hope that all had a good friendly get together and enjoyed some nostalgic moments.

Barry Lord - SA Secretary

SA DIVISION BBQ AT THE CAIN RESIDENCE, STRATHALBYN

Photographs courtesy John Saywell



Des Reardon contemplating dessert, watched by mine hosts, Michael and Kathleen Cain.



L-R: Ruth Morris, Ian and Dee Laidler and Bev and Des Reardon



L-R: Roger Harrison, Barry Lord and Rosemary Harrison
Relaxed and warming to the occasion.



L-R: John Saywell, about to disappear over the back of the chair, Dinsley Cooper, Barry Finn, Moira Saywell and Dawn Finn



Part of the group of attendees - the dog is setting the pattern for the relaxed atmosphere.

TASMANIAN DIVISION

Not much to report but we are still around.

Athol Laing, Bill Lowe and Alan and Bev Andrews, attended the recent reunion at Nowra and were well pleased to see old friends again.

A few weeks ago I had a visit from Cliff Raddatz (Kevin 'Roger' Raddatz's brother), he and his wife were touring the 'Southern States'. At the time the weather was wet and cold, being from Gympie, they were really feeling it. What they managed to see of Tasmania they really enjoyed.

I suppose that the next thing on the agenda is Christmas. It only



seems like last month that we had had the last one.

All in Tassie would like to wish all our friends and old mates the Season's Greetings. Have a GOOD ONE everybody!

As I said, not much news, so be kind to everyone and best of luck to all.

Matt 'Jake' Jacobs - Scribe

QUEENSLAND DIVISION



Our Reunions are always good value and this one was a cracker. Congratulations to the NSW Division and the National Executive for a great effort. I didn't hear any complaints at all and everything seemed to run smoothly. The rain stayed away from the golf and bowls events and some bushranger added my name to the list on the ladies' longest drive marker. Ken Harvey wondered if I wore a dress or panty hose. He balked at my suggestion he might like to check it out and name the perfume I wore behind my ear! It was good fun and the breakfast and buffet lunch were excellent.

The Council meeting on the Saturday morning went smoothly, thanks to the guidance of Toz Dadswell, National President, and unity was finally achieved at setting a standard joining fee - at last!

Mick Blair and Junior Henderson travelled down with Trevor Tite and we all met up at Tamworth for dinner at the Services Club. I told them I would be having breakfast at the Roadhouse on the south side of Musselbrook next morning so it was decided we'd meet there. I passed them enroute and got to the Roadhouse, feeling pretty hungry, only to find a heap of ashes where the premises used to be! Just as I phoned Mick, they turned up and had a good laugh at my choice of eating venue, so I had to backtrack to the local Mobil Station for brekkie while they went on their merry way.

I visited Ken and Claire Hegarty on the way down and had a pleasant night with many laughs. Their son, Steve, is in the police force at Milton and he and another gendarme have been recommended for a bravery award for saving a bloke who'd been washed off rocks in rough sea conditions. They swam out towing boogie boards and supported this bloke. The first rescue boat turned turtle and the operator broke his collar bone or arm. Half an hour later, the next boat arrived to rescue all 4 and that was a drama in the rough conditions about 100 metres or so off shore. They're fairly proud of young Steve.

I went on to Bombaderry to stay with Ray and Alice Larson, who had recently lost a grand daughter(18 years) in a nasty car accident. Very sad.

It's good to meet up with old friends not seen for many years. I met Peter Evans and Mick Winnum - hadn't seen either for too long. I visited our editor where Mick and Trevor were staying. We were amazed at JA's space age keyboard and his ability to play it with some accomplishment, and are delighted that he will carry on the job of Editor for the time being.

Sue Litchfield flew her Piper Cherokee 180 into RANAS - the tower was unmanned and no one around. It certainly tested the security as she couldn't get out of the airfield surrounds until security turned up to check her *bona fides* and finally let her out! I met Sue briefly, but didn't get a chance to check the story out as I got it second hand.



Trevor Tite and Mick Blair (looking serious) in the Slipstream Office



'Liberace' Lister jazzing it up in the Slipstream Office

Our day at the Rising Sun Hotel, Rosewood, saw about 50 attending, and there was plenty of good food and bottomless tea/coffee after the first one @ \$2 a cup. Mick reports that the raffle was well supported and the 1st prize (Whisky) was won by Nev Hall, who donated it back. By this time, the butts had been ditched so Snow held a modified Dutch Auction for it. The bidding was brisk (Ron Powell bidding it up in 50cent leaps) and it was finally won by Don Spencer for \$25, paid for in \$1 coins from poker machine winnings. Well done, Don, and a nice gesture, Nev. The 2nd prize (travelling bag) was won by Ted Fotek. This was our third visit to the hotel, now owned by John and Sue Jardine. Our thanks to Geoff Beardsley for his guidance. I did hear a rumour that Geoff was the Mayor of Rosewood??



ROSEWOOD HOTEL - Roy Hathaway and Nev Hall

(Continued on page 30)



ROSEWOOD HOTEL - John Stewart with Sandra and Peter McDonald



ROSEWOOD HOTEL - Ted Fotek - Don and Joy Spencer - Trish Fotek

Old Birdies still have - IT. Two of these characters got to Rosewood early before the pub opened, they decided to go to the trendy side of the railway tracks for a cup of coffee. The trendy bit was easy to find - there was a table and two chairs on the footpath. A small problem in placing the order required a staff consultation and the question: "By black coffee, do you mean no sugar or milk?"

Sitting there taking in the passing parade, they heard a soft sweet voice say, "You must be Irish?" One not-so-young birdie who was showing his bright green socks, replied: "With a name like Bolitho, what else would I be?" Alas, the sweet voice didn't match the body- she was a very mature lady. Ask Trevor (aka Irish) Bolitho!

Our trip overseas was good and we managed to get two weeks in Crete on a package deal, by sheer luck, to exactly where we wanted to go. We explored the Minoan sites dating back to around 1700BC (give or take an hour or two). It was hot - 35 to 42 C, but it was a dry heat with some breeze and there was plenty of ice cold beer.

We rode donkeys up to a cave where Zeus was supposed to have spent his childhood - a very steep, rough stone track winding up the mountain. I had to hang on with both hands and not look over the side and trust the donkey!

I'd been to Heraklion 25 years ago to repair an aircraft I'd sold to Lord Richard Cecil, who was enroute to Rhodesia and damaged the aircraft on takeoff. He left the aircraft there and continued on to Rhodesia by 737. The poor bloke got killed in Rhodesia by a 'baddie' the day before I finished the job! At that time, I was so busy that I didn't get a chance to look around. After the test flight, I had to run to catch the ferry back to Pireaus. Anyhow, it was great to get back there. *The Cretans have a nice custom whereby, after a meal, they give you a complimentary dish of-fruit or Raki or small cocktail. Could it happen here?*

We had a few tense moments at Heathrow when we arrived from Singapore. A friend, who was to meet and accommodate us

for a few days before going to Crete, left a message to say his wife had suffered a heart attack and was in hospital. Naturally, all arrangements were off.

I phoned a friend who had his office in West London, he rescued us and took us to Sussex to spend the night there. His parents and family are close fiends of mine and we made our base at the parents' farm from then on.

Later, after Crete, we visited our friend whose wife was then out of hospital and improving.

Back in the UK, we visited the FAA Museum at Yeovilton where the Director gave us a guided tour. He'd just been to the funeral of LTCDR Bill Murton RN, who was flying the Firefly when it crashed at Duxford Air Show.

It was good to see Concorde 002 there and I told Graham that I was the only Aussie to work on it in 67/68, not long after leaving Nowra. It was the prototype and was being built at Filton, Bristol in the Brabazon hangar. I was a test engineer on some of the systems in the aircraft.

We went to North Wales and put fresh flowers on Marian's grave near Llangollen and tidied it up. The last two days were spent with son George in London (the start of the heat wave). Our last day was spent at Windsor in 33C heat and it was stifling. I never thought I'd be glad to leave UK in hot weather!

Dave and Joan Randall are back from a cruise to Greenland and Iceland (Iceland is green - Greenland is not). They landed at New York in the middle of the power cut. They said there were huge crowds sleeping on the floors, no water, toilets or food. All flights cancelled. They were lucky to get into the Marriott Hotel on Long Island and got out after a couple of days, a bit lighter in the wallet! Scary stuff.

Warren and Maria Walters have just got back to Salinas after a cruise to Alaska and aim to be out here around Anzac Day.

Alan and Judy Arnell have been over in Idaho and other places. Alan made contact with Warren from San Diego. They enjoyed their trip.

Max Wilson tells me that he is as fit as a 'Mallee Bull' and he and Norma plan to go back to Bali in May for some time. They support a family over there. Sounds good to me.

Arthur Johnson and Maxine did a canal cruise in France earlier this year. Arthur says the weather was pretty good and they got great enjoyment in filling a bucket with corks by the end of the trip!

Arthur Sharland has been up here again and spent a few days at the Gympie Music Muster. I think he has a desire to be on stage one day. We always reckoned he was an actor! He's about to undergo a knee replacement operation and says he'll be back on the golf course by Christmas. Boy, lots of our people are keen travellers this year.

John Stewart gives the following information: Greg Ellis, together with Phil Treleaven and Fred Rubly, are organising a reunion for those involved in the 'Evans Disaster'. It will be a Memorial Day in Adelaide on 2nd March 2004. Contact Greg on (08) 8280 7828 or email: boysof69@hotmail.com

John Stewart's wife, Brenda, is donating a framed print for one of our raffles. Thanks, Brenda. We look forward to seeing it. Our Ladies' days are going well at the Treasury Casino.

I'll close now as I can feel the deadline hanging over my head - preparing to be embossed on my forehead again!

Christmas and New Year Greetings to all.

Barry Lister - President

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN DIVISION



Ahoy! This has been rather a quiet period for our Division. Our secretary, Peter Welsh, has asked each of the Foundation Members of the FAAA of A to give a short biography of their service and after service life. This is the biography of our Foundation President, Theo Bushe-Jones.

THEO BUSHE-JONES - A RESUME FROM THE NAVY TO NOW

22 FEB 1950 Joined the RAN and after Recruit Training at Flinders Naval Base, transferred to RANAS Nowra and underwent training to become an Armourer (the backbone of the RAN). [Very close, Theo! Only a couple of inches away. Ed]

1951-1952: Joined HMAS SYDNEY with 817 Squadron and served in Korean waters. Returned to Nowra and served at the Gunnery School and the Beecroft Bombing Range. Played the 'E' Flat saxophone in the original Blue Jackets' Band at ALBATROSS.

21 FEB 1956: Discharged from the RAN. Engagement expired.

Joined the City of Perth RSL Sub Branch in 1952.

Joined the City of Perth Navalmen's Association in 1956.

Completed Repatriation Course in brick laying, then joined the Western Australian Police Force in March 1969. Served in that capacity until retirement in 1988.

During the 1960s, a group of ex-Birdies would meet once a year at the Police Ball at the old Embassy Ball Room, and discuss the old times. At one of these events, it was suggested that we should contact all ex-Birdies and form our own Association. Between Bill 'Pappy' Gault, Bob Pattenden and myself, we searched the phone books, Electoral Rolls etceteras and were able to contact a lot of people throughout the State.

A meeting was held at the Airforce Association Estate at Bullcreek, and it was agreed that the Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia be formed, and that we would become a Sub Section of the Naval Association and the Airforce Association and that the Bullcreek premises would become our headquarters. I was elected President and conducted meetings each month and eventually the Association took place and went ahead.

I can't remember all the details of those years as all the books and monies from the Association were handed to Nowra when the Association became Australia wide. Until that time, two meetings were held each month; one for the Federal body and one for the State body. This arrangement required the keeping of two sets of Minutes, Financial Statements and Correspondence; all these were handed to the Federal body when it was formed in Nowra.

Admiral Sir Victor Smith was now retired and we were able to fly him to Perth (travel and accommodation paid for by Ansett Airlines) for a dinner that was held at the Bullcreek Headquarters, where he addressed some two hundred people. He was approached to become our Patron and he graciously accepted.

A clash with elements of the Airforce Association (which split their Association), found us without premises, but arrangements were soon made with the Riverton RSL Sub Branch for us to share their premises. These premises were unfinished and in poor condition, but with the help of Ron Tate, Bob Pattenden, 'Squizzy' Taylor, Harry Webster, Tom Mitchell, Tom Bennett and many others, we were able put a ceiling in the hall, install trusses, build the stage, finish the rear of the building and the kitchen - we were then ready to hold functions.

We had some memorable nights there, especially when the MELBOURNE was in and we invited Air Branch members to a great night out.

Most of our members became members of the Riverton RSL Sub Branch. When everything was a going concern, the RSL wanted to charge us \$13,000 a year rent. We refused! They then changed the locks and we were not able to use the premises.

We then held our meetings at the City of Canning Naval Cadets Hall and helped in the construction of their new premises; especially Ron Tate, who carried out the electrical installation.

When the Naval Association bought the Chapman Road property on East Perth, we took up residence there. Once again, it was the FAAA and Perth Sub Branch that put all their weekends into cleaning out the rubbish, laying concrete, painting and building, planting trees, and building display cases for the Memorabilia Rooms. 'Pappy' Gault 'came by' some telegraph poles and these were used to construct a shaded area at the rear. These were all put in place by hand!

Bob Pattenden found the anchor that stands in front of the building at Fremantle. With the permission of the Port Authority, 'Pappy', with the aid of a truck fitted with a hoist, was able to get the anchor to its present site where we cleaned it, and set it in position.

I was then nominated, and duly elected, for the State Presidency of the NAA and I withdrew from the Presidency of FAAA. During this period, I travelled to Victoria and NSW to set up State branches there. [FAAA]

Each year I attended the conferences at Nowra along with Ron Tate, John Green, George Smith and Geoff Vickridge, and saw the transfer of all Federal records and funds to the new group headed by 'Toz' Dadswell.

With Ron Tate, I attended the Navy's 75th Anniversary in Sydney; the entombment of the Unknown Soldier at Canberra and Federal Conferences in Melbourne, Adelaide and Brisbane (mostly at my own expense). In company with Lou Burns, I attended the Dedication of the Korean War Memorial in Canberra. With John Green, I attended the Korean War Veterans' return to Korea in 2001, with a side tour to China.

In the FAAA I have served as Federal and State President, Secretary, Pensions and Welfare Officer and Committee member.

In the Naval Association I have served as State President, Sub Section President, Secretary, Welfare Officer, Advocate and Pensions Officer. I was also the RSLs Naval Association representative for the retention of the Hollywood Hospital for Veterans and sat on WATMOC for nearly ten years. I was also their representative on AVADS for the same period.

I was awarded Life Membership of both the FAAA and the Naval Association.

I rejoined the RSL at the Rockingham Sub Section in 2000 and have served there as the Pensions Officer and Advocate, we represent all Ex-Service men and women in their dealings with DVA and the Appeals Board.

I am the Chief Advocate at the Combined Advocates Mandurah RSL where we offer our services on behalf of ex-service personnel in their dealings with DVA pensions.

I have conducted a Day Club in the Rockingham [RSL] area for the past 6 years and hold Day Club activities on Tuesday of each week for up to 50 lonely, elderly people. It is open between 10:00 to 14:00 and two hot meals are provided.

I joined the Fisheries Department as a Voluntary Fisherman's Liaison Officer some 9 years ago. These duties are carried out on weekdays and weekends in the education of children and others on the sustainability of our fish stocks and fishing ethics.

I have represented the Rockingham RSL at the last two State Conferences and will be doing the same again next year. ...

Out thoughts go to those of us that are not well.

Leon Battle has been ill for some time; Kerry Sojan has had a hip replacement and Morrie Mankoph and Keith Doncan cancelled their trips to the reunion due to ill health

Our new meeting place is now Rosie O'Grady's Irish Pub in Milligan Street, Northbridge. Meetings are held on the 2nd, Sunday of every second month. The next meeting will be in February 2004.

Our best wishes and seasonal greetings go to all those on the sick list - and even the healthy members.

John Green - Unit 1/7 Prinsep Road, Attadale, WA 6156
Tel. (09) 0330 7386 Mobile 0422 943 488

A TRAVELLER'S TALE

This story first appeared in the September 1960 edition of Slipstream
It may bring back a few memories,
but who is the writer?



I can't recall when the decision to move from Nowra to Melbourne was made, but I do remember the problem that followed on that decision. How to move, two adults, five children, a large dog, and a houseful of furniture and personal effects? Road or Rail transport was out, far too expensive. Service channels were also out as I was not entitled.

It was here that a policy of the previous nine years paid its dividend. The house had been furnished so that all furniture could be broken down to handy sized pieces, or ditched at a small loss. A light caravan and a roof rack were hired, and the business of packing and stowing began.

The morning of 9th July gave promise of a day of good weather, and helped to lift the spirits that were getting a little low after a night of packing and stowing things in, on, or around the car and caravan. That morning also saw the arrival of a "famous last word" that I have not been allowed to forget, "Hurry up, I want to make the border by dusk." We made the border by dusk all right, the one between Shoalhaven and Wingecarribee Shires, a mere 15 miles away. The reason why it took so long to cover so little distance was, of course, the Cambewarra Mountains, a formidable obstacle to any car, to ours with its load it was almost impassable.

The trek started at 12 noon, final packing and goodbyes taking longer than expected, inevitable I suppose when women are moving from friends and neighbours. Nevertheless, apprehensive, yet impatient, a hopelessly overloaded car and caravan finally crossed the Shoalhaven River.

By 1 p.m. we had well and truly blocked the road to Kangaroo Valley. The old Plymouth struggled mightily up the lower half of Mt. Cambewarra until a sharp bend with a steep pinch proved too much. She boiled and steamed, smoked from overheating, and finally stopped. We couldn't go up, and it was too dicey to back down. The mountainside soon filled up with a collection of cars and trucks, drivers gathered around, full of suggestions and comments, mostly impractical, some inane. Finally a bright one came through and with a lot of heaving and pushing a way was cleared to allow an empty milk truck through. The driver hooked on, and with almost contemptuous ease pulled the lot up the hill.

With a great sigh of relief we reached the floor of the Valley after a hair-raising brake and stumble run down the other side. This relief was short lived as the realisation of having to do it all again up the other side hit us. Locals stated quite firmly that Mt. Barrengarry was not nearly so steep, following events proved just how little people sometimes know of things around them.

We had to lighten the load - that was obvious - so out went my wife, the four eldest children, and the dog. "Meet you at the top," I said, "goodbye," and with a little more confidence set off. This time I only made a quarter of the climb before the car stopped again. Too much was being asked of a car built in 1936, and certainly not intended for this load. The prospect of reaching the Hume Highway at all now seemed very remote, remote that is, until a friendly builder from Moss Vale stopped and offered to tow me up on his way back from Kangaroo Valley. His truck was the inevitable beat-up Ford, but the engine sounded healthy, and the builder himself was full of confidence.

Shouts and cries of greeting marked the arrival of the foot party. They were in good spirits and enjoying the walk in beautiful surroundings. "We'll go on and meet you at the top," said my wife, so, rounding up the herd, set off up the mountain once more. Two hours went by, and I was beginning to worry about the builder, when, finally, he came bounding around the corner. "Sorry I'm late," he said, "the old bus played up on me."

Things still didn't look too bright, but this boy was full of confidence and soon had us hooked up. With a loud roar of engines, and a cloud of burnt oil we set off up the hill, the builder grinning cheerfully, and me wrestling with a first gear that had given in under the abuse it had received.

Finally, with both engines boiling furiously we topped the crest of that long, long climb. The road to Melbourne was now clear. I looked up the road, but no sign of the rest of the family. I thanked the builder and set off slowly looking for the lost members. About a mile later I came across six weary, mud-spattered figures. With tired smiles they climbed aboard, asked "why so long," and promptly fell asleep.

At Moss Vale I stopped to take stock, and it didn't look so good. Distance covered, 31 miles; petrol used 4 gallons; oil used, 4 quarts; first gear grinding badly; tow bar bent. Melbourne seemed a hell of a long way off.

The rest of the trip was just one long grind at 20 m.p.h. The only highlights worth mentioning were blowouts at Gundagai, Holbrook and Albury. By this time the trip had degenerated into a battle between tyre and pocket.

At long last, or so it seemed anyway, on Monday the 11th July, at 11 am, we reached Melbourne. Tired, dirty, broke, but immensely pleased at getting through. An experience? Yes - but never again at such odds and blithe gaiety.

Postscript:

The car alone carried: 6 bodies, 1 dog, 1 wardrobe, 1 table, 4 beds, 2 cane chairs, 1 electric polisher, 1 pram, 2 tricycles, 2 scooters, 1 bucket, 1 kit bag and 1 travelling bag.

The total load was over two tons and I have the deepest admiration for the designers and builders of 24 years ago. They knew how to put a car together, one that would last anyway.

oooOOooo

A priest and a rabbi are sitting next to each other on an airplane.
After a while the priest turns to the rabbi and asks, "Is it still a requirement of your faith that you not eat pork?"
The rabbi responds, "Yes, that is still one of our beliefs."
The priest then asks, "Have you ever eaten pork?"
To which the rabbi replies, "Yes, on one occasion I did succumb to temptation and tasted a ham sandwich."
The priest nodded in understanding and went on with his reading.
A while later, the rabbi spoke up and asked the priest, "Father, is it still a requirement of your church that you remain celibate?"

The priest replied, "Yes, that is still very much a part of our faith."

The rabbi then asked him, "Father, have you ever fallen to the temptations of the flesh?"

The priest replied, "Yes, rabbi, on one occasion I was weak and broke with my faith."

The rabbi nodded understandingly.

He was silent for about five minutes, and then he said, "It sure beats the hell out of a ham sandwich, don't it?"





Subject: Letter to the Editor

(This was a letter written to the media recently here in the US)

I would like to remind the people of what the entertainers of 1943 were doing, (60 years ago). Most of these brave men have since passed on.

Alec Guinness (Star Wars) operated a British Royal Navy landing craft on D-Day.

James Doohan ("Scotty" on Star Trek) landed in Normandy with the U.S. Army on D-Day.

Donald Pleasance (The Great Escape) really was a R.A.F. pilot, who was shot down, held prisoner and tortured by the Germans.

David Niven was a Sandhurst graduate and Lt. Colonel of the British Commandos in Normandy.

James Stewart flew 20 missions as a B-24 pilot in Europe.

Clark Gable (Mega-Movie Star when war broke out) was a waist gunner flying missions on a B-17 in Europe.

Charlton Heston was an Army Air Corps Sergeant in Kodiak.

Ernest Borgnine was a U.S. Navy Gunners Mate 1935-1945.

Charles Durning was a U.S. Army Ranger at Normandy.

Charles Bronson was a tail gunner in the Army Air Corps.

George C. Scott was a U.S. Marine.

Eddie Albert (Green Acres TV) was awarded a Bronze Star for his heroic action as a U.S. Naval officer aiding Marines at the horrific battle on the island of Tarawa in the Pacific Nov. 1943.

Brian Keith served as a Marine rear gunner in several actions against the Japanese on Rabaul in the Pacific.

Lee Marvin was a Marine on Saipan when he was wounded.

John Russell was a Marine on Guadalcanal.

Robert Ryan was a U.S. Marine who served with the O.S.S. in Yugoslavia.

Tyrone Power (an established movie star when Pearl Harbor was bombed) joined the Marines, was a pilot flying supplies into, and wounded Marines out of Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

Audie Murphy, little guy from Texas, Most Decorated serviceman of WWII.

I wish I had room to tell you more about Actor **Sterling Hayden** and an actor by the name of **Peter J. Ortiz** (Twelve O'clock High, Rio Grande and The Wings of Eagles), but this would turn into a book.

There is quite a huge gap between the heroics and patriotism in 1943 and the cowardly despicable posturing of the Hollywood crowd of today.

PONAM

**A BASE OF THE FORGOTTEN FLEET
by HARRY BANNISTER**

'PONAM' is the result of 9 years' research. Harry Bannister served with some of the units described in this book. It describes each unit, where they served, what they did, what they were equipped with, and most of all what was missing from their equipment when they arrived in Australia. All of the units are noted, with their complements and the parts they played during the Pacific/Japanese campaign of 1944/45.

Advance copies available direct from the publisher:

01424853349 or

www.upso.co.uk/harrybannister



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Paperback edition £12.99 ISBN 1-84375-024-4

A Cock and Bull story - with emphasis on the bull

Zebediah was in the fertilised egg business. He had several hundred young layers, called pullets, and eight or ten roosters, whose job was to fertilise the eggs. Zeb kept records, and any rooster that didn't perform well went into the soup pot and was replaced.



That took an awful lot of Zeb's time; so, Zeb got a set of tiny bells and attached them to his roosters. Each bell had a different tone so that Zeb could tell from a distance, which rooster was performing. Now he could sit on the porch and fill out an efficiency report simply by listening to the bells.

Zeb's favourite rooster was old Brewster. A very fine specimen he was, but on this particular morning, Zeb noticed that Brewster's bell had not rung at all. Zeb went to investigate. The other roosters were chasing pullets, bells a-ringing! The pullets, hearing the roosters coming, would run for cover, but to Zeb's amazement, Brewster had his bell in his beak, so it couldn't ring. He'd sneak up on a pullet, do his job and walk on to the next one. Zeb was so proud of Brewster that he entered him in the county fair.

Brewster was an overnight sensation.

The judges not only awarded him the 'No Bell Piece Prize.'

But also the 'Pulletsurprise.'

[Don't blame me - I didn't write it. Ed]

The Far East Strategic Reserve & HMAS ANZAC/TOBRUK Associations'

Dinner to celebrate the placing of the names on the AWM Honour Roll of:
Alan Campbell Cooper (HMAS ANZAC)

and

Robert Spooner (HMAS TOBRUK)

'Died on Active Service during the Malaya Emergency in 1957'

Venue: The Ainslie Football Club, 52 Wakefield Avenue, Ainslie ACT- 02 62488422 on 20th February 2004

Dress: Lounge Suit or Blazer ~ Ladies to Compliment

M.C.: Noel (Wacka) Payne (National President, FESR Assoc.)

1900 - Muster: Pre-dinner drinks can be purchased from the cash bar

1930 - Take seats in the Dining Room (Drinks available from cash bar)

Welcome by John Golotta (President - HMAS ANZAC Assoc.)

Naval Ode by Bill Jarman (FESR & HMAS ANZAC Associations)

Toast to Fallen Comrades by Bob Gibbs (Hon. Member - FESR Assoc.

1945 - Entrée

Main course - (Followed by an address from our Guest Speaker)

Dessert - Farewell speech

Cost \$40.00 per head RSVP by 31 JAN 2004

Send cheque or Money Order to:

FESR (National) Association, PO Box 131, Nerang QLD 4211

A LAST FAREWELL

The Association records with regret the deaths of the following members, shipmates and friends:

28 March - Brian Edward BURNS

06 August - Antony Michael PENNO

15 August 2003 - Jack KITNEY

28 August - Robert 'Googie' WITHERS

03 September - Edward Flowers WILKINSON

10 September - Robert 'Bob' HUNTER

12 September - Francis Leslie NEILSON →→→→

November - Robert J C DAVIS

04 November - Florence Christina Eileen MATTERSON

11 November - John 'Jack' Christian JEPPESON

[I have received information that 'Chuck' Churcher passed away in November, but no confirmation. Ed]



OBITUARY

ROBERT 'BOB' HUNTER

Passed away 10th September 2003 aged 77.

Robert 'Bob Hunter' transferred from the RAAF in March 1948, joining the fledgling Fleet Air Arm. During his time in the RAN, he served at HMA Ships Cerberus, Penguin, Albatross, Nimba, and Watson, and aboard Kanimbla, Sydney, Vengeance, and Melbourne.

Bob was ranked as a Chief Aircraft Mechanician Airframes / Engines and was a Technical Instructor.

Discharged in 1965 he pursued a career in Industrial Training.

He married his wife Marie in 1956.

Courtesy Adam Hunter



OBITUARY

FLORENCE CHRISTINA EILEEN MATTERSON

Passed away 4th November, 2003.

Les 'Juke' Matterson, thanks the many friends who supported, or sent messages of condolence during this most trying period which resulted in the loss of Florence, wife, mother and grandmother. The Matterson family take this opportunity to thank each and everyone.

Les, Sandra, Christopher, Veronica and families.



OBITUARY

ROBERT J C DAVIS

I wish to advise of the passing of one of our ex-Fleet Air Arm colleagues, Robert J C Davis, ex-LEM (Air).

Robert joined the RAN in January 1958, one of the first nine-year intakes. Discharged in January 1967, he became an Auto Electrician in Zilmere, Brisbane.

Courtesy George Parker

OBITUARY

ANTONY MICHAEL PENNO

05 February 1945 - 06 August 2003

'Tony' passed away after a long illness. He will be long remembered for the initiative he showed in resurrecting the HMAS Albatross 'Slipstream' as the vehicle for our current Fleet Air Arm magazine; and the restoration work he carried out for the RAN Historic Flight. Ed



The FAAA of Australia web site is on line at
<http://www.faaaa.asn.au>

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OBITUARY

BISHOP GEOFFREY MAYNE AO



IT IS WITH GREAT SADNESS THAT I INFORM THE NAVY OF THE DEATH OF ONE OF OUR MOST DISTINGUISHED CHAPLAINS, BISHOP GEOFFREY MAYNE, WHO PASSED AWAY PEACEFULLY ON SUNDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 2003. HE WAS AGED 75.

BISHOP MAYNE WAS ORDAINED INTO THE CATHOLIC PRIESTHOOD IN 1956 AND JOINED THE RAN IN 1965. HE SERVED EXTENSIVELY BOTH ASHORE AND AFLOAT AND SAW ACTIVE SERVICE OVERSEAS. HE WAS ADVANCED TO PRINCIPAL CHAPLAIN IN 1977, ELEVATED TO MONSIGNOR IN 1979 AND APPOINTED A MEMBER OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA IN 1983. HE SERVED AS PRINCIPAL CHAPLAIN OF THE NAVY FROM 1982 TO 1983.

ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE NAVY IN 1983, HE BECAME PARISH PRIEST AT MOSMAN. TWO YEARS LATER, HE WAS APPOINTED CATHOLIC BISHOP TO THE ADF. HE HELD THIS POSITION UNTIL AUGUST THIS YEAR WHEN HE RESIGNED DUE TO FAILING HEALTH.

BISHOP MAYNE'S VOCATION WAS OF TOTAL SERVICE TO HIS FAITH, TO US IN THE NAVY AND TO EVERYONE IN THE ADF. LAST MONTH, DESPITE HIS POOR HEALTH, HE ACHIEVED HIS WISH TO ORDAIN HIS SUCCESSOR IN A MOVING CONSECRATION MASS AT ST CHRISTOPHERS CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL IN CANBERRA.

HIS PONTIFICAL REQUIEM MASS WAS CELEBRATED AT ST CHRISTOPHERS CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL ON 24 SEPTEMBER 2003.

A.C.WINTER LCDR, RAN - Commanding Officer HMAS WATERHEN

OBITUARY

MAJOR GENERAL ROBERT FINEY MOHR

The late MAJGEN Robert "Stoker" Mohr was a Solicitor then Barrister before ultimately ending as Judge Advocate General of the ADF in 1984 and a Supreme Court Judge for SA until his retirement in 1995. He was born in Adelaide on July 31, 1925 and as soon as he turned 17 he enlisted in the RAN. After training he was posted to HMAS Arunta as a Stoker.



Arunta must have had erudite engineering spaces. Two of his fellow stokers, Ray Northrop and Richard McGarvie became judges in the Federal and Victorian Supreme Courts respectively (McGarvie also became Governor of Victoria) while a third, Peter Mann, became Bishop of Dunedin.

Stoker Mohr saw considerable action in the Pacific campaign. He resigned from the Navy in 1947 and studied law. Graduating in 1952 he joined two law firms before striking out solo as a Barrister.

In 1970 he was appointed as a Judge to the District Court in Adelaide and then to the SA Supreme Court in 1978.

Judge Mohr returned to the defence realm when he joined the Army Reserve in 1959. Here he cut out a distinguished career in military legal matters.

In 1982 he was promoted MAJGEN and appointed as the Army's Judge Advocate General (JAG). Two years later he became the ADF's first JAG.

In 2002 he came out of retirement when, with former RADM Phillip Kennedy he conducted a Federal Government review into the service entitlements for personnel who served in South East Asia between 1955 and 1975.

Despite his spectacular career in law, Mohr considered his experiences in Arunta as his proudest achievement. He was very proud of the fact that he was a stoker and of his nickname.

He told the story of a trip around Sydney Harbour in a patrol boat in the 1970s as a Colonel. On the bridge a Leading Stoker spotted his WWII Medal ribbons and said: "You must have been a CO of a battalion during the war, sir?"

Mohr replied, "No, I was in the Navy."

The stoker said, "Well you must have been at least the captain of a destroyer", to which Mohr told him, "No, I was just a stoker like you".

The Leading Stoker replied, "Well there is hope for me yet!"

He marched every Anzac Day with the Arunta Association until the last two years when he became a Grand Marshall.

He turned up to the Arunta group in his Major-General's uniform and was promptly told: "You were a Stoker with us - so that must be your equivalent rank in the Army."

Stoker Mohr laughed and said, "Of course it is!"

By LCDR Andrew Stackpool - Courtesy Navy News



Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Chris Ritchie giving his speech at the Provisional Acceptance Ceremony of the SH-2G(A) Super Seasprite



L to R: LCDR Ian Parrott, LCDR Chris Smallhorn, Senator Robert Hill and Federal Member for Gilmour, Joanna Gash, after the demonstration flight at the Provisional Acceptance Ceremony of the SH-2G(A).



Aerial views of Kaman Super Seasprite along coastline Culburra to Point Perpendicular.
All photographs courtesy RAN Photographic

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SLIPSTREAM EDITOR – SEE FRONT COVER
slipstream@shoal.net.au

NAVY'S NEWEST HELICOPTER ARRIVES ON DECK

On 05 November 2003, the Defence Materiel Organisation and the Royal Australian Navy, achieved a significant milestone in the Super Seasprite project with the maritime helicopter successfully making its first ever landing on the deck of an Australian warship. The Super Seasprite carried out shipboard trials onboard the HMAS WARRAMUNGA at Garden Island. The trials included landing, lash-down and stowage procedures onboard the ANZAC class warship. This was a long-anticipated event in the \$1,014.6 million project and was an important step forward.

Defence provisionally accepted the first of the 11 Super Seasprite helicopters for testing, evaluation and training at HMAS ALBATROSS in Nowra on the 18th October. The trials will help ensure that the final product meets the Navy's requirements making the Super Seasprite one of the most advanced maritime helicopters in the world. Once accepted into service and fully equipped, the Super Seasprite will provide the primary anti-surface weapon system for Australia's fleet of eight ANZAC class frigates. The helicopters will be equipped with a sophisticated suite of sensors and weapons, including the capability to fire the 'Penguin' anti-ship missile and to deliver the Mk 46 anti-submarine warfare torpedo.

The Super Seasprite, from 805 'Checkmates' Squadron based at HMAS ALBATROSS, has a crew of two for the trials. The squadron currently has a complement of 64 personnel and more personnel will arrive early in the New Year for training.

