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Slipstream

Established HMAS Albatross 1957



805 Squadron Seasprite over RANAS Nowra
Photograph by LSPHOT-1A Brad Fullerton—Courtesy RANAS Photographic Section



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805 SQUADRON UPDATE

By Commander Peter Ashworth RAN
Commanding Officer



Most readers of *Slipstream* will be aware that 805 Squadron recommissioned in February 2001 in anticipation of accepting the first of eleven Kaman SH-2G(A) Super Seasprite helicopters by mid-2001. As widely reported in the media, the helicopter acquisition project was significantly delayed due to software development problems. So what happened?

In brief, the heart of the Seasprite combat system is the computer intensive 'Integrated Tactical Avionics System', or 'ITAS' as we call it. The role of ITAS is to gather data from all sensors and systems, integrate the data, and produce a comprehensive tactical information display on the four colour LCD displays - not unlike laptop computer screens. For example, the Observer (Tacco) might elect to display his navigation track and waypoints on one screen. He or she can then quickly overlay sensor data over the nav information, such as radar and ESM tracks. The crew can then filter unwanted information from the screens, or select radar tracks with a couple of mouse clicks and assign the track to a Penguin missile or to the Link 11 datalink, or to other systems. At the same time, the pilot will have all his flight information on one of his displays, and may be managing the datalink or monitoring aircraft systems or sensors on his second screen. ITAS is quite simply a revolutionary system that enables a two man crew to manage a similar array of sensors and systems as an eleven man crew does in a P-3 Orion. The days of 'one system one display' are long gone.

Quite early in the project life it became evident that Litton, the sub-contractor responsible for developing ITAS software and hardware, was not going to meet project milestones. Eventually Kaman and Litton parted ways after the delivery of the first build of software. Build 1 software provides all of the flight systems that enable the aircraft to fly by day and night, but does not include the software to activate and control any weapons or sensors, such as FUR or radar, ESM and self-defence countermeasures. Comm's are limited to non-tactical V/LTHF and HF. Kaman has since contracted CSC Australia and Northrop Grumman (San Diego) to complete the tactical software packages (Builds 2 and 3) that will provide the full warfighting capability. Build 2 and 3 software is scheduled for delivery late 2004 for integration in the aircraft early 2005. The process of changing out sub-contractors for a major software development exercise essentially cost the program a considerable schedule slippage.

The troubles that have beset the Seasprite project are no different than those experienced by other contemporary software intensive projects. Aircraft such as the RN EH101 'Merlin' helicopter, RAAF AP-3C update, the USN Sikorsky SH-60R Seahawk, Eurofighter, F-22..... The fact that we are in such good company does not make the delays any more palatable or acceptable.

So where are we now? The Government would not accept any Seasprites until the Commonwealth could be confident that the contractor was capable of delivering the full tactically capable aircraft as specified in the contract. This assurance was gained in the third quarter of 2003, allowing the Navy to accept the first Seasprite in October last year. In the interim 805 Squadron reduced to 16 personnel whose role was to progress preparations for accepting and operating the new helicopters, and to complete mandatory customer inspections on aircraft as they were assembled.

805 Squadron commenced a steady ramp-up in personnel and activity from June 2003 to the present manning level of just over 60 personnel, with about another twenty personnel in or about to commence training. The Minister for Defence accepted the first Seasprite in the Squadron complex on 18 Oct 03, with flight training of the RAN test crew from AMAFTU commencing on 7 Nov 03. Since then a further three aircraft have been accepted at a rate of about one helicopter per month. The Seasprites are being accepted in an 'Interim Training Helicopter' (ITH) configuration. Basically, they have Build 1 software although all hardware (including sensors and weapons systems) is physically fitted to the aircraft. This interim configuration is allowing 805 Squadron to progress maintainer and aircrew training, to validate processes and publications, and to progress a large amount of test and evaluation activity including sea trials on ANZAC Class frigates. The first group of RAN instructors (3 Pilot and 2 Tacco) commenced conversion training on 14 January this year. When the final tactical software build is loaded into the aircraft all squadron personnel will complete bridging training onto tactical systems.

Those readers who had the opportunity to view the aircraft at the 2004 Nowra Show or the January museum air day (before it was washed out) would have been impressed by the level of technology and combat capability in the aircraft. It is certainly a world away from the equipment that many of us were familiar with in the 1960/70's era Trackers, Skyhawks and Sea Kings. In summary, the aircraft includes all of the capability that we ever wanted to take to sea - imaging radar, turret mounted FUR camera, ESM, laser illumination warner, missile approach warner, chaff and flare countermeasures dispensing, satellite communications, Link 11 datalink and the 'war dart' - the Penguin anti-shiping missile. And all of these systems fully integrated and presented on screens more closely resembling a Play Station or laptop computer than previous aircraft types.

Those of us who are lucky enough to be a part of the current 'fourth generation' 805 Squadron are mindful of the proud history of the squadron and look forward to the challenge of maintaining the standards set by our forebears. We also need to ensure that the squadron history is both preserved and displayed. To that end I would like to establish some displays of significant 805 squadron memorabilia and photographs around the squadron facilities. Any donations from previous members would be warmly welcomed. Contributions may be forwarded to '805 Squadron History', NAS Nowra, NSW, 2540. I am also keen to learn of previous 805 Squadron formation or section callsigns (other than 'Checkmate') used with previous aircraft types. We will always maintain the primary 'Checkmate' callsign, but we need to establish an alternate and I would prefer to use a previous squadron tag. Information can be mailed to the Squadron or emailed to: sgn805n@hotmail.com



Photograph by POPH Shane Cameron—Courtesy RAN Photographic Section

TO THE READERS...

I have enclosed this photo hoping some 'ganneteer' may be able to detect where it is and what its doing there? It looks like Brisbane. The photo was taken by Bill Barlow around 1961.



The Gannet book is still on track to be completed within the next few months and publishing will soon become a reality after nearly four years on the project.

As a thank you to all who have contributed to the history that Gannet 'print' is now at the printers, contracts have been signed and it should be finished by the time this edition is distributed. I



shall start mailing them out as soon as I receive them. For those who 'miss out' and would like to purchase a copy I will be preparing a 'flyer' for the next edition of *Slipstream*.

It's still not too late for anyone wishing to contribute a story of their association with the Gannet and be included in the book. It may be in the form of an anecdote, humour or technical in content. A photo of the author writing the story would be appreciated, also any Gannet photo's that would enhance the publication. Please keep in mind that the publication will be offered to the FAAA as a fund raiser, and is not a private venture on my part.

My address is:

Ben Patynowski, 16 Cowper St., Fairy Meadow, NSW 2519
Phone: (02) 42 841801 - email patynow@1earth.net



ANZAC DAY MARCH SYDNEY

Those members of the Association who will be participating in the Sydney Anzac Day activities are advised that due to the closure of the Hilton Hotel and

Marble Bar, arrangements have been made for the HMAS MELBOURNE and FAA Associations to gather for refreshments and small eats at the VERANDAH HOTEL, 60 Castlereagh Street, after the march.

Entry can also be made from Elizabeth Street, opposite the NSW Leagues Club. Marchers should rendezvous at the usual spot in Castlereagh Street by 0845.

EDITOR'S CORNER



Welcome to the first edition of *Slipstream* for 2004. I'm beginning to feel that *tempus* is *fugiting* just too fast.

I would like to thank the many people who contribute to our magazine, especially those of the 'New Navy'. Letters, articles and photographs are most welcome from the current serving members, they keep us up to date with the vast number of changes that are occurring in the RAN Fleet Air Arm.

Remember, if you tell your stories while they are still fresh in your mind they will be recorded for posterity. By law, *Slipstream* is required to be filed at the NSW State Library for access by researchers and other interested parties. Are they going to record your story?

Be kind to each other. Ed

Please share this with other Veterans and old shipmates.

The story could help them.

'ONUS of PROOF' by Harry Harkness

Part 1 is about the deployment of the Royal Australian Navy Aircraft Carrier HMAS MELBOURNE to South East Asia during the Indonesian Confrontation and early part of the Vietnam War.

It tells, for the first time, about the involvement of HMAS MELBOURNE'S Ships Dive Team in mine search operational dives in Singapore Harbour in April 1965.

It is a story of unrecorded and unrecognised Naval Operational Service by men at sea in the service of their country.

Part 2 relates details of the process involved with claims for disability pension with the Department of Veterans Affairs and the long drawn out Appeals process before light finally appears at the end of the tunnel.

It is more than a personal story.

With the day-to-day details of MELBOURNES movements during this deployment the background story told actually applies to all 1300 ADF personnel who served on MELBOURNE from 24 February 1965 to 22 June 1965. As such, the details could be used, by others, as the basis of many such stories about this deployment.

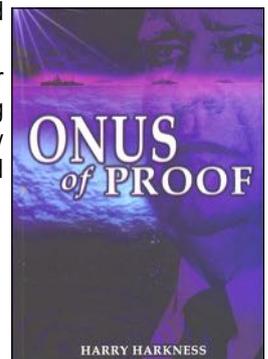
The epilogue at the back of the book invites veterans to add their own story. They are encouraged to send a copy of their story to Bob (Windy) Geale, FAAA Hon. Curator at: 288 Illaroo Road, Nth Nowra, NSW 2541. or Email to: bobgeale@telpacific.com.au

The information you provide could add to the history of the FAA.

The soft cover book is available for \$24.95, including Postage, Packing and Handling. To order your copy please mail your delivery details and payment to:

**H. R. & P. F. Harkness, Villa 60,
Baycrest RSL Care Retirement Village
99 Doolong Road, PIALBA QLD. 4655.**

Phone 07 - 4128 4143



NEXT DEADLINE - JUNE 28 - 2004

LETTERS Editor

Dear Ed

I came across a book written by Steve Eather the other day. He has briefly described all the squadrons that served in all forces from the beginning until recent years.

73 Squadron of the RAAF had a Nowra connection. It was formed on 8/5/42 at Cootamundra and moved to Nowra in December 1942. It flew Anson MK1's up and down the East Coast on anti-submarine missions and on 9/9/44 decommissioned at Nowra when intelligence assessed that the submarine threat to Australia was negligible. It must have been a very junior squadron because the CO for that brief period was F/O K C Berry.

A couple of other features of the book was that the late Col Wheatley bailed out during the Korean War (something I was not aware of) and that Lt. Colonel R R Harding and others helped him gather information.

Ross Harding was an Army pilot and I am sure that he was the first Army bloke to fly a helicopter. I can recall that he came to Nowra in the early 50's to complete training. He was probably trained by Gordon McPhee or Jim Ferguson or someone of that vintage.

Another part of the trivia of this story is that in 1945, Ross was the dux of Nailsworth Boys Junior Tech. in Adelaide, and in the following year I achieved the same honour. This was not a difficult thing to achieve for in 1945 there were 3 students that completed the fourth year and in my year it climbed to 4. It did not qualify us for university education but was good enough for us to be commissioned in, as it was then, His Majesty's Service.

Barry (Dooley) Lord

Dear Ed

I Found this T-shirt when I was unpacking some boxes. I believe 851 Squadron produced it when Mr Scholes' announced that there would be no new aircraft carrier.



With regards to the photograph which appeared in a previous edition, the four gentlemen standing next to the Wessex are: The late David Collins CBE, former Chairman of Westland, Commander "Freddy" Sherborne, Mr. "Ted" Wheeldon, former Westland Managing Director and Captain Purvis.



I found this information in a Westland publication titled 'Over Australia' dated November 1983 that was produced for the RAN Wessex 21st Anniversary.

Whilst reading the last *Slipstream*, this story came to mind.

In early 1981 I was the Motor Transport Maintenance CPO at HMAS *Cerberus*.

Late in the afternoon one of the WRAN MT's came running up to me, she had just met a wonderful old lady. The WRAN'S job was to drive the bus that would take the passing out class families back to Melbourne after the parade.

When the bus arrived at Spencer Street Station, the driver asked a lady whether she had enjoyed her day out.

"Yes my dear", was the response. "I have had a lovely bus trip to Westernport Bay, watched a Navy Parade, had a wonderful lunch of sandwiches and cream cakes and all the time being looked after by those lovely lady sailors and now you have driven me back up to the train station".

The driver asked the lady whether she had a son or grandson in the passing out parade.

"Oh no, dear", she replied, "I caught the train into Melbourne from Sunshine and this lovely man in a uniform said everyone get on the bus, so I did. And what a wonderful day it's been."

'Larry' Kent

[David and Penny Kent are located in Bargara, Queensland. They are proprietors of Dunelm Houses B & B at 540 Bargara Road. They can be contacted on: (07) 4159 0909 or by email at dunelm@austarnet.com.au]

Dear Ed

There were two items in the previous issue that particularly caught my attention among the other interesting items.

The first was the casualties among historic aeroplanes. I am writing this in my home, which is four miles across the fields from the famous Tangmere aerodrome, now disused but hosting an aviation museum, which is often the venue for a flying display. I watched one such display from my garden in, I think, 2000, by a Spitfire. The aeroplane performed dives, pull outs into loops, rolls off the top, and similar evolutions.

The next edition of the local 'rag' carried a letter enthusing about this display by such a skilled aviator in such a well loved aeroplane. I countered this with a letter in which I stated my belief that such a performance in a 55-year-old piece of machinery, over a crowd of spectators, was a display of folly and irresponsibility.

I went on to quote how I, as a FAA Apprentice with two months seniority in October 1940, had sat in a classroom at No. 1 School of Technical Training, RAF Halton, while an ex- RFC pilot, Capt. Garrard, stood before us holding a one foot steel rule in his left hand as he bent it back and forth with his right, saying, "If I do this long enough the rule will eventually break".

This was his introduction to the subject of fatigue. He explained that fatigue was impossible to detect it only becoming evident when a structure failed, thus we had to design to minimise the possibility of fatigue. Nevertheless, all structures, especially aeronautical, were a subject to fatigue from both age and use. As this teaching is as valid today as it was in October 1940, it follows that flinging a 55-year-old structure about the sky is just asking for trouble.

There were indignant responses such aeroplanes have been subject to all manner of tests, including X-ray, etc., which all missed the point. One just cannot see what is going on beneath the skin, therefore undetected cracks may develop in vital components. When I think of all the testing I have seen to detect the onset of failure, by X-ray and ultra-sonic, for minute cracks etc., and take into consideration design engineer Neville Shute's

prophetic book, "No Highway", shortly followed by the tragic demonstration of its subject by the Comets, I am amazed that there are reputedly experienced pilots still prepared to fly as I have described.

Shortly after that incident, a twin seat Spitfire came to grief on landing on the nearby all grass Goodwood aerodrome, killing both occupants. I do not suggest that either fatigue or folly caused that accident, but it was yet another historic aeroplane prang.

Such machines, if flown at all, should be subjected to no more than about 1/2g, in gentle, straight and level flight. We come to see the aeroplanes, not some ego buster showing off himself rather than the aeroplane. Experienced pilots they may be, but none of them can have had such experience on the vintage types as would enable them to cope with emergencies peculiar to type.

The second item to catch my particular attention, was the account of the two Hornets recovered after mid-air collision. That brought to mind the yarn I wrote for Ben Patynowski's Gannet book. I hope that it will not upset him if I repeat it here.

In 1958 I was AOEO of Eglinton, which at that time was hosting Gannet AS and Whirlwind choppers (including the Gannets of No. 1 Squadron of the recently re-constituted German Navy). Three Gannets of the RN Squadron were rocket firing on MacGilligan range, one of the aircraft having a young Air Mechanic in the middle seat on his very first flight. There was no other occupant.

This Gannet flew into the slipstreams of the preceding two aircraft and the only alternative to 'ploughing and scattering' was to haul back on the 'pole' harder than recommended by the manufacturer.

Having thought that he had 'cleared the deck', the pilot found that such was not quite the case, both outer mainplanes having sheared off at the folds, taking with them, of course, the ailerons. After some rather hairy experimentation he found that he could exercise a modicum of control over the beast and, bearing in mind the state of his passenger, decided to try and return to Eglinton. He subsequently landed at some ungodly speed, running off the end of the runway into the soggy grass without further damage.

I had a good look at the remains. The port auxiliary fin on the tailplane had been knocked askew but more astonishingly, it was now a swept back Gannet! I could shove my fist in-between the leading edges and the fuselage at the joints, and the trailing edges were driven into the skin a corresponding amount. There were serious wrinkles in the skin here and there indicating that the thing should not have continued to fly, or that it should have disintegrated on landing at the speed that it did.

I believe that the pilot had the distinction of being awarded a red and a green endorsement for the same flight, the former for getting into such a mess, the latter for getting out of it.

There was an equally embarrassing sequel. One of the outer planes was lying in about a foot of water just off the range, and a Whirlwind was sent to retrieve it, with pilot and Chief Aircrewman. The latter put on his wellington boots, stepped out of the hovering aircraft, stood on the submerged plane, fixed the approved strop, hooked it on to the hoist, and stepped back in. All went well for the first foot of the lift but, they had forgotten the phenomenon of surface tension. As soon as the plane came to the surface, it pulled the chopper on to its side in the water, where its embarrassed crew left it as they walked home.

Neither aeroplane was repairable. It was reported that a tarpaulin was stretched over the hole in Captain 'Chico' Roberts's

office roof where he had gone through it, after having commented on the competence of some of those under his command. It was in a manner not entirely unexpected by those who knew him well, he being both engineer and pilot with a particular gift for commenting on the performance of both types of gentleman.

As a small aside, I was given the task of qualifying German Ordnance ratings on the Gannet type. Quite a giggle! I asked the questions and an English speaking 'Boatswain', translated the question and answer.

The Gannet crews had trained in the USA on Trackers. They much preferred the Gannet, because.. "*Iss fighting aeroplane!*"

Maurice Ayling - 3 Elizabeth Avenue, Rose Green, Bognor Regis, Sussex P0213EL

[Following an item in the last edition's NSW Division Report concerning Pauline Burt's donation of kneelers to the FAA Chapel at RANAS, I received the following letter from George Chadwick in the UK addressed to Ray and Pauline Burt. It is reprinted here with their permission.]

Dear Ray and Pauline

On reading the latest issue of *Slipstream*, I became transfixed fifty years back in time when I served in 816 Squadron as CAA along with the Administration Chief, John 'Duke' Denehy (your father, Pauline.)

I was RN loan from mid-1952, joined the squadron following Easter 1953, at Nowra. A squadron matter that week brought the two of us in close contact. Having mentioned to John (his name given at birth, I believe) that I would be heading to Sydney on the weekend, he offered me a lift with the invitation to stay the night at his home. The following day I would then be free to go on my way to the city.

Such hospitality occurred on a few occasions between Easter and June when the squadron embarked in *Vengeance*. There would be a stopping off on the drive from Nowra to collect a sack of bottles for refreshment on arrival.

Thence, in *Vengeance* and *Sydney*, John and myself were mates in shore runs; events of every one making a good 'dit'.

I was taken at your gesture in presenting kneelers for the wedding chairs at the FAA Chapel. I had a lady member of my FAA Branch make me a kneeler dedicated to a RN mate who was lost at sea in the month of joining his first ship. I presented this to the RNFAA Chapel at Yeovil.

I did read that your father had 'crossed the bar'.

Thank you for the memory.

George Chadwick



1953 -The late 'Duke' Denehy and George Chadwick
Photograph courtesy Pauline Burt

Dear Ed

The following from a Queensland source may be of interest to the readers:

THE DIARY OF A BRISBANE/Queensland SUMMER...

August 31st: Just got transferred with work into our new home in Brisbane!! Now this is a city that knows how to live!! Beautiful sunny days and warm balmy evenings. What a place! I watched the sunset from a deck chair on the verandah. It was beautiful. I've finally found my home. I love it here.

September 13th: Really heating up. Got to 35 today. Not a problem. Live in an air-conditioned home, drive an air-conditioned car. What a pleasure to see the sun everyday like this. I'm turning into a sun worshiper.

September 30th: Had the backyard landscaped with tropical plants today. Lots of palms and rocks. What a breeze to maintain. No more mowing lawn for me. Another scorcher today, but I love it here.

October 10th: The temperature hasn't been below 30 all week. How do people get used to this kind of heat? At least today it's kind of windy though. But getting used to the heat and humidity is taking longer than I expected.

October 15th: Fell asleep by the pool. Got 3rd degree burns over 60% of my body. Missed 3 days of work. What a dumb thing to do. I learned my lesson though. Got to respect the ol' sun in a climate like this.

October 20th: I missed Kitty (our cat) sneaking into the car when I left this morning. By the time I got to the hot car for lunch, Kitty had died and swollen up to the size of a shopping bag and stank up the \$3,000 leather upholstery. I told the kids that she ran away. The car now smells like Wiskettes and cat crap. I learned my lesson though. No more pets in this heat.

October 25th: The wind sucks. It feels like a giant bloody blow dryer!! And it's hot as hell. The home air-conditioner is on the blink and the AC repairman charged \$200 just to drive over and tell me he needed to order parts.

October 30th: Been sleeping outside by the pool for 3 nights now. Bloody \$450,000 house and we can't even go inside. Why did I ever come here?

November 4th: It's 35 degrees. Finally got the ol' air-conditioner fixed today. It cost \$500 and gets the temperature down to 25, but this bloody humidity makes the house feel like it's about 30. Stupid repairman. I hate this stupid place.

November 8th: If another wise arse cracks, "Hot enough for you today?" I'm going to strangle him. Bloody heat. By the time I get to work the car's radiator was boiling over, my clothes are soaking wet, and I smell like baked cat!!

November 9th: Tried to run some messages after work. Wore shorts, and sat on the black leather seats in the ol' car. I thought my backside was on fire. I lost 2 layers of flesh and all the hair on the back of my legs and my behind.

Now my car smells like burnt hair, fried arse, and baked cat.

November 10th: The weather report might as well be a bloody recording. Hot and sunny. Hot and sunny. Hot and sunny. It's been too hot to do anything for 2 damn months and the weatherman says it might really warm up next week. Doesn't it ever rain in this damn place? Water rationing will be next, so my \$2,000 worth of palms just might dry up and blow into the bloody pool. Even the palms can't live in this heat.

November 14th: Welcome to HELL!!! Temperature got to 38 today. Now the air-conditioner's gone in my car. The repairman came to fix it and said, "Hot enough for you today?" My wife had to spend the \$2,500 house payment to bail me out of jail for assaulting the repairman. Bloody Brisbane. What kind of a sick demented idiot would want to live here?

December 1st: WHAT? This is the first day of Summer? Ya kiddin me!

[The writer's response follows...]

Subject: Diary of a Brisbane Summer

Hot? Humid? That lot in Brisbane are a pack of pussycats. Especially the out-of-town recent blow-ins like the 'Mexicans' and 'Roaches'. If they want fair dinkum hot and humid, try the Far North in the summer/Wet season. We'll even throw in some dengue mozzies, crocs, toxic stinging jellyfish, and the odd cyclone.

'Banana Bwana' aka 'Mango Man' aka 'BigAl'

Dear Ed

Thank you for publishing my letter in the last issue. Since that time I have done a little more research and closely studied the public documents that cover the Australian Museum of Flight (AMoF). Along with many others I have been involved with the museum for some time and can remember the original vision. A personal view is that although the current management team have, like their predecessors, done a magnificent job, we have lost our way. I don't have the answers. These are not easy to come by. But I have distilled a few questions that I think need to be answered so I can understand. Perhaps others may be interested in these so discussion may be broadened.

Who owns the museum? There is a dawning perception that AMoF is the Royal Australian Naval Aviation Museum Foundation and as such is now at least functionally and possibly as a legal entity, a private group that owns the fabric and also exercises the full control that goes with ownership of Naval Aviation Heritage items. As such the Foundation does not consult or report to the community or a stakeholder group. This is contrary to and a major departure from the original vision which defined the Foundation as a community organisation. That is: For the Navy family and the community and responsive to the community. Was the Foundation forced by Navy to establish itself essentially as a separate corporate entity?

Who owns/controls and is preserving heritage items? The AMoF is dispersing items apparently without account. The disposal of Auster VH-BYV is one example of a number of transactions that have caused concern if not consternation. I think that most stakeholders are alarmed by the process attending the AMoF's management of heritage items. Many of which reportedly enjoy uncertain, even undefined title according to AMoF.

Brand and Display. The AMoF's contention that Navy is not a marketable commodity is not accepted and viewed as an odd, contrary and unproven concept particularly when "Navy in the Brand" is inferred by AMoF as excluding a broader aviation display. It is interesting that the member who wishes for a greater visibility of FAA history is painted as a change-resistant luddite. No one I think is against an appropriately balanced display. But many see that AMoF have dealt with naval exhibits inappropriately. Disassembled aircraft, bits of mirror landing systems, boats stuffed in corners unseen. And very little indeed to do with the last 25 years or so of achievement is displayed. The

museum's problem is centrally about a "brand" which now excludes Navy. The museum is supposed to have as its central theme the current and continuing story of **Australian sailors operating Navy aircraft off Navy's ships**. It doesn't tell that story anymore - although the AMoF's web site leads you to believe that it does. The museum is just not immediately relevant to today's sailor or potential "Birdie". I think this stakeholder wants to know why? It is very significant indeed to see the former/FAA/NA museum represented as it is in local press, signage and on the radio without reference to Navy, as the "establishment adjacent to HMAS Albatross"! On 17DEC03 the Director and Curator referred to some bench marks used by the Board in its management as these apply to, school curricula, curatorial/conservation standards and the need to be competitive for funding and fund raising. Could the museum expand on what the bench marks are, the objectives of the museum with regard to them and how well the museum has done in meeting these goals?

Articles. AMoF has departed from the vision outlined in the Heritage Charter. What authority and relevance are still imposed by other extant "guiding" documents including the Articles and Memorandum of Association which amongst many matters of governance include reference to **Members**. Members who participate in the management of the museum are provided for in the Articles. The lack of Members is seen as a means to reduce accountability and external influence-apart from removing a handy source of funds.

Financial Position. What is the the AMoF's/Foundation's financial position as covered in the audited financials for FY02/03 and projections for 03/04? Neil Ralph and Mark Clayton have continued to provide unfavourable reports and forecasts of imminent disaster in the local press/Slipstream. What plans for the Heritage items if AMoF ceases trading?

I suppose all of this really is a request for some communication in order that I can understand what the AMoF's strategy is toward meeting the aims of the Heritage Charter, how well that plan is working and that whatever happens that there is a plan in place to protect our heritage items. Frankly, I never had in mind a bland GA museum that scarcely mentions the last 25 years of Naval Aviation History and that is steadily marginalising the earlier part of the story while apparently disposing of heritage items.

Cris George

[The reference by the writer in Para.4 of 'boats stuffed in corners' relates to the cutter from HMAS *Melbourne* which served with great effect during the rescue of survivors from the collision with HMAS *Voyager*.

Members of the local sub-branch of the Naval Association, ably assisted by the Shoalhaven Sea Cadets had, over a lengthy period, stripped the boat back, repaired and repainted it into a first class exhibit relating to an important part of RAN history. It now resides in the darkest reaches of the museum as a receptacle for old aircraft panels and assorted rubbish.

I feel sure that the members of the Voyager Association, who recently visited the museum during their annual memorial visit, would have been most impressed had they been able to see it. A de facto dumpster to which many owed their lives. Ed]



Dear Ed

Just a short story I thought you may like to include in *Slipstream*.

I was born on a farm 400 miles west of Adelaide (which is about as far as you can get from anywhere). When dad sold the farm in '63 I was told I could no longer be a farmer and would now have to get a trade, and the best way to do so was to join one of the services.

Dad's best mate, Ben Stubbington, had a son in the Navy and that was the only way to go, so I joined the Navy and started my apprenticeship at Nirimba in '65. Whilst there I made some enquiries and found that Micheal Stubbington had become a 'birdie' and was at HMAS *Albatross*.

The Navy decided that I was best suited for Systems Artificer and was to go to Gore Hill Tech College, but I was determined to follow my leader (that I still had never met) and transferred to become a 'birdie'. I continued at Nirimba and eventually arrived at *Albatross* in '68, only to find that my nemesis had drafted to the *Melbourne*.

Later, of course, I also went to the *Melbourne* but by that time Mick Stubbington had paid off. I then lost track of Mick during my career in the Navy and eventually left the Navy in '84 having never met the man in whose footsteps I had followed.

At the 2003 reunion in the AmoF White Ensign Club, I was talking with a group when someone called a greeting to 'Stubbo'. I looked up, saw the 'Stubbo's' nametag and asked him if his father was Ben Stubbington and did he remember Vic Davies. I had finally met the man who was ultimately responsible for my decision to join the FAA.

Keep up the good work, Ed.

Bill Davies

PS: I now have 200 acres and enough cattle and horses to almost claim a return to my roots on the farm some forty years later.



Dear Ed

Re: Riff-Raff "MILITARY JUSTICE AUDIT TEAM REPORT"

(Page 16 Slipstream Vol.4 No.3)

Having proudly worn the RAAF uniform (ATC 1946/47) I must challenge that article's translation in respect of the acronym "MJAT". Perhaps those letters in fact stand for "Military Judgements Absurdly Tendered"!

But just hold on a bit! I do recall one exception!

I don't know just when the R.A.N. introduced H.R.D. courses at Flinders Naval Depot but when I attended mine in 1954 they were referred to as "Petty Officer Courses". Perhaps "Higher Rates Disciplinary Course" had begun to sound a little Captain Bligh-ish. Our O.I.C. was LTCDR Austin, a natural leader of men.

The plan was to gather together a dozen newly promoted Petty Officers representing a variety of ships and establishments and a spread of service Branches. Also, for some unknown reason, one recently promoted Sergeant from each the Army and the RAAF were added. The whole group would then undertake six weeks solid training eg. Instructional Technique, Seamanship, a series of navigational exercises, First Aid drills and lectures on many subjects. All of this was aimed at each individual gaining an appreciation of his latent abilities whilst recognising the true measure of tempering power in his new role. A great induction.

Of course, at the end of each exhausting day there was the
(Continued on page 8)

social side to enjoy in the P.O.'s Mess. A few Melbourne Bitters, a game of snooker or just a yarn. Our new found Army bloke had had a tough Korean war and many hardships but was a joy to have in the Mess. That RAAF chap was, however, a very different type.

Feeling a bit sorry for him on the second night, after supper I took a couple of drinks over to where he was reading the paper. After a couple more pots he found his tongue and told me his story.

He was born in Ipswich, Queensland, and lived there until he joined the RAAF. Most of his service life had been spent at the Amberley Air Base which is but a stones throw from Ipswich, Queensland. He had met the girl of his dreams five years ago and they live in their nice Ipswich home with their two fine little girls. "I have indeed enjoyed my seven years in the RAAF", he said almost to himself. "But!", he squinted at me and raised his voice, "But if I'd known they were going to damn well muck me about like this, oh no! I WOULD NEVER HAVE JOINED!"

(A factual story but presented using poetic licence)

John Buchanan

Dear Ed

A few weeks ago whilst working in Griffith, NSW, I took a few pictures of the 'Firefly on the pole'. It is located in the main street in front of the Information Centre.

It is seventeen years since I last saw it, the paint work isn't too bad, the prop still turns, depending upon wind direction, and it now has a 'dummy' pilot (I'll leave that alone). I'm sure that you and other members know its history.



When I joined the RAN in 1964 they were all gone, except for one that I remember. I think it was flown by a civilian pilot and used for Target Towing.

Dino Gedling – ex-Phot

Dear Ed

Thank you for including the paragraph in the last edition of *Slipstream* relating to the lost books and photographs.

I am pleased to report that I have got them back, but that is a long story. My thanks go to 'Boxhead' Stevens.

Ray 'Stalky' Maley

Dear Ed

A little bit of reminiscing... I first met Roland 'Butch' Hain in 1949. I was a very junior naval airman just qualified to work in the Met Office at Nowra and Butch was 'Little F' to an air station that had

no aeroplanes to speak of. Everything at Nowra at that time seemed unfinished. The 20th CAG was about to arrive and most of us did not know what to expect.

Butch had a habit of storming into the met office early forenoon to get the weather picture for the day. This routine suggested it was an important beginning of the day and this puzzled me. I was soon to learn that the weather would be the aviator's number one enemy. Butch's mere presence demanded his attention and I, being a very junior sailor, felt intimidated.

In January 1950 I escaped from his predominance when drafted to HMAS *Sydney*, but 12 months later I discovered he was still 'Little F' at Nowra when I was drafted back there. I vaguely remember that he was either promoted to Commander, or was accepted into the RAN permanently. Whatever, he expressed great surprise (not directly to me, but to Morrie Lloyd the senior Met officer) and that he did not expect such fortune.

I then did another disappearing act to complete flying training. This was completed in 1953 when I joined 817 at Nowra. Butch by then was Commander Air. He hadn't changed much and fronted me soon after my arrival for being a damn fool by getting married whilst in England. I was too young and would be distracted from the sanctified tasks of being a fine naval officer. I think he may have been right! He continued to vex me on occasion when he was Commander Air of *Melbourne*.

He was a most colourful character and one always knew when he was present. I have often wondered what made him tick. I have discovered that he was unique breed well worth knowing.

He was born in 1913 and as a child spent most of his time in a boarding school near Wimbledon. It was a case of cold showers in winter, play rugby whether you wanted to or not, and not get too much to eat. His mother was probably German for he would go on holidays to the Rhineland and the Bavarian Alps. As a teenager he would have experienced the turmoil in those areas during the 1920's.

When he was about 17, against his father's wishes, he joined the Merchant Navy. Adventure was in his blood. The 1930's were the years that he became established in flying, especially naval flying. He did train and serve in the RAF but the sea was his home. I have enclosed a picture of Butch taken in November 1987 on Toranto night. It is one of his wife's favourite photo's.



He could not have flown on the Toranto attack for that was in November 1940 and he was taken prisoner of war in September of that year. He was Mentioned in Dispatches during a raid in Augusta Harbour (Sicily) just before being taken prisoner. (I have not been able to find out anything about that raid so someone may like to enlighten me.)

I must admit that I was always a bit in awe of Butch, but then, he flew in Swordfish and I was stuck in Fireflies and Gannets. He was a born leader. Why wasn't he promoted beyond Commander? If he had been I think it would have spoiled the image and been a waste.

'Dooley' Lord

PS: His thoughts on a ship's company were...

'A Ship is measured by the sum of the statures of those who complement Her.'



The Editor-Slipstream

Museum Matters

Your editorial in the last *Slipstream* has generated arrangements for the meeting you suggested should be held between the Association and the Museum Board and that meeting is planned for 13 February. However I note the deadline for articles for the next edition is 3 Feb and without pre-empting any subject to be discussed at that meeting, I thought I should outline what the Directors of the Foundation have been trying to do over the last few years to respond to some of the issues.

The central strategy adopted has been one of survival of the Museum and then increasing its strength as an institution. The following were the main factors relevant to the Board's decision to change the name and guide the Board's actions since:

- . firstly, using the cash reserves from the HIH donation and the Shoalhaven City Council donations to offset operating costs had to stop because to continue this would have meant crunch time 3-4 years on,

- secondly, the Naval Aviation exhibition growth and development could no longer be depended upon for development of this theme, there was and is no guarantee that obsolete Navy aircraft would come to the Museum by Defence allocation, the Minister gave us the new Defence guidelines for disposal of aircraft paying off and this meant their sale to the highest bidder and probably being unaffordable to the Museum,

- thirdly, Navy's ability to continue to assist the Museum in the many ways it had been able and willing to do was being affected by organizational changes within Defence and therefore locally, together with budget stringencies; the result being the Museum likely to be charged for previous free services,

- fourthly, airdays, one of the important fund-raising activities, would feature no Navy or RNZAF jet aircraft, always crowd pleasers, and flying hour restrictions were placed on Navy's helo flying to operational requirements, therefore there was a greater reliance in airday programs on civil aircraft flying,

- fifthly, there was a strong perception among potential donors and the NSW Government that the Museum was a Commonwealth responsibility and the Navy should look after it rather than scarce charity funds be directed toward bailing the Govt out. Moreover the Federal Member told us that she would always support Govt financial assistance to community institutions before an esoteric institution like the Museum, and this view was endorsed by the then Deputy Mayor of the Shoalhaven Council and Chairman of its Finance Committee,

- the donation rate had been reducing over time and the donor chase was not turning up much financial help as was being experienced by other charities,

- the Museum was not attractive to school groups pursuing curricula related outings and visits and general visitor rates were not increasing.

Something had to be done to change the trend. Revenue had to be increased. Broadening the appeal of the Museum to all sections of the community, potential donors, government and industry, seemed to be the way.. Attracting school groups was important to revenue earning since curricula now cover military history subjects hitherto unthinkable for schools' curricula.

Broadening the appeal meant broadening the collection and improving its presentation.

Broadening the collection gave the Museum some very good exhibits such as the Lockheed 10 which was one on Ansett's first aircraft, the Wirraway, the Wright Flyer engine which powered the first flight in Australia, the first Australian made flat four configured aircraft engine and other valuable relics most of which are loaned by the Museum of Victoria. The Lockheed 10 is close to airworthy condition, it had been fully restored to its original 1937 specifications and is now the Museum's property. Other civil types followed suit and we were hoping for the Fockler Friendship which was the vehicle for the Laser Airborne Depth Sounder equipment. These exhibits gave the substance to coverage of the history of aviation in Australia which was and is seen to be more relevant to their studies by school groups, visitors generally relate very readily to this theme and it is a way of introducing them to the other less familiar displays.

The Board then had to focus on good presentation and so Stage 4, the installation of the walk-way and the special effects lighting, and Stage 5, the upgrading of displays and suspending more aircraft to fit others in and better display them, proceeded with capital funds previously donated applied to these stages. Chief of Navy opened the display upgrade on 17 Dec 03 and 90% of visitors since have scored the presentation as excellent.

But in a Museum the job is never done or finished in the sense that the displays must vary from time to time to continue to attract visitors returning.

On the Navy collection front, I've previously mentioned the loan courtesy the RAN Historic Flight of a former RAN Macchi albeit in RAAF guise, and a bid has been made for a SeaKing and Squirrel which we would be lucky to obtain under existing Defence disposal policies. There may be a way of gaining these aircraft through the courtesy of the HF in due course. The Sea Fury in the hangar is on temporary loan from the Historic Flight and not in the display. The Museum has bought a former 135th/HFV UH-1H Iroquois from the US which is awaiting shipping to Australia to be the centre of the Vietnam display Two-thirds of the aircraft on display are former Naval aircraft, there is a Navy air weapons display, a separate FAA display being rebuilt and the RANHFV Vietnam display as well as the carrier model room. An original RAN Auster has been procured and needs restoration work before display. The naval aviation theme has therefore increased in content, not reduced. An attempt to procure a former RAN HS748 has not proceeded because of the difficulty in road transporting it to Nowra.

On the business front the Museum is very fortunate that the operators of Aerial Technical Training Services are installed in the building using the aircraft and engine exhibits for senior school student training and now for some QANTAS training. This provides revenue which may grow as ATS becomes even more successful in an area of high potential. Museum staff have vacated the Federation Wing to enable more space to be rented to ATS and Defence contractors and help close the operating cost/revenue gap. The café has been let to a private business and this will save us heaps in operating costs. Work has to be done to get more visitors through the door to meet operating costs without subsidy, this may be ambitious but we cannot rely on donor funds for this purpose. We must also keep our airdays successful and we have Navy, volunteers and participants who will help in this.

So the strategy has been to balance operating costs with earned

(Continued on page 10)

revenue, saving any donations for display improvement and maintenance. We are not there yet and until we are there is some threat to the financial viability of the institution. We can do more of the operating by volunteers perhaps and there is always plenty of effort required to maintain the exhibits in good order. In summary, the Board is aiming for a zero operating cost deficit and a credit in capital funds, a strengthening of the institution generally through reputation and appeal. Then we should be able to meet your expectations on naval aviation history in the displays more fully.

The Board looks forward to meeting with the Association shortly and would like regular such meetings which we had proposed a few years ago.

Neil Ralph -Chairman

The Australian Naval Aviation Museum Foundation

[UPDATE: In response to the Chairman's letter. I would like to state that the concerns expressed in the editorial were not generated just by members of the Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia. For quite some time now I have received complaints from people who are current serving members, donors, and local citizens whose rates went to provide handsome donations for what was perceived to be a NAVY museum. Several Museum Members, including myself, also voiced their concerns. I don't believe that the opinions of the latter group are of much concern because the AMoF appear to hold them in little regard.

The meeting arranged for the 13th of February did not eventuate. The FAAA felt that the restrictions imposed upon the meeting by the Australian Museum of Flight were not conducive to producing an open discussion. To counter this impasse, the FAAA is now preparing a submission to the museum outlining the concerns of the Association and other items that have been brought to light. When this has been presented, it will then be given a wider distribution.

In relation to the last paragraph in the letter where it is stated that the 'AMoF had proposed regular meetings with the Association', I can say without any contradiction that this is not correct. Having been involved directly and indirectly with both the Museum and the NSW FAAA since their inception, I can state categorically that the only full briefings we have received came from the then Museum Director, CDR 'Spike' Campey, during the initial construction stage of the museum.

In saying that, if the offer is made available, I'm sure it would be well received by the FAA of A. Ed]

Dear Ed

Once more I have gone to my Navy 'shoe box' and found some old photos.

This one was taken in the NCO's bar at an American base in South Vietnam called 'Bearcat' where we were stationed with the 135th Assault Helicopter Company in September 1969.

Barry Grainger, myself and Peter Ruhl had been in the country for about 24 hours and Murray 'Woody' Herrmann and Geoff? Waugh were probably spinning a couple of 'warries'. They were going home in a months time and were showing us the 'ropes'.

Photo (L/R) Murray 'Woody' Herrmann, Bill Barlow,

Barry Grainger, Geoff? Waugh and Peter Ruhl.

Bill Barlow



Dear Ed

The latest edition of the journal (Vol.14 #3, 2003) is yet another first class issue. I was delighted to find that you've decided to stay on as editor for a while yet. I think that only those who know what effort is required to regularly produce any publication – be it meeting minutes, newsletters, periodic reports or whatever – to a regular deadline would understand the work that goes into preparing a magazine like *Slipstream*. But when it is of consistently high quality – so much more the praise due.

Much of the copy is taken-up with reminiscing, but I believe that such a record is valuable and if some of the younger people serving today absorb some of it then they'll have a better appreciation of what was handed to them. Our history is both rich and unique and those who took-over the flame ought to be made aware of what it cost to keep that flame alight.

One of my jobs these days is as an honorary archivist to a large college and I'm forever discovering how important old records by ordinary people are. They are often the only corroboration available for obscure events and lesser-known identities. You have only to see how eagerly private papers are pounced-on by researchers after the customary 30 or 50 year public release to realise how important such records are.

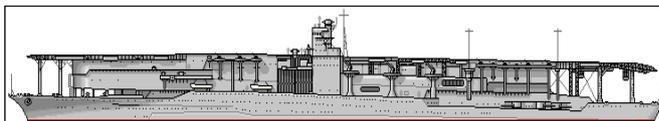
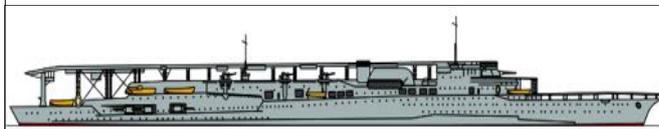
In the case of 'Slipstream' the record is highly reliable since any blunders or false claims will soon be challenged by a raft of 'letters to the editor'. On the other hand, I'm very glad to see some articles from serving people beginning to appear (eg: front and back covers of both the latest editions and pp 14-15 of the latest edition); that's informative for us old salts and lets us know that the firm is still in good hands and serving in places to which the RAAF still can't even get near.

I don't write very often so may I make some comments on the last two issues.

Vol.14 #2, pg.4 – Port Side Islands, Other Sides and Other Things:

I can confirm Bruce Hamilton's advice that the IJN *HIRYU* and *AKAGI* had islands on the port side. Captain J.M. Thornton of the RCN is a world authority on 'oddball' facts about warships and in his *Men-of-War, 1770-1970* (Model & Allied Publications, Watford, 1978) he discusses both. The *SORYU* was *HIRYU*'S sister ship but for some reason they had islands on opposite sides. *AKAGI*'s island was in fact originally on the normal starboard side but it was relocated at a refit in 1938 (I've not been able to determine why).

Named for a mountain northwest of Tokyo, the Akagi was laid down in 1920 as one of four Amagi-class battlecruisers. These were abandoned in accordance with the Washington Naval Conference of 1922, but the hull of Akagi was kept and redesigned as an aircraft carrier, built without an island. Akagi was reconfigured in 1935-38, the primary changes being the addition of a full-length flight deck and a small port-side superstructure, the only interruption to her otherwise plain profile.



However, there were other carriers with a non-standard island – sort of. HMS *FURIOUS* was an early RN carrier, originally intended as a cruiser but in 1917 changed to a semi-carrier with a slightly downward sloping launching deck over where ‘A’ and ‘B’ turrets would normally be and the original cruiser bridge still in place. There is an excellent depiction of her at that stage on p.7 of ‘Flying Stations’. She then had a recovery deck added aft of the bridge – which remained until the 1925 reconstruction. A huge



1918 - Furious - For'ard land-on deck fitted

crash barrier was interposed between the forward end of the recovery deck and the bridge/funnel superstructure but I don't know whether it was used routinely or only for emergency (presumably the latter as landing speeds were fairly slow).

From 1925 to 1938 she had a full length recovery flight deck with a small ‘conning position’ actually midships in the forward flight deck which could be lowered flush with the deck during flying operations. The original launching deck remained as such under the new full length recovery deck. The conning position was replaced with a small permanent island at the '38 refit and she served through and survived WW-2.

FURIOUS was perhaps the single most important vessel in the evolution of the aircraft carrier in any nation, with the RN rapidly developing carrier techniques after WW-1 using her as a trial horse. The famous Japanese carriers of the 1930s were largely constructed on the *FURIOUS* experience (remembering that the Japanese were our allies in WW-1 and their Navy was patterned directly from the RN, even to having signs in their ships in English, as those who have visited *MIKASA* will have noticed).



1920 - Furious rebuilt with flush flight deck

The USS *LANGLEY*, the first USN carrier (originally the collier *JUPITER*) had two funnels (one originally) which could be lowered during flying ops and they were on the port side. A couple of other early carriers both British and American, had this arrangement. Incidentally, there is a well known photo of the *LANGLEY* with a

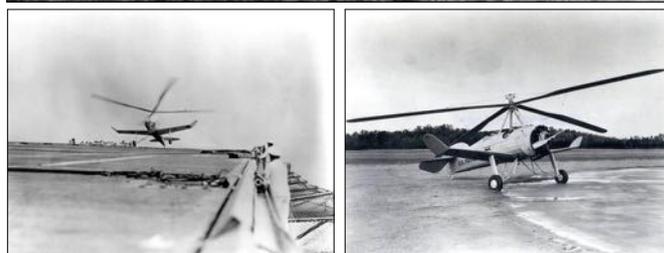


1928 - USS Langley

USN autogiro on the deck, at sea, so the Americans were into rotary wing flying right from the start. *LANGLEY* never had an island at all, the original collier bridge being right forward at the bow and it remained there.



1937 - Converted to Seaplane carrier-note the funnel arrangement



23 SEPT 1931 -The US Navy's first rotary wing aircraft, the Pitcairn XOP-1 autogiro, piloted by LT Alfred M Pride, carrying out naval suitability trials aboard USS Langley.

[The early days of aviation saw many experiments and unusual ideas afloat. Not surprisingly, many of these ideas didn't work out and are nearly forgotten today - but others became great successes in time, and are vital parts of modern naval warfare.

In 1903, Samuel P. Langley attempted to enter the record books as the first man to fly a powered aircraft. His contraption was launched from a platform built atop his houseboat, moored in the Potomac River. The airplane rolled down the ramp...and sank 'like mortar'. Understandably, Langley's efforts are overshadowed by the Wright Brothers. However, this was probably the first time an aircraft was launched from a floating platform. The US Navy named its first aircraft carrier in honour of Langley, but only after naming its first major aviation vessel (an airship tender) in honour of the Wrights. Ed]

And More than One Flight Deck!

It may be of interest to note that a number of carriers in Britain, USA and Japan had *two* flight decks (in fact, the *AKAGI* and *KAGA* had three!) – the upper deck for recovery (and later launching as well) and the lower one for launching (the first was *FURIOUS* as already discussed).

The USN ‘Essex’ class, laid down during the ‘30s, were originally designed to have catapults (or ‘catapults’ if you’re an American) for’ard on the hangar deck and some were actually so built and operated but the idea was eventually abandoned by the USN, not least because the launch was through an opening in the stbd side and as the pilot shot out from inside the ship he had to instantly contend with a 20+ knot stbd side wind with added bow turbulence since the ship was also launching topsides and was steaming at high speed.

The problem of deck parking with simultaneous launch and recovery operations was not again tackled until the Brits came-up with the angled deck (for which reason *MELBOURNE*'s delivery was delayed and I believe that she was the third carrier in the world to be so fitted.

Can anyone confirm this?

(Continued on page 12)

Going the Wrong Way

I can also confirm Bruce Hamilton's note that some carriers could - and did - recover aircraft while steaming astern. By great coincidence, a retired U.S. Marine friend of mine (his squadron was 805's host unit at Cubi Point in 1962 and we've been in contact ever since, including a family visit to his family in Pennsylvania) sent me for Christmas a fascinating book entitled *Grey Ghost – the story of the aircraft carrier HORNET*. I served for a short while on *HORNET* in 1967 (with Clive Blenner-Hasset, if he's reading this) so have always had an interest in her and was pleased to see that she is now one of the few Aircraft Carrier Museums in the world (at Alameda) having gone to within days of being attacked by the breakers blowtorch. Anyway, the book discusses at considerable length the history of the 'Essex' class, including construction and operational details, which includes detailed accounts of flying off from the stern. My previous mention re the hangar deck in the 'Essex' class comes from that book.

Also, Bruce Hamilton's pic of an 'Avenger' landing over the bow of *YORKTOWN* is not a trick photo. Nor is the wake emanating from the bow, nor the bow wave being generated by the stern. In fact, a design requirement of the 'Essex' class was that they could steam astern at full speed for both launching and recovery (and that would mean that the island was temporarily on the port side!).

Even more bizarre was that several carriers had arresting wires at the front of the flight deck. However, this arrangement was rarely (if ever) used and I have a 1960 copy of NAVWEPS 00-80P -1, *United States Naval Aviation, 1910-1960* (given to me many years ago by Fred Lewis) which records the following for the 22nd July 1943: *Since there had been no operational need for arresting gear and related equipment for landing on the bow of aircraft carriers, the Vice-Chief of Naval Op's approved its removal.*

In June of 1945 whilst part of Task force 38, the forward section of *HORNET's* flight deck was splintered (being mainly wooden) and the superstructure twisted like a piece of 'alfoil' by a giant wave during one of the severest typhoons ever recorded. Captain Doyle launched aircraft over the stern until temporary repairs could be effected (which left the flight deck 40 ft short). It was this event which partly initiated the retrofit of the 'hurricane bows' to USN carriers in the early '50s and that design went through two stages (and the author of my book asks the interesting question – Why weren't they called Typhoon bows?).

So – next time you see pics of aircraft going the wrong way and are sceptical, check to make sure that your eyes aren't in fact seeing the truth.

Vol.14 #3, pp.3, 6 & 10 – Museum Politics

I noted your editorial remarks about the name of the Museum and read the other letters in both the previous and current journals on the topic. I must confess I was disappointed at the change of name and lack of naval inclusion. I appreciated Neil Ralph's explanation in Vol.14 #2 and can sympathise with the difficulties the Board faced. Having been involved with government funding for various projects I appreciate the imperative to be more widely representative. However, how much of our 'Navy' space do we have to sacrifice to fit-in something of no interest to us or which has no connection to Australia's maritime defence history?

Conversely, how much of our stuff has to be left out to fit-in somebody else's whim?

I would be interested to know if the various Army and RAAF museums get any such funding without having to sacrifice their

identity. Does anybody know the answer to that?

It's also appalling that the Museum has to go into the open market place to bid for our own former aircraft. When a scrap metal merchant can get a whole ship or aircraft (or tank or whatever) for a few thousand dollars the comparison with posterity for future generations is ludicrous. I noted the *HORNET* above: it was put-up for sale for a paltry \$US200,000 (yes, that's right – two hundred thousand) and the USN heritage group organised to try to get it as a museum had to bid on the open market. Our government bean-counters are just as parsimonious. It seems to me that we ought to fight this one, perhaps in conjunction with the other two services and get some kind of policy established. As a last resort we should perhaps all be mobilised through the state branches to blitz our local members when an aircraft is coming-up for disposal. Many will be aware how sensitive MPs are to a flood of letters.

One other point that caught my eye was that some previous generous donations had been used for operating expenses. I don't know the circumstances so need to be reserved in any comment but there is an old dictum that bequests and suchlike, unless donated for a specific purpose, should never be used for operating costs. When you see a firm selling real estate to meet debts, as opposed to raising capital for expansion, you know that they're already going under. Gifts should normally be placed in a trust fund to build-up capital generation. That means foregoing short-term gain but in the long run firms-up the base to provide a steady income.

Does the Museum have a trust fund? Such funds are tax deductible and can thus attract substantial corporate and estate gifts. I am a Director on a newly established incorporated trust fund for a particular education purpose and we'll be unashamedly going after the big end of town, but with a clear and narrow focus. Perhaps the Museum needs another James Balderstone; to achieve that sort of aim you have to have a national figure with some political clout.

I noted Neil Ralph's remark about perceived arrogance and another comment elsewhere about lack of support from us FAA types. I suggest that the two points can be connected. In my own case I suffered a humiliating experience by a former senior official at the Museum and never gave another donation nor set foot inside the place again (with the exception of the '98 reunion and then only for a few official functions). I hasten to add that I needed to have contact with the current Director about a reprint of *The Flight of the Pelican* and cannot but say that I was cheerfully and courteously treated. Perhaps I need to review my attitude. However, I know that my experience was not unique.

At all events, I serve voluntarily on a couple of boards of both incorporated and non-incorporated not-for-profit companies (which means that I pay to be on them and don't even get expenses) and running a large organisation like the Museum ain't easy. Tough decisions have to be made and you tend to get more brickbats than bouquets. Nobody can but say that the museum is a magnificent institution and a credit to those who have served so hard to make it so. So, while I've thrown a couple of bangers I'd also like to record my appreciation for what has been done.

p.32 – A Traveller's Tale

Several of us can tell you who owned the grossly overloaded 'Dodge' in the pic at the top of the page. You've probably already heard from Mick Blair, Bruce Schmitz, Len Bolden, Brian

Steemson and several others. The owner of the car and writer of the article was 'Benny' Goodman, Aircraft Artificer First Class, ex Halton Brat, ex RN WW-2 veteran. Benny was one of the great characters of our early days – terror of the S.E. Asia bars and a bit of a scoundrel. But a friend too and invariably cheerful no matter how bad things were (read the article to prove that!). He also knew all about how aircraft worked and taught many of us technical types our craft - especially those of us who were good at systematically trouble shooting obscure unserviceabilities. He could teach students how to follow a schematic hydraulic system diagram blindfolded in a dark room at night with no lights.

He paid-off with his original and only ever issue peaked cap; the only change it would ever have had would have been the replaced AA4 (Petty Officer) badge for the AA3 promotion (CPO) badge. When he took it off it would fall into three pieces which, when he went to put it back on, had to be juggled carefully onto his head.



Many of us can recall that famous journey to Melbourne and the story didn't end there. When the family arrived they had no house to go to but Benny, being who he was, never saw that as a problem. But that's another story

P.33 – The 'PONAM' Book

I would like to highly recommend this book to anybody who had anything to do with the WW-2 Mobile Operating Naval Air Bases (MONABs), and that includes anybody who has ever served at ALBATROSS or NIRIMBA or worked at Bankstown or Manus.

The research that Harry Bannister has put into this work cannot be described simply as 'monumental' – it is beyond that. It is the only concise record of these various bases (the name comes from one of the island bases near Manus) and comprises over 380 pages, every one of which is a mini research project in its own right. If it had not been for Harry's work this part of Australia's WW-2 history would have drifted astern and been lost.

I say 'Australia's history' because the bulk of the bases were in Australia or the Pacific (apart from details in this book *The Flight of the Pelican* lists all of them on p.26, except for those that were formed but never deployed as the war ended. The same page acknowledges the input by Harry Bannister on this subject into *The Pelican*). Any ex-RNers should have 'PONAM', but it is a valuable contribution to the RAN's corpus too. Our journal editor, John Arnold, is also well familiar with this work – how about a review John?

'Flying Stations'

Finally, I've not yet read through 'Flying Stations' in detail but I certainly have my own copy and I've seen them here and there on the bookstands. It is a very important record. I was glad to see plenty of pics in it; I've published a few books and nowadays unless there are plenty of 'visuals' to catch peoples' eyes the book won't even be picked-up. However, I was a little surprised to not find any reference to either the Royal Australian Naval Aircraft Maintenance Examination Board (RANAMEB) or the Royal Australian Naval Aircraft Maintenance Development Unit (RANAMDU); the latter now the Aircraft Maintenance & Flight Trials Unit (AMAFTU).

Some might say that I have a personal reason for picking up those points but the fact remains that they were unique.

RANAMEB was the first organisation in Australia to be granted maintenance licencing accreditation outside the then three major airlines (QANTAS, ANA and TAA).

When the RAAF heard that we were applying for it they fell-over laughing but stopped when we were approved and then even more so when they applied and did not get as wide a coverage. Because of those licences being a leg-in to the civilian air world many ex-RAN air maintainers went there after the Navy (QANTAS at one stage being known as the ex-FAA Association and at least two fellows became regional airline chief engineers) and were thus retained in the business to the national benefit and as a return to the taxpayer. Brian Steemson actually joined the DCA as an ex-Oic of the Board so we had a friend in court.

RANAMEB grew out of the old RN Board at Lee-on-Solent and thus had a history with a solid ethos going back to the very early days of Naval flying and, as Gordon Jervis would attest, was undoubtedly one of the primary contributors to the RAN's excellent and continual record of flying safety (Gordon was always a RANAMEB supporter and recognised how important a place it played in the RAN's airworthiness culture).

In this vein I was most interested to read CPO Williams' article on pp.33-34 of Vol.14 #2 of the journal. I note that he joined the RAN in 1987 so he'll be interested to know that the civilian accreditation I'm talking about started in 1965.

RANAMDU likewise grew out of the RN NAMDU (also at Lee-on-Solent) and introduced things like Flexible Servicing and Tool Control. John Selby was the first AEO to implement Flexible Servicing at sea (816 Gannets) and I recall him saying on return from the 1965 ('66?) cruise that it gave him and the CO the equivalent of an extra one and a half aircraft. Eventually, the unit grew to include flight trials and people like Ian McIntyre and Keith Englesman (pic on p.24 of Vol.14 #2) became the Oic's. My guess is that RANAMDU/AMAFTU probably saved the taxpayer much more than it had spent on it. For a small outfit like the RAN FAA to have had such an effective and professional hi-tech unit would have been worth a mention – I'd have thought.

Last, but not least in 'Flying Stations', there is an old chestnut lurking at the very start of Chapter 14 on p.249: '*Following the Whitlam Government's decision to end Australian involvement in the Vietnam War ...*'. The Whitlam Government did no such thing.

By the time the Whitlam Government occupied the Treasury benches most Australians from Vietnam were already home. The end of Australia's involvement was initiated by the McMahon Government and so announced by the Prime Minister on the 18th August 1971, the Cabinet having made the decision on the 26th July. However, an informal partial withdrawal had actually begun in 1970. In fact, McMahon's predecessor, John Gorton, had actually stopped sending any further troops to Vietnam well before 1971. The sudden formalisation of the process in 1971 resulted from President Nixon's decision to visit China in July of that year and the Australian Government, under McMahon, seized the opportunity to rapidly collapse Australia's involvement in what had become an unpopular war. The plan was to withdraw the first of two battalions of Australian troops by October and the second in December – well before the Labour Party won the 1972 Federal election.

The reason for this enduring myth is hard to fathom. It may have been that the Labour Opposition had been saying since Arthur Calwell's time that if it won government it would immediately end Australia's involvement in Vietnam and it actually

(Continued on page 14)

did come to power just after the involvement wound-down. No doubt the two events were linked in some minds and some historians have done little to correct it. Gerard Henderson of the Sydney Institute regularly tries to make the point (as recently as the 28th January 2003 in *The Sydney Morning Herald*) that the Whitlam Government had no practical part in the decision.

Nevertheless, 'Flying Stations' is a very important record and it reminded me of things that I'd forgotten. A monumental (literally) amount of research. Thus, it will serve a future generation long after we've all gone and become part of the Navy's history to be recorded along with events like the formation of the RAN, some of its great World Wars battles and the part that the FAA has played in making and keeping this country as the best place in the Universe.

Ron Robb

A letter from 'Wolfman' in Russia...

Dear Ed

Thought I might drop a line about a recent interesting trip to Samara (about 24 hours by train from Ekaterinburg on the Volga).

I had to go there to do some 'wheeling and dealing' for our next summer cruise on the Volga; I told an American mate he was welcome to tag along as he hadn't been there before and what was interesting in Samara is 'Stalin's Bunker'.

As it happened, the travel agency I was dealing with for the cruise, rang and said that there were no tours of Stalin's Bunker on Friday afternoons and it was closed on Saturdays and Sundays - typically Russian - having the main attractions closed at times when it is most convenient for tourists to visit. It is a method they seem to employ to avoid too much work stress.....

I thought well, they can only say 'no' if we rock up and try and have a look. I had visited the bunker as part of a cruise excursion two years previously and I knew where to go, so off we went. Sure enough, the door was locked, but I decided to give the 'red buzzer' a go.

After a couple of minutes there was some sound of life coming from within the bunker and an elderly bloke opened the door and asked us what we wanted. I explained to him that we were both Australians (Americans aren't always the flavour of the month in Russia) and we had come to Samara with the sole purpose of seeing the bunker.

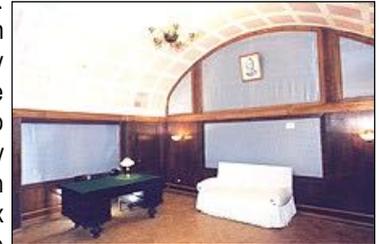
Well luck was on our side and the old guide said he would show us through and was very happy when I said I didn't want a receipt or ticket for our entrance fee.

Regarding the bunker and its history - during the war when the Germans were making big inroads into Russia, Stalin decided that Russia must have a back-up capital should Moscow fall. He chose Samara and immediately had work commence on his bunker and war office. All embassies (including Australia's) and consulates were also relocated there. Under Stalin's orders, 600 of the specialist workers who built the metro system in Moscow (also designed to be used as air raid shelters) worked around the clock to complete the project as quickly as possible, with financial rewards and medals being promised as 'incentives'.

After only nine months the whole project was finished. The bunker is the deepest of all wartime bunkers - thirty seven metres underground with various rooms for staff on the upper levels. It had its own water and air filtration plants, electrical generation system and if it was under siege it could be closed airtight with

sufficient oxygen supplies for the 'chosen ones' to continue living and working for five days. The steel and concrete doors throughout the underground complex would put Fort Knox to shame - it would probably survive a nuclear attack let alone the conventional weapons it was designed to withstand.

Stalin's private room was at the very bottom and is a very Spartan. Despite being the head of the USSR, Stalin himself did not go in for all the luxuries that others of the communist elite lavished upon themselves. It contained only a desk, and a sofa which converted to his bed. Only two pictures hang on the walls - these actually having 'windows' - pale blue silk panels were installed to give the impression that they were windows letting through the daylight. There were six doors leading off from the room - only two opened - one, the entrance door, the second, to his toilet. The others were merely an attempt to remove the claustrophobic atmosphere of the place.



Across the corridor was the war office - a large T-shaped boardroom table was the centre piece which could sit about eighteen of his generals. A map of western Europe, including western Russia, filled the wall behind Stalin's seat. Along another wall were the telegraphists desks. Five telegraphists would enter the office and sit at their machines facing the wall, this was so they could not identify any of the generals or whoever may enter the room. Next to the entrance door was another small desk where one of Stalin's 'most trusted' KGB officers sat. He was armed with a loaded pistol to be aimed at anyone who may appear to try and interfere with Stalin. His orders were to 'shoot to kill', so it wouldn't have been a good idea to grab for a hanky to blow your nose. This was how business was done Stalin style.



As for the business of building the bunker and the 'incentives' made to the construction team. We were told that one of the workers didn't really believe all that he heard and he 'escaped'. He returned later saying that all the workers, after completing the bunker complex, were taken down to the river, given a bullet to the back of the head and thrown in - end of story!

After the war the bunker remained a secret until the fall of the communists back in 1991 and since being 'rediscovered', it has been opened to the public and remains much the same as it was sixty years ago. A very interesting piece of history well worth visiting.

In one of the small rooms were photographs of some of the embassies which were relocated to Samara - Australia's being at 110 Kubisheva Street (one of the main streets). I decided to have a look and see if it was still there. It is, but with the state of the building I am not sure if it is being restored or knocked down, it is nowhere nearly as impressive as it was in its heyday.

For now best wishes from Locko - (Wolfman in Russia)

A TRAGEDY - The very first bomb dropped by the Allies on Berlin during World War II killed the only elephant in the Berlin Zoo.

Dear Ed

It would be appreciated if you would publish the following in *Slipstream*. It is of great importance to many of our members.

Rod Coupland, Bob Morris and Kevin Cook

Korean War Veterans Of Australia

Please read the attached submission which we intend to present to the Federal Government Of Australia.

The submission has been forwarded to all branches of Korean Veterans throughout Australia. It is not to be looked at as an individual paper, but as a whole by all Australian Korean War Veterans.

We must unite as one body and put a combined signed petition to the Federal Government for the award of the Australian Active Service Medal (AASM) and the Returned Active Service Badge (RAS) to all Korean War Veterans from 1953 until 1957.

Should any veteran have any suggestion or motion to add to this submission please do so and forward it to the committee, their names, addresses and phone numbers are recorded on the submission paper.

We must have as many signatures as possible on the paper to obtain a fair and worthy hearing, so please assist us to help our campaign go forward.

Submission: To The Federal Government Of Australia
The Forgotten War

Fifty years and six months have passed since a cease fire was agreed by North and South Korea following three long years of bitter fighting. A cease fire took place on 27 July 1953 and an armistice was signed between the two countries.

Article 14: Recommendations to the governments concerned on both sides of the Armistice read as follows:

Article 60: In order to ensure the peaceful settlement of the Korean question, the military commanders of both sides hereby recommend to the governments of the countries concerned on both sides that within three months after the armistice is signed and becomes effect, a political conference of a higher level of both sides be held by representatives appointed respectively to settle through negotiations, the question of withdrawal of all foreign forces from Korea, the peaceful settlement of the Korea question.

Article 60 - WAS NEVER COMPLIED WITH!

Australian Military forces, Navy, Army and Air Force played major roles during the campaign from 1950 until 1957. Australia being a member of the United Nations was among the first to join the United States to assist South Korea defend their country against a military invasion by North Korea in June 1950.

Australia suffered the loss of 339 service personnel killed in action up to the cease fire in July 1953. Many more deaths and severe injuries occurred during military operations until the withdrawal of forces in 1957.

Australian personnel who served from June 1950 until the 27 July 1953 were awarded the Australian Active Service Medal, the Returned Active Service Badge, the British Korea Medal and United Nations Medal. All remaining Korean War veterans post 27 July 1953 were awarded the United Nations Medal, this ceased on the 26 July 1954.

During 1993-94, General P C Gratton, along with Senators Mr.

Bob McMullan and Mr. John Faulkner, carried out a public inquiry into the Australian system of honours and awards. As a result, Korean War Veterans post 27 July 1953 were awarded the Australian Service Medal 1945-1975 and the clasp Korea 1953 -1957.

During the year 2000, Major General Mohr and Rear Admiral Phillip Kennedy conducted a Federal Government review into service entitlements for personnel who served in South East Asia between 1955 and 1975. The two investigations and their findings from 1955 to 2000 showed little in recognition of Korean War Veterans who were on active duty from 1953 until 1957 and should have been awarded the Australian Active Service Medal and Returned Active Service Badge.

Since the Korean War chapter closed in 1957, several operations have taken place in different locations by Australian Defence Forces. Some regarded as Emergency Forces, Exercising Forces, Patrol Forces and suchlike.

The Australian Active Service Medal and Returned Active Service Badge was awarded to the majority of servicemen, Navy, Army and Air Force, who served in these operational areas. These areas do not include Vietnam which was declared a War Zone.

During an official visit to Nowra NSW on 16 August 2003 to welcome home Gulf War Veterans, the Minister of Veterans' Affairs, Mrs Danna Vale MP, made herself available for a meeting at the City of Shoalhaven Function Centre to hear any problems, queries or concerns from the local veteran community. Mrs Joanna Gash MP, the local member for Gilmore was also in attendance.

The Korean War Veterans committee put their claims forward to Mrs Vale as she was also the Assisting Minister of Defence. The claims also had the support of Mrs Joanna Gash MP, Kelly Hore MP, Mr Jim Lloyd MP and The Hon. Ian Causley MP.

Mrs Danna Vale said that the veterans had a very good argument to put forward. Since that time, she has been replaced by Mr Mal Brough MP, as Assisting the Minister of Defence.

A reply relating to the veterans' request for recognition was received from Mr Mal Brough on the 20 January 2004, it was not very convincing. His letter being based on the findings of the CIDA report in 1993 and 1994 that were mentioned earlier in this document.

The Korean Veterans are not begging for more benefits from DVA, only just to be honoured with the Australian Active Service Medal and Returned from Active Badge they justly deserve.

Please allow this submission to be fully and fairly discussed and debated by official parties representing the Federal Government of Australia and The Korean War Veterans of Australia and be released for public Viewing.

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Dear Ed

I don't know whether or not you're still running that old series of the best, worst, first, last, least, most, etc but I enclose a few photographs of CMDR RAN (Rtd) Ray ('Affie') Morrith who will be remembered as one of the icons of the Gannet and Tracker era. Ray was a driver of both types and eventually C.O. of 816. His last Navy job before moving to other things was CAG Commander. Ray believes that he holds the record in the RAN for:

First Gannet night emergency landing on MELBOURNE (21 Nov.57), perforce following a single engine failure after take-off. 817 Sqdn at the time.

First night 'bolter' ('58, again following single engine failure) in both the RN and RAN. Also 817 Sqdn.

Highest number of RAN deck landings - 864 - when he paid-off in 1978. Unless we get back into fixed wing sometime in the future (?) this is unlikely to ever be surpassed.

He'd be interested to know if anybody can knock him off any of the above perches.

We were idly yarning over a cool glass some time ago when he casually mentioned the above achievements. I said he ought to test the water in *Slipstream* but he's a modest sort of bloke so I said 'Give me the facts and I'll run them past the editor', which I'm hereby doing - for your kind consideration.

With a bit more pumping, I squeezed some more bio details out of Ray and the accompanying photos may be of interest.

The picture of Ray with the fabulous model-like lady shows his graduation in June '55 from #18 Course at RAAF Point Cook. He had won the Goble Trophy as the most proficient pilot on course and, to boot, the course Weapons proficiency prize. The lady? Oh yes - she was Sue Kline and she shortly after became Mrs Morrith. She still is.



The photograph below shows 817 Sqdn. Gannet side #310 with the port main wheel in a sponson, October '57. The pilot was a 'bog-rat' A/SBLT Ray Morrith and the crewman was Aircrewman Wilkinson.



The photograph to the right, shows another 817 Sqdn Gannet doing a night repeat of the foregoing after a night CASEX only a fortnight later.



This time there were two rear seat crew: LEUTs Lovell and Evans. Can you guess who the pilot was? Suffice to say that Ray shortly afterwards found himself on a train returning to Nowra for refresher deck landing practice.

It goes on. Shortly afterwards, on 21 November '57, Ray had to cope with the night engine failure as mentioned previously.

But wait - there's more: in 1958, still with 817, was the night bolter also mentioned previously.

The only other one I can think of that could match Ray for such a series of mishaps not really of his own making was Winston James. I was on Gannets for some time and we used to assume that any emergency alarm when Gannets were airborne would be Winston. I hasten to add that they were invariably mechanical failures and I think that pilots of lesser calibre than Ray or Winston might not have brought their birds back to deck or ground so successfully.

To reinforce that observation, my Lords High Commissioners apparently thought so too because the photograph below shows Ray being congratulated as CO 816 (Trackers) by Captain Neil McDonald after a very successful RIMPAC '72 and his 816th deck landing (a youthful Jack McCaffrie in the background).



Whatever, Ray certainly ended-up okay for, as stated above, he became not only a 'Charlie Oscar' but the 'Charlie Alpha Golf' - a noble conclusion, by any standard.

Ron Robb

[THE GOBLE TROPHY - The Fairey IID seaplane first flew in 1920, and was originally ordered for service with the Royal Australian Navy in 1921. Most famous of the Faireys was A10-3 in which Wg Cdr Goble and Flt Lt McIntyre completed the first flight around Australia. During April and May, 1924, the aircraft covered 8,568 miles in 90 flying hours over an uncharted course and in face of numerous difficulties. The flyers were awarded the 1924 Britannia Trophy, and the flight was classed by the contemporary press "the finest in the history of aviation"

Today, the epic achievement is commemorated by the Goble Trophy which is awarded to the most proficient pilot of each course at No 1 AFTS. Ed]

CLOSURE OF THE FESR CAMPAIGN

The Far East Strategic Reserve (FESR) campaign, which reached closure in February at Canberra, had a marked effect on several thousand FAA personnel serving in HMA Ships MELBOURNE and SYDNEY and embarked squadrons on tours of duty in the FESR.



They now enjoy service pensions, gold cards, disability compensation and medals in recognition of their service after a fierce bureaucratic battle for recognition. A number of 'carrier navy' types campaigned solidly as members of the FESR Association, as did members of the FAA Association and they should all take a bow. The battle for the carriers to be included was also intense, FESR arguing for, and eventually winning an extension of the nautical mile inclusion zone in the operations area during the Mohr review. At campaign end Joe Linaker writes....

POIGNANT CEREMONY ENDS FESR CAMPAIGN

Over 150 veterans of the Far East Strategic Reserve (FESR) Navy Association and their wives made the pilgrimage to Canberra in February to witness the emotional closure of a protracted campaign for recognition of their service in HMA Ships some 47 years ago during the Malayan Emergency and Indonesian Confrontation.

Representing all state divisions of their association, the veterans assembled at the Australian War Memorial for the unveiling of the names of two casualties Alan Cooper and Bob Spooner who lost their lives whilst serving in FESR on HMAS ANZAC and HMAS TOBRUK respectively.

The unveiling was preceded by a moving memorial service and wreath laying ceremony conducted by Monsignor Ian Dempsey in the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Navy members of the Federation Guard, resplendent in ceremonial white and gleaming boots, mounted a well-drilled catafalque party and impressed all in the brilliant Canberra sunshine. Admiral Mike Hudson delivered a strong Ode to the Fallen and the Last Post reverberated through the portals of the War Memorial, overwhelming the relatives and former shipmates of Cooper and Spooner.

Walkways in the Hall of Memories were packed as the unveiling of their names on the Roll of Honour was performed by Commodore Bob Trotter and blessed by Monsignor Dempsey. Relatives and veterans then placed poppies in the wall to mark the sad loss of two young lives 47 years ago.



The FESR contingent then moved to the Navy Memorial on Anzac Parade for an Association service and wreath laying. This was performed by Bill Jarman (HMAS TOBRUK) and 'Wiggy' Bennett (HMAS ANZAC) close friends who served onboard when Bob Spooner and Alan Cooper lost their lives.

The significance of the occasion was further marked by a formal remembrance dinner presented by the FESR and ANZAC/TOBRUK associations at the Ainslee Football Club. Nearly 200 people enjoyed fine food, wine, dinner music from the RAN band ensemble, and listened to an array of speakers linked together by the energetic patter of Master of Ceremonies, Noel Payne.

John 'Reebop' Golotta, President of the ANZAC/TOBRUK Association delivered the welcome address and Admiral Mike Hudson presented an absorbing synopsis of the bureaucratic battle waged for equity by FESR campaigners. Deputy Chief of Navy, Rear Admiral Roan Moffitt, entrusted with the keynote address, enlightened everyone with an overview of the our Navy of the future, and to the delight of the 'Birdies' he indicated possible return of flight deck operations albeit on troop carriers with embarked helicopter squadrons.

Tenacious researcher for the FESR campaign Bob Gibbs introduced an old custom of the sea and tolled 8 bells to the fallen followed by a minute of silent reflection and a single bell of closure to record the end of the campaign.

Patron of the FESR Vice-Admiral Sir Richard Peek received a standing ovation to the lectern where he spoke fondly about the men of the FESR and the deprivation they experienced while serving with him in Torrid Zone conditions around the coast of Malaya. Sir Richard capped his speech with the presentation of personalized ships plaques to Joyce Mannix, sister of Alan Cooper, and Pat Williams, sister of Bob Spooner. To say both were stunned by the Canberra event would be an understatement.

The FESR campaign for recognition was arguably the most successful bureaucratic battle in veteran history. It commenced in 1993 when researchers, Roger de Lisle and Bob Gibbs, uncovered an extract from a 1956 Report of Proceedings by Commanding Officer HMAS TOBRUK, Captain Richard Peek. This sought compensation for his Ship's Company similar to that enjoyed by others serving in the FESR.

Years of intense political lobbying to Government Ministers and Bureaucrats followed without success, and it has to be said that a number of ex-service institutions were less than supportive during the early years. As word gradually spread through the veteran community, lobbying intensified through state and federal members under guidance of the FESR Association.

Support of the Naval Association of Australia and the formation of the Joint Consultative Group under the chairmanship of Admiral Mike Hudson, finally broke through to government with a high impact submission that ultimately commissioned the Mohr Review.

The Mohr review recommendations were carried into legislation in 2001 and tens of thousands of FESR veterans now enjoy a better quality of life from the widespread benefits of a ten-year campaign to win recognition for service in 28 warships of the RAN in the far east theatre - service which started in 1955 and continued until 1971.

The inscription of Alan Campbell Cooper and Robert William Spooner on the Honor Roll within the Hall of Memories of the Australian War Memorial also confirms the place of FESR service in our RAN history. The spirit of these two young men will endure among veterans of the wider Naval Family.



MOMENTS IN TIME



1968–69 RANHFV Vietnam



1953-54 HMAS SYDNEY leaves for second tour of duty off Korea
Photograph courtesy Clem Conlan



1972 – 725 SQDN [What was the occasion?]

Front L-R: LT Firth - LT Tapping - LCDR Debus - LCDR Stopford - LT Arthur - SBLT Walford
 Rear L-R: LS Muscia - LS Trippett - LS Smith - LS Connolly - LS Revter - LS Hollow - LS Barney
Photograph courtesy AMoF



1949 -The first RAN aircraft (Firefly) to land aboard HMAS Sydney



Circa 1953 - HMAS NIRIMBA - ELECTRICAL DIVISION

Taken when Schofields was being developed into the RAN's second Naval Air Station

Rear L-R: 5th Bob Coombes - Far Right Barry Herron

Front L-R: 3rd CPO Charles Morris - CPO Stan Martin - LCDR Jack Whitfield RN - Mr Frederick Lewis

Can the readers provide the missing names? *Photograph courtesy Frederick Lewis*



1956/57 AJASS - 816 and 817 Squadron aircrew in attendance

Front L-R: John Dudley - Leo Baker RN - Pat Stewart - Ken Barnett - 'Nobby' Clarke - John Griffin - 816 CO Jim Bailey - 817 CO 'Whacka' Payne? - Bill Palmer? - Charles 'Hank' Fargher - Ray 'Affie' Morrill
 Centre L-R: ? - ? - ? - John Champion - Bloffwitch- Johnny Nestor? - John Matthew? - Robert 'Gerry' O'Day—?
 Rear L-R: ? - Don Debus - ? - Mike Astbury - 'Toz' Dadswell - Dicky Andrew RN - Les Powell ? - Malcolm 'Blackie' Barratt - ? - Doug Anstee? - Dick Lea - ? *Photograph courtesy George Self - Forwarded by John Champion*



WALLER RECRUIT CLASS 62 - HMAS CERBERUS - MARCH 1959

Rear L-R: John Ward - G McPherson - Mick Blenkinsop - Alan Arnell - Ron Geyl - John George - Bevan Daws
 Centre L-R: Donoghue - Ron Evans - Bill Paul - Cook - Ray Tungall - John Stewart (Kneeling)
 Front L-R: Barry Arthur - Bob Evans - John Trood - LWR Wilson—Frank Smith - Tom Daly
Photograph courtesy John Green

From: LCDR Rankin, Christopher M.

**Aviation Officer Community Manager,
2 Navy Annex, Rm 3607
Washington, D.C**

**Subject: FW: Half A Crew Member's Body
Outside During A Carrier Landing**

Keith Gallagher was my next door neighbour in Whidbey from 1989-1992. This occurred post Desert Storm on Lincoln's 1991 cruise. They had just rounded the southern tip of India in the IO Blue Water Ops! A metal fairing had failed in the top part of the ejection seat which held the seat in place. This mishap caused a fleet wide inspection of all seats and 4 more failures were found.

Aside from cuts and bruises, Keith's major injuries were nerve damage in both shoulders. He healed well, passed a medical board and was restored to a flight status a year later. One year to the day of the mishap, Keith's first flight was back in this same jet with the same pilot.

Keith was a graduate of Harvard, he got out (no surprise there) went to Duke for his MBA and is now a big wig with Sprint. His pilot Mark Baden (callsign: "Master") received an Air Medal for his efforts. He went to the training command to instruct and is now an airline pilot. From the time the seat went through the canopy till 515 was on deck was under 5 minutes, the emergency pull forward was pretty epic, all reasons Keith is still alive today.

It is a pretty good read:

AN AMAZING A-6 INTRUDER STORY

Gaze at the pictures . . . then . . . read this fighter jock's story. So much for the thought of a boring refuelling mission !

Lieutenant Keith Gallagher's Account :

On my 26th birthday I was blindsided by a piece of bad luck the size of Texas that should have killed me. Luckily, it was followed immediately by a whole slew of miracles that allowed me to be around for my 27th. Not even Murphy of Murphy's Law could have conceived of such a bizarre accident !

On the open sea, a third of the way through our cruise, we had the duties of an overhead tanker, making circles in the sky. Although the pattern can be pretty boring, we were alert and maintaining a good lookout doctrine because our air wing had a midair collision less than a week before, and we did not want to have a repeat.

We felt we were ready for 'any' emergency : fire warning lights, hydraulic failures and fuel transfer problems. Bring 'em on ! We were ready for them. After all, how much trouble can two airplanes get into . . . while overhead the ship ?

After my third fuel update call, we decided that the left outboard drop tank was going to require a little help in order to transfer. NATOPS recommends applying positive and negative G to force the faulty valve open. As the pilot pulled the stick back, I wondered how many times we would have to 'porpoise' the nose of the plane before the valve opened. As he moved the stick forward, I felt the familiar sensation of negative "G" . . . and then something strange happened : my head bumped the canopy.

For a brief moment, I thought that I had failed to tighten my lap belts, but I knew that wasn't true. Before I could complete that thought, there was a loud bang, followed by wind, noise, disorientation and more wind, wind, wind. Confusion reigned in my

mind as I was forced back against my seat, head against the headrest, arms out behind me, the wind roaring in my head, pounding against my body. " Did the canopy blow off ? Did I eject? Did my windscreen implode?" All of these questions occurred to me amidst the pandemonium in my mind and over my body.

These questions were quickly answered, and replaced by a thousand more, as I looked down and saw a sight that I will never forget: the top of the canopy, close enough to touch, and down through the canopy I could see the top of my pilot's helmet. It took a few moments for this image to sink into my suddenly overloaded brain. This was worse than I ever could have imagined - I was sitting on top of a flying A-6 !

Pain, confusion, panic, fear and denial surged through my brain and body as a new development occurred to me: I COULDN'T BREATHE ! My helmet and mask had been torn off my head, and without them, the full force of the wind was hitting me square in the face. It was like trying to drink from a high pressure fire hose. I couldn't seem to get a breath of air amidst the wind. My arms were dragging along behind me until I managed to pull both of them into my chest and hold them there.

I tried to think for a second as I continued my attempts to breathe. For some reason, it never occurred to me that my pilot would be trying to land. I just never thought about it. I finally decided that the thing that I could do was eject. I grabbed the lower handle with both hands and pulled. It wouldn't budge. With panic induced strength I tried again, but to no avail. The handle wasn't going to move. I attempted to reach the upper ejection handle, but the wind prevented me from getting a hand on it.

As a matter of fact, all that I could do was hold my arms into my chest. If either of them slid out into the wind stream, they immediately flailed out behind me, and that was definitely not good. The wind had become physically and emotionally overwhelming. It pounded against my face and body like a huge wall of water that wouldn't stop. The roaring in my ears confused me . . . wind pressure in my mouth prevented me from breathing, and the pounding on my eyes kept me from seeing. Time had lost all meaning. For all I knew, I could have been sitting there for seconds or for hours. And I was suffocating, and I couldn't seem to get a breath.

As I felt myself blacking out, I wish I could say that my last thoughts were of my wife, but all I said was, " I don't want to die."

Then someone turned on the lights . . . I had a funny view of the front end of an A-6 . . . with jagged plexiglas where my half of the canopy was supposed to be. Looking down from the top of the jet, I was surprised to find the plane had stopped on the flight deck with about 100 people staring up at me. (I guess expecting to see the pearly gates and some dead relatives.)

My first thought was that we had never taken off . . . that something had happened before the catapult. Then everything came flooding back into my brain, the wind, the noise and the confusion. As my pilot then spoke to me and the medical people swarmed all over me, I realized that I was alive.

Then, I found out how lucky I was. My parachute became entangled in the horizontal stabilizer tight enough to act as a shoulder harness for the landing wire trap . but not tight enough to bind the flight controls on the tail. If this had not happened, I would have been tossed forward into the jagged plexiglas during the trap.

There are many other things that happened . . . or didn't . . . that allowed me to survive this mishap. . . just inches away from



disaster. These little things, and a level headed pilot who reacted quickly and correctly, are the reasons that I am alive and flying today.

Lieutenant Mark Baden's [pilot] account :

As we finished the brief, my BN (bombardier navigator - Keith Gallagher) told me that it was his birthday and that our recovery would be his 100th trap on the boat. To top it off, we were assigned to my airplane.

As we taxied out of the chocks, I was still feeling a little uneasy about all the recent mishaps that had been happening lately. To make myself feel better, I went through the 'soft catapult shot or engine failure on takeoff' emergency procedures . . . touching each switch or lever as I went over the steps. " At least if something happens right off the bat, I'll be ready," I thought.

The first few minutes of the hop were busy. Concentrating on the fuel package-check and consolidation, as well as trying to keep track of my initial re-fuelling customers, dispelled my uneasiness.

As we approached the mission's mid-cycle, we kept ourselves occupied with fuel quantity checks. We were particularly keeping a close eye on one drop tank that had quit transferring with about 1,000 pounds of fuel remaining inside. I had tried going to override on its pressurization, but that didn't seem to work. My BN and I discussed the problem and we decided it was probably a stuck float valve. Perhaps some positive then negative G's would fix it.

We were at 8,000 feet, seven miles abeam the ship, heading aft. I clicked the auto altitude hold to OFF, then added some power to allow us a little more G [to play with].

At 230 knots I pulled the stick back and got the plane five degrees nose up. Then, I pushed the stick forward. I got about half a negative G, just enough to float me in the seat. I heard a sharp bang and felt the cockpit instantly depressurize. The roar of the wind followed. I instinctively ducked and looked up expecting the canopy to be partly open. Instead of seeing a two or three inch gap, the canopy bow was flush with the front of the windscreen. My scan continued right. Instead of meeting my BN's questioning glance . . . I saw a pair of legs at my eye level.

The right side of the canopy was shattered. I followed the legs up and saw the rest of my BN's body out in the windblast. I watched as his head snapped down . . . then back up, and his helmet and oxygen mask vanished. They didn't seem to fly off . . . they just disappeared.

My mind went into fast forward. "What the hell happened ?" I wondered. " I hope he gets ejected all the way out. What am I going to do now? I NEED TO SLOW DOWN ! " I jerked the throttles to idle and started the speed brakes out. Without stopping, I reached up, de-isolated, and threw the landing flap lever to down position. I reached over and grabbed for the IFF selector switch and twisted it to EMERGENCY. And I was screaming to myself : " Slow down ! Slow down ! " I glanced up at the airspeed indicator and gave another pull back on the throttles and [max'd] the speed brakes switch. The airspeed was decreasing through 200 knots. The whole time I was doing everything else, I had been staring back

(Continued on page 22)



TOP: Coming in for the emergency landing, Keith's upper body and arm can be seen above the canopy of the A-6.

CENTRE: Keith's body can be seen partially ejected through the canopy of the A-6 aircraft as it touches down on the aircraft carrier for emergency landing. The deployed parachute is wrapped around the tail of the aircraft.

BOTTOM: Photograph taken just seconds after landing. Keith is unconscious with his arms outstretched from the wind blast.

Photos courtesy USN

over my shoulder at my bombardier. I felt a strange combination of fear, helplessness and revulsion as I watched his body slam around in the windblast.

After his helmet flew off, his face now looked like the people who get sucked out into zero atmosphere in some of the more graphic movies. He fought for his life as his eyes lids were blasted open, his cheeks and lips were puffed out to an impossible size, and the tendons in his neck looked like they were about to bust through his skin .

Now at 200 knots, I saw his arms pulled up in front of his face and he was clawing behind his head. For a moment, I thought he was going to manage to pull his ejection handle and get clear of the plane. I was mentally cheering for him.

His arms got yanked down by the blast, and I cursed as I changed my radio selector switch to button 1 and said : " Mayday, Mayday, this is 515. My BN has partially ejected. I need an emergency pull-forward ! " The reply was an immediate, " Roger. Switch to button six." I switched frequencies and said [or maybe yelled], " Boss (Air Officer), this is 515. My BN has partially ejected. I need an emergency pull-forward ! "

In an effort to get slower, I slapped the gear handle down and turned all my fuel dump valves on). The ' Boss' came back in his ever-calm voice and said, " Bring it on in."

As I watched, the indexers move from on-speed to a green chevron as I worked the nose to keep the plane as slow as possible and still keep it flying. The plane was holding at around 160 knots airspeed and slowly descending. My BN's legs were kicking, which gave me some comfort; he was not dead. But, watching his head and body jerked around in the windblast . . being literally beaten to death . . made me ill. I had been arcing [the aircraft] back and forth around in my descent and was still at seven miles when the Boss came up and asked if the BN was still with the aircraft. I think that I caused a few cases of nausea on deck when I said, " Only his legs are still inside the cockpit." It made sense to me, but more than a few people who were listening had visions of two legs and lots of blood and no body. But, the Boss understood what I'd meant.

As I turned in astern, I called the Boss and told him I was six miles behind the boat. I asked how the deck was coming. He asked if I was setting myself up for a straight-in. I told him " Yes." He told me to continue.

It was then I noticed that my BN had quit kicking.

A chill shot through my body as I looked back at him [and I saw] what I saw scared me even more. His head was now turned left and was laying on his shoulder. His face was starting to turn grey. Maybe he'd broken his neck and was now dead ? Bringing back a body that was a friend [only minutes before] was not a good thought. After that I forced myself to not to look at him.

About four miles behind the boat, the front windscreen started to fog up. I cranked the defog all the way and was getting ready to wipe off the glass when it finally started clearing. Then, I saw the boat making a hard left turn. I made some disparaging remarks about the guys on the bridge as I rolled [into a bank] to chase the boat's centreline.

I heard CAG paddles [landing signal officer] came up on the radio. He told the Captain that he would accept the current deck winds and that he needed to steady up the course. My tension eased slightly as I saw 'mother' begin to leave her wake in a straight line.

Coming in for landing I was now driving it in level at about 300 feet. I had been in a slight descent and wasn't willing to add enough power to climb back up to a normal altitude for fear I would have to accelerate and do more physical damage to my already battered BN.

I watched the ball move up to red and then move slowly up towards the centre. Paddles called for some rudder and told me not to go high. My scan went immediately to the # 1 [landing] wire. I had no intention of passing up any "perfectly good wires." I touched down short of the number one wire and I sucked the throttles to idle.

The plastic canopy shards in front of the BN's chest looked like a butcher knife collection. I was very concerned that the deceleration of catching the [arresting] wire was going to throw him into that jagged edge. I cringed when I didn't immediately feel the tug of the wire. I pulled the stick into my lap as paddles was calling for it. So I got the nose gear off the deck and felt the hook catch a wire. I breathed a sigh of relief. Testing the spool-up [acceleration] time of a pair of J-52s engines as I rolled off the [far] end of the angled deck was not the way I wanted to end an already bad ' hop'.

As soon as I stopped, I set the parking brake and a yellow shirt gave me the signal to kill # 2 engine. Immediately after that, I heard a call over the radio that I was chocked. I killed # 1 and began unstrapping.

As soon as I was free of my seat (I somehow remembered to 'safe' the ejection seat) I reached over and 'safed' the BN's lower ejection handle, undid his lower Koch harness fittings and reached up to try to safety his upper ejection handle.

As I was crawling up, I saw that his upper handle was already 'safed.' I started to release his upper Koch fittings, but decided they were holding him in and I didn't want him to fall against the razor-sharp plexiglas on his side. So I got back on my side of the cockpit, held his left arm and hand, and waited for the medical people to arrive. I realized he still was alive when he said, " Am I on the flight deck? " A wave of indescribable relief washed over me as I talked to him while the crash crew worked to truss him up and ease him out of his seat.

Once he was clear of the plane, they towed me out of the landing area and parked me. By hand, a plane captain bumped my canopy open far enough that I could squeeze out. Without looking back at the plane, I headed straight for medical.

Later, I found that ignorance can be bliss. I didn't know two things while I was flying. First, the BN's parachute had deployed and wrapped itself around the tail section of the plane. Then, the BN's seat timing release mechanism had fired and released the BN from his seat. The only things keeping him in the plane were his parachute risers that were holding him against the back of the seat.



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

Please register your intentions, by forwarding numbers of persons to attend, ASAP. This will aid in venue booking and pricing. Once numbers are known, you will be informed of all necessary information relating to the reunion.

Contact: **Philip Trenaman, 78 Lennox Drive, Paralowie 5108 SA**
Phone: (08)82813446 - frankeevansmelb04@iprimus.com.au



AUSTRALIA'S MUSEUM of FLIGHT

by Mark Clayton—Director



On December 17th last millions of people convened at memorials and museums around the world to commemorate the centenary of powered flight, an epochal event – lasting just twelve seconds – the consequences of which continue to exercise a profound influence. The world's most popular museum, the Smithsonian Institute's National Air & Space Museum (NASM), marked the occasion by opening its new 70,000 m² annex at Washington's Dulles Airport. Ten times larger than our own museum hangar, and costing more than \$US311 million, the new NAASM annex is by far the world's biggest museum.

The occasion was doubly significant of course for the staff, Directors and volunteers here at the Australian Naval Aviation Museum Foundation (ANAMF) who have spent the last four years realizing an ambitious redevelopment of the museum's exhibition content. Sustaining enthusiasm and direction for this project has been difficult for all, especially given the many setbacks suffered by the Foundation along the way. It was, therefore, with a mixture of pride and collective relief that we listened to the Chief of the Navy's speech, marking the exhibition's official opening.

While most of the redevelopment's objectives have now been achieved we are painfully conscious that much remains still to be done. Engineering problems have left some aircraft sitting on the ground – when they were to have been suspended – and there are glaring gaps and substitutions caused by the non-arrival of other airframes. On balance though we are reasonably pleased with the outcome and initial public response has been overwhelming positive. While broadening the exhibition's public appeal has – in recent years - become an important part of the Foundation's development strategy, giving full expression to such a fundamental philosophical shift was never going to be a straightforward matter. Comments made about the museum in the last *Slipstream* remind us that at least some stakeholders are not altogether happy with the museum's present course, and we'll be redoubling our efforts now to try and better understand and accommodate these concerns.

My own views of the name change - and the consequent shift in collecting and exhibition emphases – were set out in an earlier edition of *Slipstream* (Vol.11 No.2) and there is little more that I could add at this juncture, other than to restate a few observations made during the December 17th opening ceremony.

While all public institutions undergo some evolutionary shift, the arguments for change here at the ANAMF's museum were particularly compelling. Like most single-issue political parties, single theme museums can only ever have limited public appeal, a factor that restricts both their fundraising potential and eligibility for hotly contested government grants. The latter are invariably assessed on the basis of their relevance to the broadest possible cross section of the community and yet, women (half the population) were almost entirely excluded from our former displays. We simply couldn't afford to go on ignoring this compelling demographic, just as we had to face up to the fact that we were forgoing a potentially significant economic windfall by maintaining displays that had only limited relevance to the schools curricula. None of our former exhibitions, moreover, complied with prevailing curatorial or conservation standards, these shortcomings serving to further limit both our public appeal and

eligibility for government funding.

The former is especially important when one remembers that we are now having to operate in a highly competitive tourism market, clamouring for the attentions of an ever more sophisticated museum-going public that has grown accustomed to the high display standards of institutions such as Bundanon, the Australian War Memorial, and the Powerhouse, Lady Denman Maritime and Bradman Museums. As they scarcely register on the political radar museums, unlike like some other community service organizations (such as libraries), have to be especially sensitive and responsive to these vagaries. This partly helps to explain why many military aviation museums – here and overseas – have already changed their names and added non-military aircraft to their galleries.

Independent museums, particularly independent technology museums (such as ours, tend to rank the lowest in terms of public funding priorities and for this reason are more vulnerable than most. This point was graphically demonstrated only recently by the closure of the Airworld facility at Wangaratta (then Australia's largest aviation museum), and the subsequent sale of its entire collection.

At issue here, I suspect however, is not the question of whether – or not – these changes at the ANAMF's museum were necessary but rather, the shift in emphasis that has led some to believe that the FAA heritage has now been marginalized. While it seems unlikely this matter will ever be resolved to the satisfaction of all stakeholders, it's perhaps worth remembering that our recent shifts in collecting and display emphases are simply the latest course adjustments made by an institution that has already been subject to constant change and which, I expect, will continue to evolve in response to external influences. The recent changes simply reflect what the existing Board and staff judge to be best for the institution at this stage in its development, and are neither permanent nor irreversible. Indeed, if circumstances allowed, we would hope to see the current displays dismantled and replaced within a few years as routinely happens in most well-resourced museums.

Subsequent Directors and staff will no doubt want to take the museum along a different course again, thereby causing the tides of change – and opinion - to ebb in yet another direction

PARKING TICKET

I went to the store the other day and I was in there for only about 5 minutes. When I came out there was a motorcycle cop writing a parking ticket, so I went up to him and said, "Come on, mate, how about giving a guy a break?"

He ignored me and continued writing the ticket, so I called him a pencil-necked Nazi. He glared at me and started writing another ticket for worn tires, so I called him a horse's backside. He finished the second ticket and put it on the windshield with the first. Then he started writing a third ticket! This went on for about 20 minutes... the more I abused him, the more tickets he wrote.

I didn't care. My car was parked around the corner. I try to have a little fun each day. It's important.



Pause to Ponder...

MONKEY BUSINESS

Could this be happening at your business?

Do you have habits, work actions, traditions or expectations that no one really knows why they are required?



Maybe ...the Monkeys know a thing or two about it!

Start with a cage containing five monkeys. Inside the cage, hang a banana on a string and place a set of steps underneath it. Before long, a monkey will go the steps and start to climb towards the banana. As soon as he touches the step, spray all of the other monkeys with cold water.

After a while, another monkey makes an attempt with the same result – all the other monkeys are sprayed with cold water. Pretty soon, when another monkey tries to climb the steps, the other monkeys will try to prevent him.

Now, put away the cold water. Remove one monkey from the cage and replace it with a new one. The new monkey sees the banana and wants to climb the steps. To his surprise and horror, all of the other monkeys attack him. After another attempt and attack, he knows that if he climbs the steps he will be assaulted.

Next, remove another of the original five monkeys and replace it with a new one. The newcomer goes to the steps and is attacked. The previous newcomer takes part in the punishment with great enthusiasm! Likewise, replace a third original monkey with a new one, then a fourth, then the fifth. Every time the newest monkey takes to the stairs, he is attacked.

Most of the monkeys who are beating him have no idea why they were not permitted to climb the steps or why they are participating in the beating of the newest monkey.

After replacing all the original monkeys, none of the remaining monkeys have never been sprayed with cold water. Nevertheless, no monkey ever again approaches the steps to try for the banana.

Why not? Because as far as they know that's the way it's always been done around here.

And that, my friends, is how company policy begins.

Wednesday, February 25, RECOGNITION OF ADF SERVICE

Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence, Mal Brough, today announced that a group of prominent Australians, most with a defence background, will be asked to help explore issues about appropriate recognition of ADF service. Mr Brough said, currently, service personnel receive medal recognition after 15 years of service with the Defence Long Service Medal.

Following calls for further recognition of service with an additional medal awarded after two years of reserve or full-time service, the Minister has decided to seek advice from a number of experienced Australians in this field. "The Government values highly the contributions made by all servicemen and women," Mr Brough said. "However, consistent with the strong tradition and principles underpinning the Australian system of Honours and Awards, service medals currently remain reserved for recognition of gallantry in operations, distinguished or long and efficient service, and service in military operations.

"Accordingly, medals have not been awarded retrospectively unless an anomaly or new evidence has been acquired regarding service under existing eligibility criteria. "These rules for honours and awards try to balance the sometimes conflicting desire to provide wide recognition for service against the need to ensure that the achievements of those honoured or in receipt of formal awards are not devalued by giving honours and awards beyond the purpose for which they were meant."

FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE

From 'Wolfman' Lockett

I have received the latest edition of Slipstream and thought I would send you a tale that may be of interest to the readers.

As our advancing years takes its' toll, I read many articles about our members who for some reason or another have to spend some time in hospital. Also in the media there are many stories about the state of our hospital and medical system, most of them in the negative, but there are also a great many who have experienced wonderful treatment from a very devoted and professional body of people. I would like to pass on a story about a stay in a Russian hospital that will show just how lucky we are, as Australians, to have the hospitals that we do. In writing this I am not 'looking a gift horse in the mouth', as I am EXTREMELY grateful for all the treatment I received - who knows where I would have ended up without this help.

'Back in August, I thought I had pinched a nerve in my back whilst moving an aquarium in our apartment. I imagined that everything would be okay, but after three days with no improvement and hardly able to walk, I knew that I needed to do something.

My partner, Vera, rang several medical institutions and was either 'fobbed off', had the phone slammed down on her, or received a mouthful of abuse from some secretary who considered it was too much trouble to try and help.

We then contacted a colleague who worked as a lawyer for a veterans' hospital and explained the situation. About five minutes later, the director of the hospital, Mr Simon Spektor (a mirror image of the Spektor from the Bond movies and a VERY influential man in Ekaterinburg) rang personally and said that an ambulance would pick me up in ten minutes and take me to the hospital.

Sure enough, an 'ambulance' did arrive; an old station wagon painted white with a red cross on it which was the only thing about the vehicle which resembled an ambulance. It wouldn't have passed a rego check in Australia. In the back there was a wooden bench with no mattress and a stool alongside it for the attendant. There was no medical equipment and the driver smoked at will.

After arriving at the hospital I was met by a very friendly young doctor who was assigned to look after me. He did several checks and then I was taken to the 'theatre' - a cold bleak room with a granite slab table. Laying down on it was bad enough, but when I received a 'horse needle' in the base of my spine, I almost left teeth marks in it.

Then I was taken to my ward - a small room with six beds and a toilet in a small room in the corner (no shower). There was one shower for the whole floor. The other blokes in my ward must have thought I was strange as I used it twice a day. I didn't see them use it at all, there was a small hand basin outside the toilet which seemed adequate for them. Maybe only one shower was sufficient, as I never had to wait for anyone to finish.

My bed had just been vacated, but the linen on the foam sponge mattress (smelling strongly of stale urine) was not changed and nor was I given a clean towel. Two nurses (also very friendly and happy) came and made a pin cushion of my backside and I was put on a drip.

Shortly afterwards it was time to 'dine' - along came the tea lady who asked if I would be eating - she then abused me for not bringing my own soup bowl and spoon. I informed her that until

one hour previous I had no idea I would be dining in her restaurant. I was then given half a ladle of porridge and a glass of very sweet tea. That was the evening meal.

For breakfast the next morning I also received half a ladle of cold porridge (no milk), a boiled egg and a glass of cold tea. I didn't have lunch but the menu was the same for the other unfortunate 'inmates' - a bowl of porridge. For the rest of the time, my meals came from home in the Tupperware - I don't think I could have handled a week of porridge. A lot of patients are catered for in this way making life for the 'victualling officer' very easy.

Every morning I received the same treatment - a series of needles in the backside and a drink from the drip (no vodka added). After the fourth day I was X-rayed and a small tear in a disc was revealed. However, whatever they were feeding me in those needles seemed to be working as the pain was quickly going and my mobility was returning. I was then put on a physio program a couple of times a day, using some equipment from 'Noah's ark'. After a week I was allowed to go home. The guys in my ward said that the reason the hospitals are so bad in Russia is so that the patients recover quickly as they don't want to stay there. This also worked for me as I have been back training at my local gym with no ill effects.

Apart from the tea lady, I couldn't have asked for better service. The people have to work in such horrid conditions and are paid an absolute pittance for their work - and I didn't have to pay a cent - I did, however, give a gift as a token of my appreciation for the help and attention I received.

Another and more pleasant experience occurred just before Christmas. Along with an American colleague, I was invited to take part in a 'mining excursion' - a travel company was making a documentary film in order to promote some of their more adventurous tours to the west.

A mini bus arrived in the morning and took us to the small city of Asbest which is where (you guessed it) asbestos is mined. On route, we were given a lesson on geology from the guide who is actually a teacher at the local geological institute in Ekaterinburg. He explained all the different types of minerals and gems which are abundant in the Ural Mountains (80% of the minerals/gems in the world can be found in the Urals).

Because of the pollution, asbestos mining came to a halt some years back, but now with the operation being controlled by a Canadian enterprise it is working again. Originally there were twelve processing plants in the city but because of stricter pollution controls only three have been re-opened after much 'renovation' work had been carried out. This has been beneficial for both sides, the Russians have work again, and the Canadians can produce the asbestos much more cheaply in Russia and have access to the former Russian markets.

In Kalgoorlie I had been astounded by the size of the gold mining 'pit', but it is nothing in comparison with the 'valley' which has been dug into the ground at Asbest. It is 12.5 kms long, over 4 kms wide and has a depth of 400 meters. Like the pit in Kalgoorlie, the Euclids (or Russian version thereof) look like Matchbox toys, as does the ore train which runs into the valley.

From the asbestos mine it was only a short drive to Ezumrud (Emerald) where we were at first shown over the tailing heaps which are still loaded with the 'good green' stuff. The ore is

processed twice before being dumped on the tailing heaps but it is highly illegal to help oneself in the leftovers, but this of course doesn't stop the black market trade. Our guide said to 'just put it in your pockets' - having experienced life in a hospital I had no intention of spending some time as an inmate of the prison system so I don't have any emeralds for sale.

After this we were taken to an emerald mine - we were 'kitted out' in jackets, hard hats with miner's lamps, and gumboots. The mine into which we descended hadn't been worked for two years. We were informed that this was only because of political problems between Moscow and Ekaterinburg as to who should receive the spoils from the mine. So now the travel company will conduct tours as an alternative method of making money from the mines.

There was no such thing as a lift to carry the workers - we climbed down rickety old wooden ladders to the base of the shaft at forty meters. It was wet, dark and cold. Because of this all the equipment was rusted and (I think) inoperable - the tracks for the small hopper were in disrepair or buried under the mud which was as gluey as the 'Merri Creek Mud' on the MCG pitch - hence the gumboots. Any future operation would require extensive overhaul of all this equipment. The ventilator, however, was in some kind of working order so we had no problems of being overcome with stale air.

The walls and ceilings were not all shored up and the actual ore could almost be scraped by hand from the walls it was so soft. At the very end of the shaft the wall is concreted over to stop 'tomb raiders' and this will be removed when the mine is put back into operation. A lot of *mica*, *berillium*, and *alexandrite* is extracted from the mines along with the emeralds.

Apart from the mud, in one passage a stream of 'spring water' flowed through the shaft and we were 'guaranteed' of its quality so I tried it - it tasted okay, wasn't glowing, and I have had no stomach problems as a result of drinking it. A bonus for the miners, I guess, as they don't have to carry their water. They do six-hour shifts in their little 'paradises' beneath the ground.

Although the conditions were rough (to say the least), it was a very interesting experience and I would highly recommend it to anyone who would like to see something totally different. I wonder what the salt mines in Siberia are like?

Then I had to survive the Russian New Year. It was a very enjoyable evening (and from what I remember of the morning), with 16 people in our small apartment from all corners of the globe. Another Aussie, Americans, my Japanese teacher, a Canadian and Russians, we celebrated in style 'calling stumps' at 0630 (sun up was at 0930). I then I had to travel to Samara (22 hours away by train) as I had received an invitation to teach English and Australian culture for ten days to school kids at a winter camp... but that's another story.'

To all my old workmates and readers of Slipstream - best wishes for 2004.





USN or USAF? by Bob Norris

Bob Norris is a former Naval aviator who is now an accomplished author of entertaining books about US Naval Aviation including "Check Six" and "Fly-Off".

In response to a letter from an aspiring fighter pilot on which military academy to attend, Bob replied with the following...

12 Feb 04

Young Man,

Congratulations on your selection to both the Naval and Air Force Academies.

Your goal of becoming a fighter pilot is impressive and a fine way to serve your country. As you requested, I'd be happy to share some insight into which service would be the best choice. Each service has a distinctly different culture. You need to ask yourself "Which one am I more likely to thrive in?"

USAF Snapshot: The USAF is exceptionally well organized and well run. Their training programs are terrific. All pilots are groomed to meet high standards for knowledge and professionalism. Their aircraft are top-notch and extremely well maintained. Their facilities are excellent. Their enlisted personnel are the brightest and the best trained. The USAF is homogenous and macro. No matter where you go, you'll know what to expect, what is expected of you, and you'll be given the training & tools you need to meet those expectations. You will never be put in a situation over your head. Over a 20-year career, you will be home for most important family events. Your Mom would want you to be an Air Force pilot...so would your wife. Your Dad would want your sister to marry one.

Navy Snapshot: Aviators are part of the Navy, but so are 'Black shoes' (surface warfare) and 'bubble heads' (submariners). Furthermore, the Navy is split into two distinctly different Fleets (West and East Coast). The Navy is heterogeneous and micro. Your squadron is your home; it may be great, average, or awful. A squadron can go from one extreme to the other before you know it. You will spend months preparing for cruise and months on cruise. The quality of the aircraft varies directly with the availability of parts. Senior Navy enlisted are salt of the earth; you'll be proud if you earn their respect. Junior enlisted vary from terrific to the troubled kid the judge made join the service. You will be given the opportunity to lead these people during your career; you will be humbled and get your hands dirty. The quality of your training will vary and sometimes you will be over your head. You will miss many important family events. There will be long stretches of tedious duty aboard ship. You will fly in very bad weather and/or at night and you will be scared many times. You will fly with legends in the Navy and they will kick your ass until you become a lethal force. And some days - when the scheduling Gods have smiled upon you - your jet will catapult into a glorious morning over a far-away sea and you will be drop-jawed that someone would pay you to do it. The hottest girl in the bar wants to meet the Naval Aviator. That bar is in Singapore.

Bottom line, son, if you gotta ask...pack warm and good luck in Colorado.[USAF Academy]
PS: Air Force pilots wear scarves and iron their skivvies and flight suits.



AN AUSTRALIAN LOVE POEM

Of course I love ya darling
You're a bloody top notch bird.
And when I say you're gorgeous
I mean every single word.
So ya bum is on the big side...
I don't mind a bit of flab.
It means that when I want to
There's something there to grab.
So your belly isn't flat no more...
I tell ya, I don't care.
So long as when I cuddle ya
I can get my arms round there.
No Sheila who is your age
Has nice round perky breasts.
They just gave in to gravity,
But I know ya did ya best.
I'm tellin ya the truth now,
I never tell ya lies...
I think it's very sexy
That you've got dimples on ya
thighs.
I swear on me nanna's grave
now...
The moment that we met
I thought u was as good as I
Was ever gonna get.
No matter wot u look like
I'll always love ya dear.
Now shut up while the footy's
on...
And fetch another beer!



PURE LOGIC - PICKING A WIFE

A man is dating three women and wants to pick one to marry. He decides to give them a test. He gives each woman a present of \$5,000 and watches to see what they do with the money.

The first does a total make over. She goes to a fancy beauty salon, gets her hair done, new make up, and buys several new outfits and dresses up very nicely for the man. She tells him that she has done this to be more attractive for him because she loves him so much. The man was impressed.

The second goes shopping to buy the man gifts. She gets him a new set of golf clubs, some new gizmos for his computer, and some expensive clothes. As she presents these gifts, she tells him that she has spent all the money on him because she loves him so much. Again, the man is impressed.

The third invests the money in the stock market. She earns several times the \$5,000. She gives him back his \$5000 and reinvests the remainder in a joint account. She tells him that she wants to save for their future because she loves him so much. Obviously, the man was impressed and he thought for a long time about what each woman had done with the money he'd given her.

Then, he married the one with the biggest boobs. Men are like that you know.



THE OIL CHANGE

OIL CHANGE INSTRUCTIONS FOR WOMEN



1. Pull up to Jiffy Lube when the mileage reaches 3000 miles since the last oil change.
 2. Drink a cup of coffee.
 3. 15 minutes later write a cheque and leave with a properly maintained vehicle.
- Money spent:
Oil Change \$20.00
Coffee \$1.00
Total -- \$21.00

THE OIL CHANGE

OIL CHANGE INSTRUCTIONS FOR MEN



1. Wait until Saturday, drive to auto parts store and buy a case of oil, filter, kitty litter, hand cleaner and a scented tree, write a cheque for \$50.00.
2. Stop at store and buy a \$20 case of beer, then drive home.
3. Open a beer and drink it.
4. Jack car up. Spend 30 minutes looking for jack stands.
5. Find jack stands under kid's pedal car.
6. In frustration, open another beer and drink it.
7. Place drain pan under engine.
8. Look for 9/16 box spanner.
9. Give up and use crescent wrench.
10. Unscrew drain plug.
11. Drop drain plug in pan of hot oil: splash hot oil on yourself in the process. Cuss.
12. Crawl out from under car to wipe hot oil off of face and arms. Throw kitty litter on spilled oil.
13. Have another beer while watching oil drain.
14. Spend 30 minutes looking for the oil filter wrench.
15. Give up; crawl under car and hammer a screwdriver through the oil filter and twist it off.
16. Crawl out from under the car with dripping oil filter splashing oil everywhere from the holes. Cleverly hide filter amongst rubbish in the garbage bin to avoid environmental penalties. Drink a beer.
17. Buddy shows up; finish case of beer with him. Decide to finish oil change tomorrow so you can go see his new garage door opener.
18. Sunday: skip church because "I gotta finish the oil change." Drag pan full of old oil out from underneath car. Cleverly dump oil in hole in back yard instead of taking it back to O'Reilly to recycle.
19. Throw kitty litter on oil spilled during step 18.
20. Beer? No, drank it all yesterday.
21. Walk to store; buy beer.
22. Install new oil filter making sure to apply a thin coat of oil to gasket surface.
23. Dump first quart of fresh oil into engine.
24. Remember drain plug from step 11.
25. Hurry to find drain plug in drain pan.
26. Remember that the used oil is buried in a hole in the backyard, along with drain plug.
27. Drink beer.
28. Shovel out hole and sift oily mud for drain plug. Re-shovel oily dirt into hole. Steal sand from kid's sandbox to cleverly cover

oily patch of ground and avoid environmental penalties. Wash drain plug in lawn mower gas.

29. Discover that first quart of fresh oil is now on the floor. Throw kitty litter on oil spill.
 30. Drink beer.
 31. Crawl under car getting kitty litter into eyes. Wipe eyes with oily rag used to clean drain plug. Slip with stupid crescent wrench tightening drain plug and bang knuckles on frame.
 32. Bang head on floor in reaction to step 31.
 33. Begin cussing fit.
 34. Throw stupid crescent wrench.
 35. Cuss for additional 10 minutes because wrench hit Miss December (1998).
 36. Drink beer.
 37. Clean up hands and forehead and bandage as required to stop blood flow.
 38. Drink beer.
 39. Drink beer.
 40. Dump in five fresh quarts of oil.
 41. Drink beer.
 42. Lower car from jack stands.
 43. Accidentally crush remaining case of new motor oil.
 44. Move car back to apply more kitty litter to fresh oil spilled during steps 23- 43.
 45. Drink beer.
 46. Test drive car.
 47. Get pulled over: arrested for driving under the influence.
 48. Car gets impounded.
 49. Call loving wife, make bail.
 50. 12 hours later, get car from impound yard.
- Money spent:
Parts \$50.00
DUI \$2500.00
Impound fee \$75.00
Bail \$1500.00
Beer \$40.00
Total -- \$4165.00

But you know the job was done right!

"Not Hungry"

A woman asks her husband if he'd like some breakfast.

"Would you like bacon and eggs, perhaps? A slice of toast and maybe some grapefruit and coffee?" she asks.

He declines. "It's this Viagra," he says. "It's really taken the edge off my appetite."

At lunchtime, she asks if he would like something. "A bowl of homemade soup, homemade muffins or a cheese sandwich?" she inquires.

He declines. "The Viagra," he says, "really trashes my desire for food."

Come dinnertime, she asks if he wants anything to eat. Would he like maybe a steak and apple pie? Maybe he'd like a microwaved pizza or a tasty stir-fry that would only take a couple of minutes?

He declines. "Naw, still not hungry."

"Well," she says, "would you mind letting me up? I'm starving."

"It is useless to hold a person to anything he says while he's in love, drunk, or running for office." Shirley MacLaine (1934 -), actress.



NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Well 2004 certainly got off to a busy start and my New Year resolution to play more golf lasted about one day.

Another successful Xmas Hamper Appeal was conducted in 2003. There was a slight hiccup early on in the planning when Defence issued an instruction that donated parcels could not be accepted for personnel serving overseas. Apparently there had been cases of prohibited goods being sent by this method.

With the help of VADM Russ Shalders, the FAAA case was presented to the Chief of Defence and we were granted an exemption. There was only one embarked Flight (HMAS MELBOURNE) away over the festive season.

As the response to the appeal had been as great as in previous years there were too many 'goodies' for one small group, and so the decision was taken to pack all the donations and let the Officer-in-Charge of the Flight, LCDR Darryn Jose, distribute the goods onboard as he saw fit. LCDR Jose's letter of thanks relates how this distribution was carried out. General Cosgrove, who was on board for the Xmas dinner, was able to sample the cakes and puddings we sent over.

The FAAA thanks the following donors who made the Hampers Appeal such a success: Arnotts' Biscuits, David Jones, Woolworths, Lightstorm Photography, the Australian War Memorial, the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the RAN. The FAAA supplied FAA T-Shirts to all members of the Flight.

Members will have noted that in the Editorial in the last edition of SLIPSTREAM, the Editor called for a round table discussion with the Museum of Flight so that the FAAA could voice its concerns regarding the direction the Museum was taking, with special reference to the apparent degrading of the terms of the FAA Charter which was the basis on which the FAA Museum was created. The Museum kindly offered to host such a meeting but imposed restrictions on the conduct of the meeting which were not acceptable to the FAAA Executive. The solution to this impasse is that the FAAA will now submit a formal written submission to the Museum setting out our concerns. This arrangement is satisfactory to the Executive as it will allow members to take an active role in formulating input to the submission. Draft texts will be published on our web-site as we progress the paper and members are asked to read and comment as they see fit. This is your opportunity to have your say. Please take it.

On the home front I have to report that Gwen and I are once more on the move. We are heading back to the Shoalhaven area to live in a retirement village on the northern shore of St Georges Basin. I understand the fish are already migrating away from the area in anticipation of an all-out assault by TD.

I am sure by now that the message has also circulated about my forthcoming retirement from the Presidency of the FAAA at the next AGM. Volunteers should contact their Divisional Secretary. Don't be shy. Here is your chance to guide the FAAA into the future (the pay is not worth writing home about).

There is still a lot to be done on a number of fronts but we are making progress and, with your support, the FAAA will continue to grow and prosper. Best wishes to you all

Toz Dadswell



HAMPER PACKERS - Squadron personnel and a 'Sin Bosun' thrown in to 'keep 'em honest' Photograph courtesy Beverley Clarke

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY HMAS MELBOURNE



TO: Commodore T. A. Dadswell, AM RAN (Rtd)

Dear Sir,

Please accept my sincere thanks on behalf of all members of Seahawk Flight 2, which is currently embarked in HMAS MELBOURNE for the very thoughtful Christmas Hampers. Being at sea, in an operational area, away from family and friends over the Christmas period and missing out on the 'normal' festivities can be particularly difficult, however, your support to the members of the flight certainly generated considerable Christmas cheer and displayed a part of the great Australian character.

The continued support that the Fleet Air Arm Association provides our embarked flights at sea is very much appreciated and I look forward to continuing the close relationship that has been forged, well into the future. You will be pleased to learn that the boys up here are doing a great job under trying conditions and I am sure that all Fleet Air Arm Association members will be as proud of them and their continued achievements as I am.

The hampers were opened by the Flight at 1000 on Christmas morning while on station in the Northern Arabian Gulf. There were a number of photographs taken, but it might be a short

while until we get them developed. A selection of items was presented to the Commanding Officer, Commander Vern Dutschke in his cabin later on Christmas morning and this was also duly photographed. We have shared some of the prize possessions contained within the hampers with other sections of the ship that help us in our duties and other aircraft that have visited. A little kindness goes a long way.

The Christmas lunch served on the ship was outstanding. A full meal with ALL the trimmings served up by the CO and HODs. Santa even made a surprise appearance during the day. While I am sure that everyone onboard would have preferred to have been at home with family and friends, everyone had as good a day as they possibly could under the circumstances. CDF, General Peter Cosgrove even made an appearance for dinner and remained overnight to help share in the celebrations. It was a great day.

Once again thank you and please convey our heartfelt gratitude to the members of the FAAA. Finally, from all members of Flight 2, I would like to pass best wishes to you and all the members of the Fleet Air Arm Association for a safe and happy year in 2004.

FLY SAFELY, FLY NAVY

Yours sincerely

D. JOSE

Lieutenant Commander, RAN Flight Commander

NATIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT



It is good to see new members coming into the Association from various States, and quite a few into the NSW Division from the Museum members who still wish to receive Slipstream.

All the Divisions have been keeping me up to date with new members and changes of addresses, which have all been entered for this mailing. Secretary's that require further copies of Slipstream or any other material please advise.

Thankyou to the Queensland and NSW Divisions that assisted with the Woolworth's vouchers for the Christmas hampers, Jane (my wife) enjoyed the shopping spree. This was topped up by the national body with its input which was mainly due to the efforts of our very active President, Toz Dadswell. It was a huge success and thankfully received by our serving shipmates.

Mike Heneghan

NSW DIVISION



With the festive season well and truly over for another year, and with the 'ankle biters' back at school, the 'cooks' on the golf courses or bowling greens, we should be dangling a fishing rod, but as always, there are other things to do.

We held our AGM and Election of Officers Bearers on 14 March, the only changes being to the position of Treasurer (Joe Dunner), and PR (John Arnold).

The meeting , held at the AMoF Auditorium, was followed by

light refreshments at the Flight Line Café, now operating in the White Ensign Club at the museum. The proprietor, Donna Ashworth, and her staff did us proud.

Our Patron, John Goble, chaired the meeting for the election of office bearers and later, he and his wife, Annette, carried out the draw for the raffle. The results of which, I'm sure, have been very pleasing to both the NSW Division and the prize winners.

1st Prize - 3884

**F Donnelly, 1 Giblin Circuit, Urunga Waters, NSW 2455
(02) 66555345**

2nd Prize - 6425

J Eagles - 2 Acacia Street, Oatley, NSW 2223 - (02) 95859996

3rd Prize - 4751

L Battle - 65 Hume Road, Thornlie WA 6108 - (08) 94934964

The framed prints of the Firefly that have been made available by our artist, John Downton, are very pleasing to the eye. Due to a printer's error in the last edition of Slipstream, the details of the print were not published in their entirety and will be repeated at the end of this report. I am going to try and convince him to do one of a Sea Fury in the near future.

My thanks to the many members who have been in contact with their items of concern relating to the Australian Museum of Flight. These have all been noted and we have forwarded them to the National body. The intended meeting did not take place due to the difficulties in coming up with an acceptable format to both parties (what was to be discussed and who could attend). Therefore, a discussion group, assembled by the National body, is drawing up a discussion paper which will be forwarded to all States and interested parties, then presented to the Board of the AMoF for their consideration.

I attended a presentation at the chapel where the lounges, kneeling cushions and ring cushions commissioned by the NSW FAA were presented to the chapel and blessed by both the 'left and right footed administrators'. I am happy to report they were received with due diligence and sincere thanks to our organization.



Rear L-R: Ray Burt - Geoff Ledger—Greg Wise - Simon Cullen - Jim Lee
Front L-R: Navy Chaplains Krys Gebski and Ted Brooker

(Continued on page 30)

We extend our appreciation to Pauline Burt who did a magnificent job on the production of the cushions. It was a pleasant task making available items that we, our offspring, or serving members and their siblings will get some use from. They certainly spruced up the setting inside the chapel. This is just one of the ways in which we can help to maintain the bonds between the 'old and new'. The importance of the occasion was displayed by the presence of both CMDRE Geoff Ledger and CAPT Simon Cullen.

On a more sombre note, with family and friends of the late Tony Penno, I attended a service to dedicate a plaque in his memory on the Chapel Remembrance Wall.

I have much pleasure in relating that the committee has asked (and received confirmation) from Harley Dadswell to become an Honorary Member of our association in appreciation of his endless hours and dedication to our web site. This may hopefully ensure he stays as our Webmaster for some time to come as it is now a site to be proud of and gets better all the time. Until you try and play around in this 'cyber world' you just don't realise the hours that go into the production and maintenance of a web site.

One 'blessing' for Harley is that his brother, Toz, is moving from Canberra to the 'Basin' and in close proximity to Ian Ferguson. It would seem that Harley's dog-sitting days are over and Ian Ferguson's are about to start!

There is also a rumour around that Toz is about to become a proper sailor again. He is currently looking for at least one deck hand to help with the cleaning, maintaining and usage of his 'soon to own' fishing boat – pity help those near him on the water. The membership loss to ACT will no doubt be a bonus for us, welcome back to Nowra.

Greg Wise - President

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:

John Downton P/L, PO Box 151, Gerringong 2534 NSW

Please allow approximately ten days for delivery.



VICTORIA DIVISION



Attention on the flight deck!

Variety is the spice of life. Thus, if Melbourne weather is the subject under consideration, it must surely present its natives with the perfect environment. Summer temperatures briefly during December and early January, followed by a touch of autumn and a pinch of winter late January, promising spring, revisited, before then easing back to summer in February. Toss in a few thunderstorms and hail with local flooding after a prolonged drought requiring the introduction of water restrictions. Add to this the confusing about-turns in policies relating to the acceptance of private rainwater tanks on city properties and you can hardly say that life in the south of the mainland is boring!

Farmers really can smile, it seems, as drought-stricken areas around the country suddenly are converted to inland seas. Gardens flourish and perhaps, before too long, the prices of fruit and vegetables may revert to a more affordable level for we oldies who need them.

The year 2004 has launched with a promise of better things to come – may we hope! A wee flourish of new membership applications and the return to the fold by the odd 'recalcitrant' promises an injection of new ideas to attract the reluctant youth and thus keep the ship afloat. Too long have we had 'seaweed' in the prop!

Our Annual General Meeting, held on Sunday 1st February, produced little in the way of fresh faces – which is to be expected after past experiences. Not one nomination was received from the membership for their representatives, which, as the past and President-elect commented, "It makes you wonder!"

Reined in by Acting President Warren Kemp, due process was exercised following nominations from the floor, elected representatives for the current year, 2004, being:

President – Ron Christie

Vice President – Les Jordan

Secretary – Geoff Litchfield

Treasurer – John Ikin

Committee – John Champion, Ian Stanfield, Ralph Mayer, Alan Clark and 'Hank' Fargher.

Auditors – Rob and Anne Taylor

Social Coordinator – Valda Christie

Delegates – Geoff Litchfield and Ron Christie

Public Officer – Ron Christie.

Sound familiar?

A total of 33 members attended the meeting, about par for the course these past few years. We are pleased to welcome three new members, Commodore Dacre Smyth AO, Commander Charlie Rex (P) and Commander Philip Worsman. (P).

This opportunity is grasped to inform interested parties of the Victorian Division of amendments to erroneous information recently circulated in the local newsletter 'Flight Deck' regarding planned events for the year 2004. The first Committee and General Meeting overseen by the 'new' team will now be held on 23rd May, 2004 due to the unavailability of the ESU rooms on 16th May. Then, the event in the calendar advertised for Sunday 9th October 2004, should read "Saturday 9th October, 2004" and is

NOT a Committee and General Meeting but the Federal Council Meeting in Nowra. My sincere apologies for this aberration! One of the reasons for my expected replacement by someone much younger – wishful thinking!

Following successful negotiations by our President and the Social Coordinator, it has been decided to once again hold our traditional annual dinner at the Harbourview Motel at Hastings on the night of Saturday 28th October. A promised upgrade of catering and service at a fixed price, including accommodation for those requiring same, seems the most satisfactory solution under the circumstances considering the Memorial Service at *Cerberus* to be held on Sunday 29th October.

Meantime, we are hoping for a maximum effort turn-out in ideal weather for the Anzac Day march this year to let the general public and other units know that we are still a force to be reckoned with. A post-march BBQ will be held at the usual venue, the ESU, at a cost per head of \$12.00. Advance payment to the Social Coordinator prior to 18th April if you wish to participate, PLEASE!!

A quick study of the health of the nation stirs one's anxiety to tap the youthful minority to ensure the longevity of our association. Noel Knapstein finds he is doing half as much in twice the time after suffering an angina attack back in April necessitating a sextuple by-pass (and that has nothing to do with the sailors' lament!) Perhaps he was not consuming sufficient quantities of his cousin's vintage reds? With 19 inches (wait for it!) of an artery from his arm to by-pass the blockages, he seems to be open for business as usual, again.

John Cooke has returned to the fold after a spell in hospital dealing with some skin cancers, still looking much younger than the average septuagenarian pilot deserves.

Syd Mitchell reappeared on the scene after a long absence, during which he has been having an 'affair' of the heart and looking for a pacemaker implant to keep the heart and body functioning in concert.

Jim Ferguson is making plans to move north, again, to that other capital city. Regular exercise at the local swimming pool is proving beneficial, but a recent breakdown of his usually trustworthy Jeep left him stranded for a time over the Christmas period. Wary of exercising when alone in case of a fall, he could only benefit both physically and mentally from more regular visits from old mates – Unit 5, 5 Hope Crescent, Frankston, Vic.

I have been remiss in not yet checking up on everyone's favourite Monsignor, Frank ('Tiger') Lyons, but intend to rectify that soon after writing this epistle and will report back accordingly. Knowing the man, I am sure he thinks of everyone else more than the reverse.

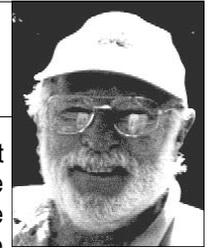
A group of members are heading north to Moama on the Murray for a few days of frolicking, which should, no doubt, produce some material for our next contribution.

Carry on!
Geoff Litchfield
Hon. Secretary



One hundred times now!
'I will not overdose on red wine again.'
L-R: Secretary Geoff Litchfield and Division
President, Ron Christie

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN DIVISION



I might just meet the deadline for the next *Slipstream* publication. It is nearly a no change report. I feel like I am in Tasmania for little changes there! However if I am to believe what politicians are saying we that live in SA are mightily blessed and once we get the unemployment up, there will be no end to those blessings.

There have been three events since the last report. Christmas party, Navy Week and a BBQ in the park. In March we will hold our AGM and so with many people anxious to hold office I am confident that this will be my last report. The Christmas party was well organized by Dinsley Cooper and to display that we are not in a rut he sent us to the pub at Belair that is nestled in the Adelaide Hills. There was quite a good gathering and with quality food to be washed down with suitable beverages all had a great time.

I was fortunate to sit next to Ted Percival and his wife and learnt a bit more about his life. He was an RNer (remember at one stage we called them 'shoes' – and I look forward to some one in the next issue to explain why we called them shoes) and spent a couple of years out here on loan then went back to the UK. After leaving the Navy he spent many years in South Africa where he met and married Marion. They foolishly went back to the UK but hungered for the blue sky.

Michael Cain won the annual raffle that was a voucher for \$100 worth of tucker suitable as Xmas fare. It was a deserving win, for Michael is the divisional treasurer and is most efficient at juggling the money.

Navy Week has sameness about it. Ships come into Outer Harbour or up the Port River and open up for the public to make inspections. I can recall in my day that when that happened to us it was not all that much fun. I think that when the day was over a warm feeling crept over me.

One of the touching moments of Navy Week is when a commemoration service is conducted at Naval Memorial Gardens. The Naval Association makes all the arrangements and does an excellent job. There are always a number of public figures present and the most notable this year was Her Excellency Marjory Jackson-Nelson. Vice Admiral David Shackleton AO RAN (Rtd) was an invited guest. I was there too! However the most important people there were the veterans from all the ships of the past to remember those who fell in the course of duty.

The Fleet Air Arm has a plaque to lay a wreath on, this year Commander John Siebert performed that duty on our behalf. I did take a photo of that moment but can't find it. It is always a poignant experience and special to the Navy. Dinsley and Junice Cooper are regular attendees. It is a bit like a mini Anzac Day but Navy only. So Navy week came to a close and we look forward to next year.

The BBQ in the Park. Don't know what happened! I was going but something with family priority snatched me away from having the opportunity of drinking someone's booze. From all accounts it was a good social gathering but not as good as what they have in Tasmania. Michael Cain reports that a select few did knock off from eating and drinking to discuss the concerns of the AMoF. Toz asked us to submit something. The troops racked their brains but

(Continued on page 32)



came up with nothing. I was about to admit to Toz that we wanted to pass on that one when our esteemed past President Peter Coulson sent a foolscap page of well framed words pin pointing some of the problems with answers. He sent this whilst lazing about in his Norfolk Island hideaway so there is obviously not much to do there. Thank you Peter for your constructive effort. We now await further news on this subject.

Health seems to be OK. No new members. It always hovers around the 50 mark. *Slipstream* still maintains a high standard (except for the divisional reports) and always sparks off some fond memories. I studied the photo of Course 8 on page 11 of the last issue and thought of the times when Brian Farthing would pass through Helston in the early morning, stopping long enough to pick me up in his 1928 Baby Austin. Somehow it always got us to Culdrose. He used to have a warming device in it all night so that it would start in the bitter cold. This and other exciting things occurred in 1955 during the Gannet conversion days. Bill Vallack was there too. He looked different in those days!

On a sad note, Jim Ferguson's wife, Pat, tragically passed away in December from a brain aneurism. Our condolences are extended to Jim and family.

Finally, just to remind people what Dinsley Cooper looked like in the 1950's, I have included the following photograph.



BOMB DUMP CREW

Rear L-R: Dinsley Cooper - Johnson - 'Jacko' - 'Bluey' Thompson
 Front L-R: Eric Cottrell - Stevens - Henry 'Nobby' Hall - CPO Hayes - Alan Mignon - Mortimer and McCaskill

That's it folks.....There is nothing wrong with Tasmania.

Barry (Dooley) Lord - Secretary SA Div.

[Re- query on the term 'shoes'. Derived from the brown plimsoles issued to the RNers. Also known as 'RN Packards'. I can remember one ex-RNer who changed over to the RAN and let slip that he had been born in India. From that day forth he was known as 'Moccasin'. Ed]

QUEENSLAND DIVISION

I'm running late again with this report and have submitted my apologies to the editor for his consideration!

We were sorry to have missed our Xmas function at the Maritime Museum in Brisbane in December, we were in Melbourne at the time. Our secretary, Trevor Tite, files the following report on the event:



'Thirty-one members and their partners attended and all agreed that it was a good venue being situated on the banks of the river. There was good parking, plenty of space, and a large room available in case of bad weather. The admission price included a tour of the Museum and Dry dock, the cost was covered by the Division. All who attended said it would be great to visit again.

Our raffle went well. Bill Strahan won a bottle of rum, Gary Reid a bottle of wine and mixed nuts, and the Murrell family won the Xmas Hamper provide by Bill and Judy Bryant. Our sincere thanks to those who donated the prizes.'



CHRISTMAS BARBECUE AT THE MARITIME MUSEUM

Top L-R: Ray Murrell - John Stewart - Trevor Tite - Ron Powell - Rex Day
 Centre L-R: Gary Reid - Bernie Jeffrey - Ray Guest
 Lower L: Judy Arnell and Dot Herman
 Lower R: Sharon Reid - Judy Arnell and Flossie Nugent
 Photographs courtesy Alan Arnell

Mick and Dulcie Blair, who were attending another function, sailed past on a boat and gave the 'Royal wave'. Mick reckons he's the only person on the committee not to have won a prize.

Bill and Val Strahan have relocated back to the West. Bill has resigned from the committee and we're sorry to see him go. We all thank him for all his your support and help.

Before leaving, Bill sent me the following information on his, and other ex-'birdie's' activities at the Caloundra Queensland Air Museum.

Trevor Bolitho, Ray Murrell, John Bray, Bob McBride and Bill have been working hard to get the Wessex into display condition. Ray managed to get some missing bits, such as lifting beam, side struts, etc so that they could install the Gazelle engine. With only one bomb hoist, ingenuity had to be used to do the job. Not to be beaten, they succeeded. The FAA's motto should have been, 'We always got the job done'.

When the first 10 Wessex arrived in their crates at Albatross in 'way back when', Mick Blair and I had combined teams to assemble them. I then took them to form up 725 Squadron.

One night, I carried out the first engine change on a Wessex, strictly by the book. This resulted in me flying to Bankstown in a Wessex and showing the Hawker Siddely guys how to do the engine change. They thought it was going to take only 3 hours, I suggested that they contact their families to say they wouldn't be home that night. Charles Grose may well remember that occasion.

The job went well and we flew back to Nowra a couple of days later. I don't remember who flew the aircraft. Maybe the pilot will read this. On the night of doing the first change at Nowra, I had to take an engine from one of the Wessex in the top hangar to put into the Squadron machine. I left a piece of cardboard hanging in the empty engine bay for Mick to read the following morning when he arrived for work, it said 'Foo was here'.

Once again we are making arrangements to go to Bulimba Army barracks after the march on Anzac Day. The civvy caterers 'pack in' this month, which is all to the good. The Army are running the bar again and we hope to have our own BBQ seeing that Bill Bryant and Paddy Williamson have offered to organise it. The Submariners won't be there so we should have a clear run. Warren and Maria Walters expect to be there with 2 or more American visitors. I'm awaiting a letter from the Mess President to set up a meeting.

Warren tells me they've just been to Hawaii, he said it was wet and cold(ish) and he finished up with bronchitis. Sounds like fun!

Some of our blokes had nice photographic mementos of the trip to Nowra. Des Kelly had 2, Bill Bryant got 2 and Trevor Bolitho got one. I didn't mind missing out!

We met Lindsay and Erin MacDonald in the shops before Xmas. Later we were surprised to hear that Erin had suffered a heart attack shortly afterwards. She's now home from hospital and doing well after have 4 stents put in.

We welcome new members, Cy Dakin and Peter Harris and hope to see them at the AGM. Keith Hope has just resigned, due to ill health. I met Keith years ago when he lived on his catamaran in Bowen Harbour.

We were sad to hear that Bob Davis and Chuck Churcher had passed away. Due to circumstances, we weren't able to attend the funerals. John Emlin, a good friend, also passed away before Xmas. John was RN and then RAN as a Commander (Supply), I believe. He was involved with the RAN Gliding Club in Canberra and also ran an Aviation business in Caloundra. I did some engineering coverage for him in exchange for flying hours. He'd arranged a magnificent wake and I met up with Barry Costa and Geoff Morton there. Barry is into Aircraft Brokerage and owns a helicopter service in Gladstone.

Arthur Johnson tells me that he's recently won a contract to service Army Boats and has put on 25 extra staff. Good stuff. He's getting on well with building his aircraft.

Trevor Tite showed me a cutting from a Sydney paper regarding

Harry's Café de Wheels. Some outfit called The Pedestrian Association of Australia, wants to put retractable bollards up to stop indiscriminate car parking adjacent to Harrys. This would allow pedestrians to walk along the harbourside at midnight, clutching a hot, runny meat pie, without being run over by a driver also clutching a hot, runny, meat pie. You might wonder why anyone would want to trot around the harbour at that time of night, but then, I guess you could easily arrive at an answer. Anyhow, apparently Navy objected to the scheme on security grounds!

Well, that's enough of my chatter for now. Best wishes to everyone from all of us here in QLD.

Barry Lister - President

A.C.T. DIVISION



It is so nice to say hello again. I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and New Year, with good friends and family around.

For me, it was a great time (even though I am undergoing breast cancer treatment). But, most importantly, Barrie and I welcomed our very first grandchild - a little girl called Sophie Imogen Green (our son's daughter).

We all had a very happy time at the ACT annual cocktail party at RSL HQ on 28 November 2003. I must agree that the music provided by Beryl and Nelly added to the party mood. There was the delicious food supplied by the ladies - not to mention the raffles provided by the boys.

Whilst on the subject of raffle prizes, the only one I won't pick up is the small envelope that says 'Mystery Prize'. I know that it is kindly donated by one of our very competent FAA pilots, but just know that I would lose my sea legs! I can remember all those boys in the 1950's and how daring they were with Sea Furies/Fireflies/Venoms and Vampires etcetera. They used to fly across our house just outside the wardroom perimeter on Nowra Hill and sometimes dip their wings. God love them all.

Now, if you want to know more, you are just going to have to come to our next cocktail party! But, if you can't wait until then, please come to our ANZAC DAY BBQ at HMAS HARMON on 25 April 2004, (phone Secretary Beryl Green on (02) 6258 9891 for details).

I have just had a weekend away at the coast and realise once again how different Canberra is to the oceanfront! I grew up in Nowra and had forgotten how great the sea breeze and smell of ozone is...

Ah hem! I forgot where I was for a moment - here in beautiful Canberra, where it is always WONDERFUL and we do indeed enjoy four different seasons, but even though I thoroughly enjoyed my time at the coast it was truly comforting to come back home.

To all of you who indeed love your home, I wish you love and joy and much happiness.

My very best wishes to you, and "May the wind be always at your back". God bless.

Beryl Green - Secretary

December 2003 National Geographic. Page 13. "Wings of Change." "Airplanes are now built to carry a pilot and a dog in the cockpit," says Arlen Rens, a Lockheed Martin test pilot. "The pilot's job is to feed the dog, and the dog's job is to bite the pilot if he touches anything."

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN DIVISION



Ahoy! Once again pen to paper and racking the brain to come up with some thing interesting to put before the punters. I read in the *West Australian* that Perth has been dubbed DULLSVILLE! I'm beginning to believe it as I haven't heard from any colleagues or members. Not to worry things may improve later in the days to come.

I've been reading the last issue of *Slipstream*, the reports of the recent reunion at RANAS and the photographs taken now and in the earlier years. Nearly all of us started our naval life at *Cerberus* and went on to serve at Nowra, Nirimba, and the three carriers.

What springs to mind is all those little things that happened over those years. The dits, the yarns, the heartaches, the highs and the lows, all serving together to provide what is known as 'Mateship'. The element that got us through service life and carried on into 'civvy street'. Reliving those times through the pages of our journal is a bonus.

On the social front, I had a call from Roger Hinnrichsen at Nowra and we had a most interesting walk through history. Keith Doncon still keeps me informed of the 'happenings' in Mandurah and Rockingham. Leo and Wanda Dobson of Bomaderry send their regards to all in the West – and – Glad Gault and daughter, Kerry, offered some ideas that we can bring up at our next meeting to assist our social side of things. Our Social Calendar will be ready for publication in the next *Slipstream*.

A special vote of thanks is extended to our long serving Treasurer, Jo Jost, who is stepping down from the post. Jo, and wife Elva, have faithfully served our Division for many years, with Elva making a great contribution to our social functions.

It has been rumoured that Albert 'Slack' Gratten is residing in Coolgardie – if he reads this it's about time he came down south.

Kerry Sojan is slowly recovering from his hip operation and I have heard that Lou Burns is back in his wheel chair.

To John and Brenda Arnold, we thank you for your efforts and determination in keeping *Slipstream* afloat.

Best wishes to all our members and their families.

John Green

WA DIVISION PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2003

Welcome to our new members, Gary Stevens, Graeme Price, Karen Welsh, John McGill, John Mead, John Cleary and Jan Van Amstel. It is good to see the numbers increasing.

Our meetings at Rosie O'Gradys in Northbridge have been successful, with more members attending than in the past.

Kate and I attended the 2003 Reunion in Nowra and had a great time, as usual. It was good to catch up with a lot of old friends. As in the past, interstate members made up the bulk of those attending and the absence of Nowra 'natives' was very noticeable. Our thanks once again to those tireless few on the NSW Committee who organised a great 'do'.

The National AGM was another success with all issues resolved. It is disappointing that the other States did not support South Australia's offer to have the 2004 National AGM in Adelaide. It would have given more people the opportunity to attend. It is my belief that we should spread ourselves around.

Bevan Daws – WA Division President

TASMANIAN DIVISION



Christmas had been and gone for another year and left us all on the debit side. With each issue of *Slipstream* we see some of our old mates have departed, God take care of them.

With so few on our books, it is hard to make up enough members at the meetings, what with commitments, work, travel, family and so on. We know there are a number of ex-FAA people in the community who, for reasons best known to themselves, don't wish to join the Association. But what can you do?

As far as I know, the ones that we do have are basically okay.

Maybe we will have more news next edition, but for now, all best wishes to you 'up there' from 'us down here'.

Matt 'Jake' Jacobs – Hon. Scribe

FAAA of Australia web site: <http://www.faaaa.asn.au>

Members' E-mail Directory

If you wish your E-mail address published, please contact the Editor.

Correction - Peter Keys pekay@dodo.com.au

Change - Geoff Litchfield geoff805@optusnet.com.au

Change - Harry Harkness hark@aapt.net.au

Change - Barry 'Dooley' Lord fblood@optusnet.com.au

SLIPSTREAM EDITOR - slipstream@pacific.net.au

A LAST FAREWELL

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

**W F (Bill) Cook LVO, RAN Rtd
1916—2003**

**Ronald John DAVIS
05 November 2003**

Ex-LAM (Engines) R35838, who served from
March 1948 to June 1958

**Stanley Jack BROWN
04 December 2003**

He was given a sailor's send-off with Legacy and RSL services. His ashes will rest in the Toukley RSL War Memorial Garden, joining many old friends and always on hand when Anzac Day comes around.

**John MILES
03 January 2004**

The 3rd Annual Aircraft Handlers reunion is set down for Saturday November 6, 2004.

The venue is as last year, the Prince Alfred Hotel, Booval. Qld. All ex-aircraft handlers (AVN) and their partners are welcome to attend, for more information call Glen Hartig on (07) 3299 6336.



Take your kid to work day!



Spy Plane?



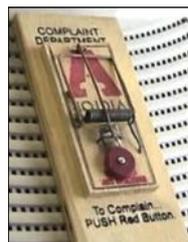
Great shutter speed!



Wet Ditching drill!



Chinook in Iraq



Patrol first...then to the Vet!





THE 'NEW' NAVY AT WORK Clockwise from below...

- Working on Sea King power plant aboard HMAS Success
- Squirrel used for fire spotting during Canberra fires
- Servicing a Sea King aboard HMAS Success
- L: POATA 's Beier and Anderson HMAS Melbourne
- R: SBLT Hobson Flight Control HMAS Melbourne
- Illegal fishing boat MAYA V being boarded by fast-roping team from HMAS Warramunga
- Operation Stabilise PO Aircrewman supervising load winching
- ATA Shane Clark aboard HMAS Melbourne

**Photographs courtesy RAN Photographic Section*



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 use 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.

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??

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.