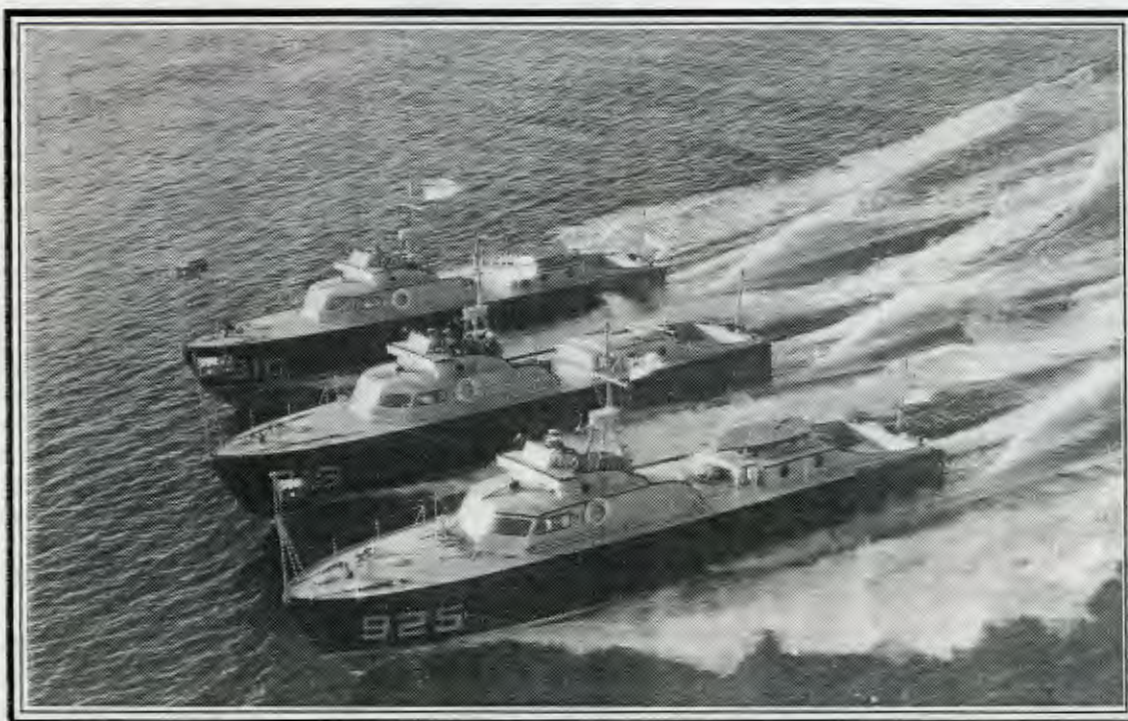


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SLIPSTREAM



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FOREWORD

By Commodore T.A. Daswell, AM, RAN (Retd)

National President, Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia

At the Fleet Air Arm conference held at Nowra in May '92, the delegates agreed that there would be considerable benefits to the members if the Association ran a national newsletter. The NSW Division was already producing a quarterly publication titled SLIPSTREAM for the NSW members, many of the 'oldies' will recall the original SLIPSTREAM produced at ALBATROSS in the late 1950s, early 60s. The NSW Division agreed to examine ways and means of producing SLIPSTREAM as a national FAAA newsletter. This edition is the first of what we hope will eventually become a national quarterly publication.

The aim of Slipstream is to keep all members up to date on the activities taking place in all Divisions, to update them on progress at the museum and to update them on the current Fleet Air Arm. If Slipstream is to succeed nationally, we will need strong support from all our members. We need to find sponsors to assist in the funding, we need stories of past events and we need interesting photographs. Divisional secretaries will need to provide the editor with timely information on happenings within the Divisions. SLIPSTREAM will only survive on a national basis if the members get behind it and give it tangible support. Please don't consign your copy of SLIPSTREAM to the gash bin after reading. Pass it around to others who have yet to join the Association. Send in your story, dig out those old photos, and together we can make it work. The hallmark of the RAN Fleet Air Arm has always been team-work. Nothing we did could have been accomplished without team-work. Now I ask you to revive that spirit of comradeship and team-work and we will create a magazine worthy of the RAN "Birdies".

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** The views and opinions expressed in articles printed in this Journal do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the Association or Committee of Management.*

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EDITORIAL

A warm welcome to all the new readers of Slipstream.

As mentioned in the foreword, Slipstream, like the Phoenix, rose from the ashes and commenced a new life in January 1990 as the newsletter of the NSW Division.

Prior to the last issue, a Special Edition for the 44th Anniversary of the FAA in Australia, the printing had been done on a series of photocopiers ranging from the geriatric to the quite 'splendiferous'. Unfortunately, collating, stapling etcetera, became quite a chore when the circulation passed the three hundred mark.

The Special Edition was printed professionally with a print run of 450. This and future editions are expected to follow the same course but with an increased circulation to cover all States.

Like the old adage that 'nothing is free', the same applies to Slipstream. To ensure its success and longevity as the 'national carrier', funding must be sought. Please give your respective committees all the help you can in this regard.

Apart from distribution to members in Australia, subscribers are on the books from the UK, USA, Canada and New Zealand, other issues are forwarded to similar organisations in the UK/Canada in exchange for their newsletters.

Apologies are in order for the omission of CMDR B.F. Matthews (19:6:68 to 19:8:68) in the list of Commanders Air, page 15 in the last issue. A typographical error appeared in the same list, the first name should read CMDR H.J.F. LANE not LAWE.

To repeat the National President's request, articles, photographs (clear), yarns for 'Spin us a dit' and letters for the 'Contact Column' are always needed. If your submissions aren't printed straight away, it's because they have been filed for the 'right' moment. Items of historical interest are copied for the museum archives. Don't forget, Fleet Air Arm history is a part of each and every one of us - share your little bit now - while you're able! * Ed.

SEA/AIR RESCUE VESSELS

Ray Robertson of Gladstone Qld, kindly provided the photograph on the front cover. It shows Air Mercy (925), Air Trail (916) and Air Speed (910), putting on a show for the camera.

Many 'birdies' tend to lose sight of the important role the SARs and their crews played in the overall picture of military aviation, their efforts should not be overlooked.

Between 1943 and 1945, under the Lend Lease

agreement, twenty-one of these Canadian/USA built vessels were transferred to the RAN. Originally designed as an anti-submarine craft, their high speed and manoeuvrability made them the ideal choice for rescue vessels. **

NATIONAL REPORT

Constitution: Recent advice from the Chairman of the sub-committee elected in May indicates the new constitution will be ready for consideration at the October Council meeting. Hope we can accept this one, progress since November 90 has been like having one foot nailed to the deck.

National Treasurer Bob Bryce submitted his resignation to take effect from the 31st August. Bob is retiring as Canteen Manager at Albatross and moving North. Thank you Bob for tremendous work as Treasurer of the Association and your stints as Treasurer of Reunion 88 and 92. My personal thanks in making my own job that much easier, best wishes to Marj and yourself for a happy retirement.

The NSW Division have nominated Gordon "Pancho" Walters (Old teabag juggler) to replace Bob as National Treasurer. "Pancho" was Assistant Manager of the Shoalhaven Ex-Servicemans Club from 1975-77 and Secretary Manager from 1977-88. He has retired and lives at Greenwell Point.

Margaret Simpson wife of Barry, President of the Tassie Division and until recently Secretary of the Division has not been well since the Reunion. Margaret has been undergoing chemotherapy, the results to date have not been as good as expected. But a change has been mooted, hopefully with better results. Hang in there Margaret, we all wish you well, you are in our thoughts.

Queensland Division: Barry Lister has advised that a meeting took place on the 14th August last, in attendance were George Riches, Graham Cox, Ian Henderson and Barry. Unfortunately Mick Blair had to cancel at the last minute. All past FAA personnel that he has an address for will be advised about forming a Division. A meeting was also held on the Gold Coast on the 13th September. (See update in 'News from the Divisions'. Ed.)

A very special mention to Peter Clark a NSW member and of Premier Coast Pre Used Office Furniture. Peter had offered to help out with some furniture, yours truly has been working from a small kitchen type table. When presented with No.1 sons computer to baby sit while he is overseas, space became a problem. Peter came to the rescue with a nice desk which can handle computer, printer, typewriter and still room left. He also provided a very nice chair and a filing cabinet. Thank you Peter for your very generous donation.

The funeral service for Col (The Barber) Gray took place on Friday the 7th August. Col was an identity at Albatross for many years. There would not be many whose ears he did not lower, he will be fondly remembered.

During the 44th Anniversary Dinner at Albatross on 29 August our President Toz Dadswell made a presentation to the Reunion 92 Organising Committee and their wives. Committee Chairman Bob Cronin and Edna, Secretary Les Matterson and Florence, Treasurer * Bob Bryce and Marj (Photo rear cover) each received an engraved silver coffee service. Many hours of work and some personal financial risk were involved in their effort a big BZ to all.

** *Ian Ferguson - Hon National Secretary.*

WELFARE OFFICER'S REPORT

RDFWA News

All members of the Regular Defence Force Welfare Association receive copies of the Association journal, 'Camaraderie', which is published in February, May, August and November and provides valuable information.

Two items in a recent edition are of particular interest:

WILLS: If the will you have is the one we made in the Services, it's quite possible that new legislation relating to wills may make it invalid.

How old is your will? Now could be the time to have it checked and possibly updated.

Incidentally, John Arnold (PO Box 28, Nowra 2541), has copies of the RDFWA leaflet, 'Putting Your House in Order', this is an excellent document which provides space for inclusion of personal information. When completed by the individual, it can be attached to the will to assist the executor in his duties.

LEGAL AID: Last year the Federal Government announced that Service and ex-service people would no longer be entitled to Legal Aid.

Due to pressure from the RDFWA and other ex-service organisations, this threat has been withdrawn and Legal Aid is available, I understand, to Veterans with 3 years or more service.

On the local front we have continued to have some successes. One of them being a settlement for a widow, which was obtained from the Department of Defence under the provisions of the Commonwealth Rehabilitation and Compensation Act. At least her financial future is secure.

Membership of the RDFWA is to be recommended, Branches are in all States and the Northern Territory.

** *I.G. (Chips) Gray.JP - Welfare Officer*

SHOALHAVEN SPRING FESTIVAL

The weekend of Saturday, October 31 and Sunday 1, 1992, will see the Navy at its finest.

The Governor General, Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair and his wife, Shirley, will be special guests of the Navy during the Festival weekend.

The Freedom of Entry into the City of Shoalhaven will take place on Saturday morning. The Navy will march from the top of Kinghorn Street to the intersection of Junction and Kinghorn street and stop at the entrance to Junction Court.

The Governor General will receive the parade and the Mayor, Alderman Max Atkins and Inspector John Crick will challenge the Navy's entry. Once the Freedom of Entry has been granted, the Navy will march on to Shoalhaven Administrative Centre, where the Governor General and his wife will be greeted by between two and three hundred school children.

The Governor will then move on to Bomaderry Public and Nowra Hill Public Schools, who are both celebrating 125th Anniversaries.

A Civic Reception will take place at the Council Chambers at 5:30pm. At the end of the civic reception the Army parachute team will jump into the Council grounds.

The historic Beat the Retreat, Beat to Quarters and a demonstration by the Nirimba Gun Carriage crew will commence at about 6:45pm.

A finale to Saturday's events will be the Spring Festival Ball to be held in the Albatross Wardroom.

On Sunday, the Governor and his wife will attend a church service at All Saints' Anglican Church in Nowra at 10:00am. At 12 noon, the Governor will unveil a plaque officially opening the new extensions to the Naval Aviation Museum.

The Naval Air Day will commence at 9:00am with the flying display from 12:30pm to 3:30pm.

** *Extract from the Shoalhaven & Nowra News.*

\$1/2M DONATION TO MUSEUM

The Naval Aviation Museum is to receive a total of half a million dollars from the Shoalhaven City Council.

The Council's Finance Committee has agreed to give the Naval Aviation Museum a \$50,000 donation each year for the next ten years.

CDR 'Spike' Campey, Museum Director, said that he believed the Shoalhaven economy would benefit from the donation because the Museum is a great tourist attraction. **

Many of our members have asked what the Kiwis are doing at Albatross. The following article should answer all those questions. As a 'Nowra Native' of the fixed-wing school of thought, I would like to say that it is just great to hear those A4's poking holes in the sky. Ed

NUMBER 2 SQUADRON - ROYAL NEW ZEALAND AIRFORCE

INTRODUCTION

The sound of freedom in the form of the Pratt and Whitney powered A-4 Skyhawk has returned to the skies over Nowra. No. 2 Squadron RNZAF is now based at HMAS Albatross with six aircraft for a five year period to provide air defence support flying for the Australian Defence Forces. This is the story of No. 2 Squadron and their aircraft.

HISTORY

No. 2 Squadron, Royal New Zealand Air Force was originally formed in August 1930 as a squadron of the Territorial Air Force. However it was not until 1937 that the Squadron received its first aircraft - the Blackburn Baffin.

At the outbreak of World War Two the Squadron was tasked with conducting anti-submarine patrols and shipping escort on the approaches to central New Zealand. By 1941 No. 2 Squadron was operating Vincents, Vildebeasts and DH 86's, but later that year re-equipped with Hudsons.

In 1943 the Squadron re-equipped with Venturas. Between November 1943 and the cessation of hostilities, No. 2 Squadron completed three tours in the South Pacific. At various times they were based at Espiritu Santo, Munda in New Georgia, Piva airstrip on Bougainville, Guadalcanal, Green Island and Jacquinot Bay on New Britain. Roles during the tours included anti-submarine patrols, supply dropping, shipping counts, survivor searches and bombing missions. One ploy during these missions was to drop empty bottles as the whistling noise was assessed as indistinguishable from that of a bomb, and thus quite damaging to Japanese morale.

With cessation of hostilities No. 2 Squadron returned with their Venturas to Ohakea where they operated in the bomber reconnaissance role. On 15 November 1946 the Squadron gave up its identity in order to create No. 75 Squadron.

In November 1948, the formation of four Territorial Air Force squadrons was authorised, among them being No. 2 (Wellington) Squadron. Equipped initially with Tiger Moths and Harvards, and based at Ohakea, the Squadron's purpose was once again to keep alive the enthusiasm and skills of the weekend servicemen. In July 1952 the Squadron received North American Mustangs to operate in the role of fighter ground attack. In October 1955, No. 2 Squadron gave up its Mustangs and soldiered on with Harvards until 31 July 1957 when all Territorial Squadrons were formally disbanded.

On 11 December 1984, No. 2 Squadron was reformed as a second Skyhawk squadron at Ohakea, to serve alongside No. 75 Squadron. The decision to reform a second Skyhawk squadron was brought about by the acquisition of ex-RAN Skyhawks in mid 1984.

The role of the new No. 2 Squadron was (and still is) support for offensive air operations. The Squadron was given the operational role of tactical reconnaissance, but its other roles, and major tasks, were to serve as the Skyhawk operational conversion unit, to develop operating procedures and tactics, and to evaluate weapons systems.

On 26 February 1991 No. 2 Squadron was relocated from

Ohakea to HMAS Albatross. With the move to Australia, air defence support for the Australian Defence Forces became the Squadron's major task. Conversion training is still conducted but is secondary to ADF tasking.

THE A-4 SKYHAWK IN N.Z. SERVICE

The Douglas Skyhawk first entered service in the RNZAF in the early 1970's when 10 A-4K (affectionately known as "models") and four TA-4K ("T-birds") were purchased to replace the aging Canberra. They were to become the RNZAF's only operational offensive air support aircraft and as such operated in all offensive air roles; air defence, maritime strike, interdiction, close air support and reconnaissance.

The addition of the ex-RAN aircraft in 1984 boosted numbers and paved the way for the reformation of another Skyhawk squadron - No. 2 Squadron.

The ex-RAN aircraft were pressed into service immediately on their arrival in New Zealand. The only change was the exchange of the kangaroo inside the roundel for a kiwi, and the addition of RNZAF serial numbers. As each aircraft fell due for a major servicing they were repainted from the light blue and grey of the RAN to the green and dark grey of the RNZAF. One by one the aircraft also went through a "G" to "K" conversion where such modifications as a park brake, braking parachute, the addition of a VHF radio, and squared off fin tips were incorporated.

In addition, the entire RNZAF fleet went through a wing refurbishment programme in which the spars and lower skin were replaced. This gave the wings zero life and should allow the aircraft to operate well into the 21st century.

The next major change to the aircraft came with project KAHU (a Kahu is a native New Zealand hawk). This was a major avionics update for the entire RNZAF A-4 fleet. During the programme the aircraft were gutted of all wiring and avionics equipment, and a new avionics suite fitted. At the same time, the original "K" airframes parted with the avionics hump on top of the fuselage as the updated avionics could be housed within the fuselage. While the addition of ILS antennae, countermeasures dispensing pods and radar warning antennae are the only semi-obvious external changes, project KAHU has made a dramatic change to the cockpit and the operational capability of the aircraft. The Navigation and attack system (NAS) is run by computers through a digital data base. The pilot is now faced with a wide angled Head Up Display (HUD), two head down display units and a throttle which has sprouted ten switches from the original three. Inside the nose, a ring laser gyro inertial navigation platform takes care of navigation, while the multi-mode APG-66 radar (as used in the F-16) allows the pilot to track both ships and aircraft for precision weapons delivery. The update has enabled an expansion of weapons employed on the aircraft. In addition to the Mk 80 series bombs, unguided rockets and guns, the RNZAF A-4's now deliver laser guided bombs, both TV and infra-red guided AGM-65 Maverick air to surface missiles (the infra-red version of which was specifically designed for anti-shipping), and the much improved versions of the AIM-9 "sidewinder" family of air-to-air missiles. All mission planning can be carried out in the Squadron operations room using computer technology. The mission is then loaded into the aircraft computers at engine start by means of a data transfer system. Once the programme is loaded the only additional information the aircraft needs is the time of day and the QNH! During the flight any parameter calculated or monitored by the computers can be downloaded for post flight analysis. The pilot is able to record by means of a video system the HUD symbology, radar display and AGM-65 Maverick video, as well as all audio information.

Whilst once upon a time it was obvious which RNZAF A-4 was ex-RAN, the only identifiable feature now is the side number. The

fleet of A-4K are serialised NZ6201 to NZ6210 for the "models" and NZ6251 to NZ6254, although NZ6207, NZ6208, NZ6210 and NZ6253 have been lost through accidents. The ex-RAN aircraft are serialised NZ6211 through NZ6218 for the "models" and NZ6255 and NZ6256 for the "T-birds". Also on these a small "A-4G" has been left as part of the markings below the serial number in recognition of the origin of the airframe. While many Australians will suggest that any RNZAF Skyhawk seen in Australia is "one of theirs" (and philosophically this might be argued as being the case) a number of people and aviation magazines have incorrectly identified A-4K's as being ex-RAN.

For those who are keen aircraft spotters, or have some affinity to a particular aircraft, the following list gives the RNZAF serial number against the US BuNo and the RAN fleet code numbers.

Single seat aircraft ("models")

RNZAF BuNo RAN
 NZ6211 154903 882
 NZ6212 154904 883
 NZ6213 154905 884
 NZ6214 154908 887
 NZ6215 155052 871
 NZ6216 155061 874
 NZ6217 155063 876
 NZ6218 155069 877

Two-seat aircraft ("T-birds")

NZ6255 154911 880
 NZ6256 154912 881

The ten additions to the "family" have generally served the RNZAF well, but not without incident. In 1985 NZ6218 ex(877) was overturned on the runway at Townsville during an exercise. This aircraft was returned to New Zealand for repair and took to the skies almost five years later, albeit with a new rear fuselage (compliments of an ex-USN Blue Angels aircraft), refurbished wing and HAHUed avionics. A classic case of grandfathers axe! In 1989 NZ6211 (ex-882) was involved in a midair collision with NZ6210 during a "Kiwi Red" formation team practice. The pilot of NZ6211 managed to land his aircraft and was subsequently awarded an Air Force Cross for his efforts. Unfortunately NZ6210 was destroyed and the pilot killed.

ADF SUPPORT

Negotiations on each side of the Tasman throughout the late 80's and 1990 resulted in a government to government agreement for RNZAF Skyhawks to provide air defence support to the Australian Defence Forces for an initial period of five years. It was decided that No. 2 Squadron would be re-located from Ohakea to HMAS Albatross. After much planning and work on both sides of the Tasman, the Squadron arrived on 26 February 1991, complete with its aircraft, support equipment, personnel and dependants. In the general scheme of things, No. 2 Squadron is established for seven aircraft and 53 personnel plus conversion course students. While all personnel are resident in Nowra, only six aircraft reside on the flight line as the seventh is deemed to be undergoing scheduled servicing in New Zealand. Often, due to unavailability of spares in Australia, one of the six aircraft resides in the back of the hangar as the "hangar queen". The Squadron is not allocated aircraft as such, but fly any six out of the now 20 strong fleet. The rest are either operated by No. 75 Squadron, or are undergoing scheduled maintenance. Any one aircraft will spend approximately nine months in Australia before being

swapped with another from New Zealand.

In essence the Government to Government agreement states that the RNZAF will provide 800 hours per year of support to the ADF. The first 400 of this, plus any transit flying is paid by the NZDF. The ADF then pay for the second half. All other flying apart from maintenance and administrative flying is secondary to tasking. For the first full financial year, the Squadron flew 795 task hours for 300 transit hours. Of the task hours, 680 were in support of the RAN conducting maritime attack, combat air patrol and air intercept controller training. One hundred and five hours were flown in support of the RAAF (mainly for the F/A-18 squadrons) carrying out adversary air and combined interdiction. Ten hours of close support were flown for the Army.

No. 2 Squadron's operations are not restricted to Nowra. As at the end of August this year, the Squadron has conducted 13 deployments to Darwin, Perth, Townsville, Williamtown, East Sale and Richmond. A further six deployments are pencilled in for the remainder of the calendar year.

CONVERSION FLYING

As far as conversion flying is concerned, conversion course students arrive in Australia with some 600 hour flying experience, having completed a fighter introduction course and consolidation on the Strikemaster, or more recently, Macchi 339c.

The Skyhawk conversion consists of 20 weeks of ground school and flying. From general handling, instrument flying and formation, the students progress to radar intercepts and air combat, academic weapons, tactical weapons employment through interdiction, close air support and maritime strike. They graduate only after they prove that they can plan, brief and lead a two aircraft interdiction mission with air refuelling, and opposed by adversary air. The students then remain at No. 2 Squadron on the operational staff until the next course graduates. The cycle then continues with those returning to New Zealand posted to No. 75 Squadron.

CONCLUSION

No. 2 Squadron personnel see the Squadron as providing a service to the ADF. As such, operations are aimed at meeting the demands of the user units, even if that will result in Squadron pilots receiving little or no tactical training value, or the maintenance crews need to put in a few extra hours to ensure an aircraft is serviceable. All personnel have found the operations in Australia demanding but rewarding. All are benefitting from the opportunity to operate with (and against) a dedicated and professional defence force. Most importantly, everybody is enjoying their stay in Australia.

*** Our thanks to Squadron Leader Steve Moore, CO No.2 Squadron, RNZAF, for this very enlightening article.*

WHY ARE AIRCRAFT STORAGE SHEDS CALLED HANGARS?

Of the two reasons which have been offered, the most straightforward, is that hangar is French for shed.

The other, is said to originate from the days of the Wright Brothers, when their wheelless flying machine was suspended from the roof-beams of their garage. The correct title for this building then became 'hanging-garage'. When this name came into use on a sign, it was reduced to 'hang-gar', in time this was further reduced to the way we know it today.

Whichever is the correct version, the second one certainly has all the appeal of the urban myth. **

DAILY ORDERS : Floggings will continue until morale improves.

SWORDS CARED FOR HONOURABLY

Although samurai swords have a rich and colourful history dating from the 11th Century, most Australians associate the weapons with World War Two.

The Australian War Memorial's collection stored in its Mitchell Annex is made up of swords acquired in the Pacific Theatre after either being surrendered or captured.

Epitomising the collection's high standard, the sword pictured with metals conservator John Ashton, dates from the early Tokugawa period (about 1670), a time characterised by the dominance of the Samurai, a warrior class sworn to defend their ruler, or Shogun.

Sword-making was so refined it was more a religious art form than a manufacturing process, resulting in weapons known as much for their beauty and elegance as for their strength.

Master sword makers could spend as long as six months on one sword, skilfully forging and folding layers of metal to give as many as 16,000 laminations.

Finished and polished, the blades have a grain similar to wood, and a cutting edge with a decorative temper line unique to each craftsman.

Sword guards (tsuba) were mainly chiselled iron, which may be decorated with gold or silver motifs. Handles were wrapped in ray skin, bound with silk, and decorated with menuki, which are small, carved metal ornaments.

Sometimes, small circular family crests were attached to sword fittings, while scabbards were mainly lacquered and embellished with colourful designs.

Although the results of such painstaking labours were fearsome, practical weapons, they were also remarkable works of art held in esteem by family, friends -

and foe.

This sword (AWM 27390) belonged to a sea garrison surgeon, Dr Hideo Okomura, who left it in his quarters while tending patients during an attack by American aircraft. Machine gun bullets damaged the scabbard and marked the blade.

In 1985, memorial staff decided to send the most valuable swords to Japan to be polished by one of only seven master-polishers, Mr Kajihara, a craftsman designated a "living national treasure".

Dr Okomura greeted his swords return, telling the precious cargo's escort, that he was pleased to see his sword being cared for honourably.

Traditional accessories were made for the swords - wooden resting scabbards (shira-saya) for blade storage, and wooden blades to keep the decorative scabbards and handles together.

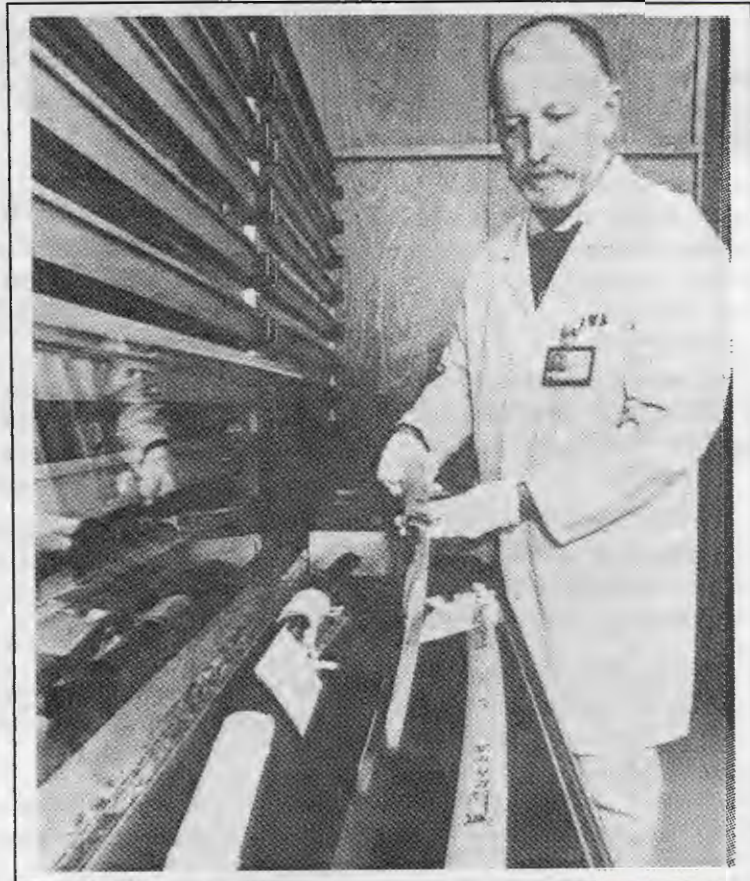
Once back in the Memorial, the blades were coated with microcrystalline wax to prevent deterioration.

A casual observer, looking at the collec-

tion in its tranquil surroundings, could be forgiven for seeing the swords as objects of rare and unique beauty. Such adulation should not diminish the fearsome, almost mystical reputation the weapons attained when they were used for their primary purpose.

FOOTNOTE: While obviously not rivalling its valuable content's workmanship, the collection's housing cabinet is interesting. It is in a Japanese style and was designed and built by University of Canberra environmental design students. Conservation requirements were strictly adhered to: the wood chosen for the cabinet does not give off acidic vapour, and it is well sealed with acrylic lacquer. Each drawer can be removed to double as a display cabinet.

** Article written by Ann Parkinson and reprinted with thanks from the Dept of Veteran's Affairs newspaper, *Vetaffairs*.



MEMORIES ARE MEDICINE

Jimmy Smith was a merchant seaman and Etta was his wife. He had a photo of her in his pocket.

It wasn't a big photo - a snapshot really, not framed or tinted or even mounted. Just plain, like Etta.

There was a bigger photo of her in his locker in the forward messdeck of the "Bulton Castle," but he wouldn't see that again. The "Castle" had gone down with two 'tin-fish' in her belly, and Jimmy lost everything but the clothes he wore. And Etta's photo.

It was buckled now, though, and splashed with salt water as he held it in wet, shivering hands and stared at Etta with eyes as grey as the heaving Atlantic itself.

It was cold on the raft, and lonely. Until yesterday Tom had been there, too. They had clung to the raft together as the "Castle" went down, just two of them, without water and food, and nothing in sight but grey sea and white waves. There had been wreckage at first, and they searched it in vain. Down there - the "Bulton Castle," her holds bulging with beef and fruit and butter and cheese. Up here - nothing but jagged, splintered wood.

Jimmy had been on the raft six days - or was it seven? He counted the notches cut in the wood. Seven notches, seven days - the sixth notch crossed, because that was when Tom went.

Poor old Tom, he had no photo. There was no Etta waiting for him, no home to go to when, and if, he was picked up. He had been cheerful at first, then bitter, then hysterical. He had cursed the grey sea, the waves, the occasional sea-bird that squawked overhead. He had cursed Jimmy and Etta. Cursed Etta, mind you!

He grew quieter, then delirious.

"Mother," he screamed, and reached out for her as if she were there, just across the water. "Mother."

He staggered from the raft, holding out his arms to her. There was nothing Jimmy could do - nothing but watch him as he bobbed about on the grey waves and listened to the plaintive voice crying "Mother, Mother!" Then there was nothing but the grey sea and the white waves and the moaning of the wind.

Jimmy and Etta were alone.

"I'll fight them, Etta," he promised. "I'll fight them - the wind, the sea, the cold, all of them. I'll be back."

He was tired, though, and it seemed to be getting darker. Too early to be getting dark, he thought, but then you couldn't judge time on a raft with no sun to guide you. It would be nice to sleep. He could hardly see the photo now, but Etta seemed to be smiling at

him. She would be smiling when he reached home, just as she had always been.

Before the war she had always been at the wharf to meet him. She couldn't find out when he was arriving now, though, and had to wait until he opened the front door. But then there were welcome and thanks, not just welcome, in her smile. There would be relief, too, next time.

As the days passed Jimmy held the photograph closer, though his fingers were thinner and very weak. It was cold, and he was too tired to cut any more notches. He ran his fingers along the edge of the raft. Seventeen notches. Seventeen days. Seventeen nights.

It was dark, too, and he couldn't see the grey sea and the white waves. He couldn't see Etta's photo, but he clutched it closer. It would be good to sleep. He had heard about sailors who had gone to sleep and who never woke again. But he had promised Etta he would be back.

It would be easy to roll off the raft while he slept, though, because he was too weak to save himself. He took out his bootlaces and joined them, holding the precious photo in his teeth.

He took off his scarf, too, groped his way slowly to a ringbolt and slowly and painfully lashed his legs to the raft. He closed his eyes.....

Jimmy didn't see the ship that picked him up.....

"Memories are wonderful medicine," the doctor said as he took the photo from Jimmy's feeble hands and showed it to an assistant.

It was crumpled, torn and salt-stained, and Etta's picture had been entirely bleached away.

"A snapshot, once," the doctor said, "but it brought back memories strong enough to keep him alive."

"But, Doc, there's nothing...."

"He'll never know that. You see, he's been blind for a week."

*** We thank the unknown author.*

SPARE A THOUGHT

HMAS Melbourne was an advertisement of Australia's commitment to regional security and cooperation.

She was a real symbol of Australia's status, prestige and influence...

She was overworked and abused, admired and cherished, sworn at and loved by those who lived in her.

The ship owes us nothing, but Australia as a whole is in her debt. *** Author unknown*

SPIN US A DIT

THE FUNERAL FIRIN' PARTY-DRY RUN INSTRUCTION

"Air Branch Officers - HO! Pay attention. Stan'-at EASE!

The following is the drill for the Funeral Firin' Party...

On the day, the Funeral Firin' Party will be drawn up in two ranks in front of the 'ouse or 'orspital where the corpse is a-laying. Now, it don't matter whether the corpse comes out of a door or a window, when the corpse appears, the Funeral Firin' Party will present arms.

Funeral Firin' Party - HO! Slope Arms! Hup-two-three-DOWN! Still, Sir, Stand still!

PRE-sent Arms! OVER-two-three, OUT-two-three, DOWN! The right foot be'ind the LEFT, Sir, you're standing like a fairy. Come to think of it, p'raps that's why - wipe that smile off your face, Sir, this is a funeral.

The corpse will pass between the ranks, closely followed by the Sorrowin' and Bereaved, you will wear a h'aspect, cheerful but subdoosed - cheerful because you ain't in the bleedin' box, see, subdoosed because you've given up your make-and-mend. Once the corpse is passed through the ranks, CLOSELY followed by the Sorrowin' and Bereaved, the Funeral Firin' Party will reverse arms, and be marched off be'ind the funeral cortege.

Funeral Firin' Party REVERSE - ARMS! Hup-two-three DOWN! Take charge of that rifle, Sir! Move to the right and left in file, Right and Left, TURN! By the left, SLO-OW MARCH!

On arrival at the cemet'ry gates, the Funeral Firin' Party will 'alt while the funeral cortege passes into the Chapel. For drill purposes, I am the cemet'ry gates. Funeral Firin' Party, 'ALT One Two! 'Old your bleedin' 'ead UP, Sir.

When the corpse, CLOSELY followed by the Sorrowin' and Bereaved, 'as passed into the Chapel, the Funeral Firin' Party will be marched to the graveside, where they will be drawn up in close order in three ranks. For drill purposes, I am the graveside. At the order DISMISS, fall in in three ranks in front of me. Funeral Firin' Party, DIS-MISS!

Funeral Firin' Party, HO!

When the funeral cortege appears, Funeral Firin' Party will present arms, after which the order will be given, Rest on your arms - reversed. Funeral Firin' Party, PREE-SENT ARMS! Rest on your arms - REVERSED! 'Old your bleedin' 'ead DOWN, Sir.

When the graveside service is over, and the order 'avin' been given 'Ashes to ashes, dust to dust', the Funeral Firin' Party will be brought back to attention. Funeral Firin' Party, HO!

You Sir, what's the next order, Sir? You don't know, Sir? Of course you don't know, Sir, you're only a bleedin' Air Branch Officer. You Sir, what's the next order, Sir? NO SIR, it is NOT 'Volleys with blank cartridges - Load'. 'Cause why, Sir? 'Cause if you did, the centre and rear ranks would poke the muzzles of their muskets up the fundamentals of the rank in front, ENTIRELY contrary to Good Order and Naval Discipline, Sir. No Sir, nor yet the next order ain't 'Open order, March'. 'Cause why, Sir? Because if you did, the front rank would take two smart paces forward, and fall straight into the 'ole, much to the consternation of the Sorrowin' and Bereaved. THEREFORE, the next order is 'One pace ONLY, Open order, MARCH', thus bringin' the front rank to the edge of the grave, a place which Air Branch officers are used to....you will then 'ave room to load.

The Funeral Firin' Party will then fire three volleys over the grave. This will usually bring muffled sobbin' from the Sorrowin' and Bereaved, a shower of slates from the Chapel roof, and a cloud of Death Watch' beetles from the workroom inside.

On completion, the Funeral Firin' Party will march off to the accompaniment of a merry tune.

*** With thanks to the Canadian Naval Aviators & Associates Newsletter who swiped it from the Nova Scotia Naval Officers Association Newsletter, 'Bosuns Call', who in turn.....?*

WHAT IS AN FAA ARMOURER?

He is....a rare breed, loved by wives, sweethearts, mothers, sisters, aunties and nieces. Hated by boyfriends, husbands, fathers, uncles, brothers and nephews.

He likes....Main leave, weekend leave, make and mend with leave, tot, splicers, pay days, fights, girls, and the field gun crew.

He dislikes.... kit musters, mismusters, misfires, hang-ups, hang-fires, hangovers, stoppages, stoppage of pay, stoppage of leave, stoppage of tot, divisions, long black gaiters, short black gaiters, greenies, pinkies, chockheads, bootnecks, saluting middies and signing on.

He is suspicious of....provo marshalls, jaunties, RPO's, leading patrolmen, the reg office and the jossmans runner. Three badge Wrens with long handbags and short arms, brown envelopes or anything looking like a draft chit, and anyone who puts Lee-on-Solent as his preference draft.

He will tolerate....the CAA, leading hand of the mess,

leading hand of the gunner's party, and the poofter in the NAAFI bar.

His sports are....darts, dominoes, uckers, shove halfpenny, chit chat racing and the odd game of tombola.

He....breaks more hearts, causes more fights, drinks more beer, and when at sea is missed more than any other male. He fights for his mate, and dies for his country without question or hesitation.

And....still gets the Captain to vouch for his integrity.

You see I know, I was one.

*** Tony Stalford -- RN FAA Armourer's Association.*

THE TORPEDO

We had been in commission for a year. It was time to actually drop a torpedo. Someone sometime had to actually do the job instead of reading about it.

It was a beautiful day in the South China Sea. No sea at all, very little wind, lovely sun shining its rays upon all of us lounging around waiting for something to happen.

Torpedoes were, of course, expensive toys so they were not to be lightly thrown into the drink. We sent away one of the flagship's 37 foot motor cutters to stand by to recover the beast after the practice drop.

The cutter crew were delighted. A day on the sea, away from the ship! Great stuff. The Leading Seaman coxswain and his Bowman couldn't have been happier. They might even get a chance to fish on the side away from the ship. Who knows?

The Gannet with the 'fish' slung underneath roared majestically off the steam catapult and into the wild blue yonder.

The motor coxswain and his boat were lowered and slipped while the ship was still under way. In accordance with his orders he pattered over to where he was to wait until the 'fish' had run out of power and was, in accordance with the manual, standing on its empty head waiting to be picked up.

The three fish-heads lolled about in the cutter thanking their luck to have such a beaut job. The Gannet swept down low to make its torpedo drop run. It was a classic drop. Everyone saw the 'fish' hit the water exactly as they expected. All eyes were on the drop. Why not? Isn't that what the fleet air arm was all about?

All of a sudden there was loud squawking on the radio from the aircraft. Almost immediately a light signal started blinking furiously to the motor cutter poncing around in the South China Sea. Then the portable radio on the cutter started blurting out the

good news.

"The torpedo is running straight for you! Make a run for it!"

"I think he's got the message, Sir!", someone told the Captain unnecessarily.

The motor cutter got under way immediately and everyone with a telescope or glasses watched in fascination as the coxswain, now standing high in the sternsheets looking frantically for the high speed torpedo now homing in on him, tried to outrun the beast.

"Go man, go!", people shouted all over the place. The Gannet cruised serenely over the scene unmoved by the drama below but watching fascinated as the torpedo clearly locked onto the motor cutter and started to hunt it.

The boat's stoker got more revs out of the engine than any book said was possible. The motor cutter simply fled the scene. The young seaman Bowman just stood there waiting for what he couldn't help feeling was inevitable.

The coxswain did a brilliant job trying to avoid the motorised sea serpent. But technology will out. The torpedo hit him fair and square in the guts. There they sat. The flagship's motor cutter stopped and laying on the surface like a stranded whale, implanted with a silvery blue torpedo.

The Gannet aircraft was probably the only aircraft in the fleet air arm of any navy to have a motor cutter painted on the cockpit side to display their 'kill' that day.

*** Story by Laurence F. Hoins*

THE LAST FLIGHT

When the last long flight is over,
 And the happy landings past,
 And my altimeter tells me
 That the crack-up's come at last.
 Then I'll meet my fellow pilots,
 No longer flying low,
 As I stow my crate in the hangar
 On the field where fliers go.
 Then I will fly forever
 With the Almighty Flying Boss
 And ride all heaven's airways
 From Orion to the Cross.

*** Unknown author.*



CONTACT COLUMN

The following letter was sent to Bob Geale, Curator of the Naval Aviation Museum. He thought that it may be of interest to our members because the writer, Bill Crozer, was mentioned in our last edition.

Just to remind you, Bill was a Warrant Officer Pilot (RN), attached to HMAS Albatross when it was first commissioned in 1948.

In this letter from PORTSMOUTH, UK, dated July 1992, he writes about Albatross as he remembers it...

Hello Windy,

I find it a bit difficult when writing to you to remember whether I am writing about things I have mentioned before; this is because I still correspond with Fred Randall and it's a bit of a job to sort out what I have written to each of you as we are more or less all interested in the same subjects. So any 'slip-ups' put down to old Bill's senility.

Anyway, Windy, thanks for your letter and the mass of information you enclosed.

As you will see from the clipping, it will be the last Air Day at Lee (*HMS Daedalus*) soon, then it will be closing next year. At present there is an Air Engineering School there and the only flying is civilian choppers for ASR South Coast.

There is talk of a Hovercraft Museum at the top of the old slipway where most of us did our float-plane training.

I don't know where we will hold our R/Pilot's reunion now, we had to move from Seafeld Park when it closed and had it at Lee last year.

Glancing through your leaflets etc.: I see the old Albatross (*float-plane carrier*) - remember being hoisted inboard her a few times off Freetown, when I was doing A/S patrols ahead of the Fleet.

Vengeance - my first commission as a 'thin striper'. I was on her in 1946/47 when she was the training carrier off the coast of Scotland.

Sydney - of course, I came home aboard her in 1950.

The shot of Albatross (*RANAS*) from the air, doesn't vary much from the one I have: taken at commissioning time, a few more buildings etc..

Yes! I remember Schoolie Smith very well, he appears in a photograph I have of the original Wardroom residents taken about the time that

Cdr.Lane took over from Rodney Rhoades - 9 RN Loan Officers and 8 RAN, also the civilian in charge of construction of the airfield. (*This photo appeared in the Special Edition.Ed*)

I have no knowledge of the Smith you mention re Repulse, but will have to enquire as I am now a member of Repulse and Prince of Wales Survivors, only found out about them a year ago.

Jervis Bay College was not a 'going concern' when we were there, only maintenance staff, but we made visits on instructional and 'Jolly' trips.

Huskisson - what memories, stayed with Mrs Neville and Family. She used to run the dress shop in Nowra main street.

It was pretty primitive then, outside toilet, and can picture myself now in swim trunks climbing into the water tanks on a cleaning spree. I have some nice aerial photos to remind me; also of the Jervis Bay Hotel - where our 'grog' was obtained.

So the old gymnasium (*RANAS*) is still standing. Looking at my photographs it shows in the background of the two inspections we had after Captain Poole took charge, one inspection by Commodore Willoughby and the other by Rear Admiral Farncombe.

Looking at all the class photographs of all the courses I helped to put through, NA's, AH's, SE's, all first timers and some for higher rates later. I wonder if any are still around, all served full time and gone to pension I expect.

Looking at the Museum pamphlet I see two carrier models, I expect one of them is the model of the Light Fleet I obtained for the Handling School for demonstration to my courses.

I wonder what happened to the old Spitfire I had cleaned up and placed outside the Handling School? Not airworthy of course - I used it as background for course photographs, which I have.

When we arrived in '48 the airfield was right in the middle of the reconstruction and mud everywhere. There was no living accomodation available and myself with Fred Randall and Pay Lt.Robin Angel were billeted in Walter Watson's Nowra Hotel in Nowra main street for about three months. Driving out to the 'drome daily to supervise what we wanted done in our sections and I visited Randwick Stores to inspect Safety Equipment left over from the British Pacific Fleet.

One photo I have is with the Gangway Staff, when I was OOD on Xmas Day 1948.

The guardroom was a wooden structure, about 50/100 yards from the gym and overlooked the main

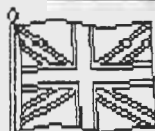
gate, which if I remember rightly, was rather a flimsy affair of metal and wire.

Also I can't recall about the flagstaff date, I think it was soon after the commissioning at the Control Tower that we switched the flag from there to the main gate area, so I think we are talking late '48. I should think some old hands still around out there could supply you with better information than my poor memory can.

I thought I'd include the local paper clipping of the tragic future for Daedalus. As a matter of interest, what about all the FAA connections we had over given periods as shown on these maps (*Maps show RN Air Stations world wide between 1939-1977, they will appear in Slipstream at a later date.Ed.*) I bet it disturbs you and your cronies as much as it did me when I first obtained them.

A couple of years back, Ray Sturtivant, author of RN books, somehow obtained my name and I was subsequently interviewed and a chapter was devoted to me in the book he published last year entitled *British Naval Aviation 1917/1990*. Also, two years ago, Terry Daniels, who lives in Geelong, was in a mess here drinking in company and found out that I'd been at Nowra. He wrote the enclosed article, gave me a copy and said he would publish it in a newspaper; whether he did or not I don't know. (*Will be published in Slipstream later. Ed.*)

Best wishes to all out there. Cheers, Bill



* Joyce Knowlson sends Best Wishes to our members on behalf of the HMS Ocean Association, UK.

*Members visiting the UK are cordially invited to make contact with 'Doc' Halliday, Secretary of the Birmingham Fleet Air Arm Association. (021-357-2738)

IN THE BEGINNING continued

BIRTH OF THE R.A.N. FLEET AIR ARM

The first RAN CAG commissioned as the 20th CAG at RNAS Eglinton on 28th August 1948.

The first RNAS (formerly RAAF Station Nowra, later *HMS Nabbington*) commissioned as *HMAS Albatross* on 31st August 1948.

The first RAN CVL commissioned as *HMAS Sydney* at Devonport on 16th December 1948.

After some modification *HMAS Sydney* was accepted into service in February 1949. She embarked the 20th CAG comprising 12 Sea Fury of 805 Sqdn. and 12 Fireflies of 816 Sqdn. under the command of Captain R.R Dowling DSO, RAN.

HMAS Sydney arrived in Jervis Bay in May 1949 to disembark the CAG. In July 1950 the *Sydney* returned to the UK and embarked the second Air Group of 808 Sea Fury Sqdn. and 817 Firefly Sqdn. forming the 21st CAG. She also embarked a Sea Otter seaplane for search and rescue purposes. She arrived back in Australia in December 1950.

As an Aircraft Carrier of the British Commonwealth forces, *Sydney* served in Korean war operations from September 1951 to January 1952, and again in 1953. She operated both 805 and 808 Sea Fury and 817 Firefly Squadrons.

A second Naval Air Station (formerly RAAF Station, later *HMS Nabthorpe*) was established at Schoffields in 1951. It became an A/C storage and repair facility. In October 1952 the Aircraft Maintenance Engineering Training School (SAME) transferred there from Nowra. On 1st of January 1953 the station commissioned as *HMAS Nirimba*. Subsequently the S.A.M.E. returned to Nowra and, after a period on a care and maintenance basis, *Nirimba* paid off on 4th of January 1956. It recommissioned as a Naval Apprentice Training establishment two years later.

In 1952, pending completion of a second CVL for the RAN, the RN made available on loan the Colossus class carrier *Vengeance*, a ship of similar design to *HMAS Sydney*. She commissioned in the RAN at Devonport on 13th November 1952 and reverted to the RN on 25th October 1955.

HMAS Melbourne commissioned on 28th October 1955. The extended delay had been caused by improvements added during reconstruction and modernisation. These included an angled flight deck, mirror deck landing sights and a steam catapult. Under command of Captain G.G.O. Gatacre DSO, DSC, RAN. She arrived in Australian waters in April 1956 with the reformed 808 Sqdn., Sea Venom jet fighters and reformed 816 and 817 Squadrons with Gannet turbo prop strike A/C embarked.

On 30th of May 1958 *HMAS Sydney* paid off into special reserve after nine and a half years service as a CVL. On March 7th 1962 'Sydney' recommissioned as a fast troop transport and, following refit and conversion was brought into operational service in July 1963. Her large hangars storage capacity and her uncluttered flight deck made her ideal as an equipment carrier whilst transporting troops to and from the Vietnam war zone. She was finally paid off for disposal on 12 November 1973.

HMAS Melbourne operated Sea Venom all weather (FAW), Gannet anti submarine (AS) strike A/C and later included Westland Wessex helicopters to the close of 1967. She then proceeded to the United States (US) to take delivery of a new generation of aircraft. (*to be continued*)

ALBATROSS HAPPENINGS

ERECTION OF 'K' HANGAR UNDER WAY

Along with the Public Service and many businesses in the private sector, Defence has realised the importance of retaining the expertise and work experience of greater numbers of women after they have decided to have a family.

The provision of childcare in a convenient location is one of the major keys to this retention. As a result, renovations to convert the old 'Wardroom Annex' into a 29 place work-based childcare centre, are currently under way.

Appropriately named 'K' Hangar, it is hoped that it will be open in the New Year.

As with all Defence work-based childcare centres, priority will be given to civilian and uniformed Defence personnel working at Albatross.

NEW BUILDING PROJECTS

Albatross is currently undergoing a much needed face-lift in the form of several new building projects. Recently completed is the HS817 and HC723 Squadron Administration building and the extensions to 'A' and 'B' Hangars. An Operations/Communications/Administration building is under construction. The overall cost of the above projects being \$4.5 million.

An aircraft hardstanding area has had the bitumen replaced with interlocking concrete pavers at a cost of \$400,000.

Projects for the 1992/93 financial year include the construction of a new Interdenominational Chapel, to be located in the area behind the quarter-deck, and an engine testing facility for the Seahawk helicopter.

Through sub-contracting, some sixty percent of these project monies go towards generating wealth in the Shoalhaven area.

HS 816 SQUADRON COMMISSIONED

July 23 saw the commissioning of HS816 Squadron, hundreds of members of the Service, former CO's of the squadron and guests from other Services and the RNZAF joined in the celebrations which took place in the presence of Defence Minister Senator Robert Ray and Chief of Naval Staff, VADM Ian MacDougall. 816 Squadron is equipped with Sikorsky S-70B-02 Seahawk helicopters which are described as being the leading edge of technology and serviceability.

HC 723 SQUADRON-CELEBRATIONS

The 40th Anniversary for the squadron was celebrated on 27 August with a Mess Dinner for all past and

serving officers of HC 723.

An all ranks dance was held at the Junior Sailors Mess on the following night for all past and serving personnel of the squadron. **

HISTORIC FLIGHT UPDATE

SEA VENOM RESTORATION

During the airshow held at HMAS ALBATROSS in May, the Sea Venom crew were fortunate to meet a young 6 year old lad who, confined to a wheel chair, made the whole day worth while. Andrew was all smiles and a very happy young man especially when hefted out of the wheel chair, had a bone dome and oxy mask placed on him and then placed in the cockpit of the Venom. After talking with his guardian Andrew was instated as an honorary member of the Sea Venom restoration crew and given a flight jacket with the Historic Flight Badge and the Sea Venom badge sewn to it. Andrew will now be looked after by the crew when ever he is able to get down to 'Albatross'. A flight in the Dakota was also organised for his sixth birthday.

WZ937 became hopelessly U/S for ground running after the last engine run. A serious fuel leak developed in the valve group assembly which necessitates the removal of the engine and replacing or repairing the valve group assembly. It was decided not to go ahead with the problem at this time. The aircraft fuselage is going to be fibre glassed on the 19th of September and the aircraft painted and sent up to the museum hopefully in time for the November activities day.

Work on WZ895 is now in full swing and presenting problem after problem. Two out of every five screws that have to be removed are shearing or just will not budge. This means a lot of anchor nuts having to be drilled out and replaced.

The metal part of the firewall is all but ready to be removed. The canopy section was still being a right pain and simply refused to come off, but with a little gentle persuasion we finally lifted the whole canopy off on Saturday the 5th of September. The Stbd Acre 9 unit has finally been removed and work is continuing on the removal of the wing fuel tanks.

I must say the job that has really bugged me is writing up all the paper work. We have got a part four unserviceabilities (to the older guys) or a RUCC (to the newer guys) measuring about two and a half inches thick so far. We are also starting to come across problems of finding the associated AP's which is not helping the cause at all.

Time to say thank you to Shoalhaven Frames and

Trusses for their donation of all the timber used in making the aircraft nose stands, wing stands and boom stands. They have made life a lot easier for us.

*** Tony Penno Project Manager.*

SEA FURY RESTORATION

At the beginning of this project I had some misgivings as to the restoration of this aircraft to flying status due to the availability of some "one off" special parts. I have found that there are many people who are dedicated to see it happen as our team are. We give many thanks to the people in Aerotec - DARWIN - Dehavilland - Bankstown and our many Navy friends at 'Albatross' who spend extra time in our area helping. To name them all would double this report.

Progress on the Sea Fury is moving along very well. The tail section and centre fuselage sections have been re-mated. The cockpit section, center wing section and one mainplane are completely stripped of all parts and are now ready for paint stripping and structural inspections. A number of hydraulic units have been refurbished and pressure tested as serviceable.

*** Oscar Harper Sea Fury Team manager.*

C47A-DAKOTA RESTORATION

Unfortunately Don is away and can't get a report in for this edition, but as far as I know, all the floor boards have been either renewed, or the old ones cleaned up and replaced. The inside of the aircraft has been cleaned out completely and repainted.

The ailerons, elevators and rudder have been removed for either replacing or refabricating. Engine cowls have been removed and are being stripped of all the old paint work.

Don will probably deny all I have said in his next report, but I think the above facts are pretty correct.

*** Tony Penno for Don Parkinson - Team Manager*

DONATION TO HISTORIC FLIGHT

From South Australian Division to NSW

Dear Bob,

Attached please find cheque to the value of \$200.00, being a donation to assist in the restoration of the Historic Flight, for you to disperse as you see fit and for which I would like a receipt at some time to keep the Auditor happy.....

This was the start of the letter from Mary Rayner, Treasurer of the South Australian Division.

Members of the Historic Flight restoration teams thank SA Div. for their generosity and thoughtfulness.

NEWS FROM THE DIVISIONS

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Hi Shipmates!

Sorry for the delay in getting pen to paper for this edition of Slipstream.

I've been rather slack of late with the correspondence as I have been moving house from Beckenham to the wind-swept plains of the Rockingham area. I am now residing at 24 Baltic Mews, Waikiki WA 6169 and the telephone number is 09-55279186.

If only the rain would ease off we may be able to get things in order. Lou Burns has been helping to get the roof on the patio but every time we started, so did the rain. We started early last Saturday and beat the rain so now we can go outside without the sea-boots sou'westers and heads low.

Jim Caldwell has been holidaying in the Tropical North so he has missed all the great wind and rain, I don't know how he was able to get away with the Eagles playing, and all. He may be back soon and I can hand him back the cheque-book and get a Treasurer's Report. Yes, we are still solvent, even with me holding the cheque-book.

I hear we are to get a visitor for our Annual Dinner, none other than 'Juke' Matterson, so gather around and show him a good time. While we are on the subject of Annual Dinners, the tickets are now available at \$32.00 from Ron Tate or myself, so beat the rush and get them while they're hot. No ticket - no dinner! The menu is attached to the ticket, it will be held at the same place as last year. Please make the effort.

'Toz' and Gwen Dadswell were visitors to our shores and a get-together was held on Jack Suriano's boat, the Midstream. As the rain tumbled down not a lot of people turned up, but those that did had a real good time. There was plenty to eat and for those inclined drinks were provided. 'Toz' enjoyed a drop of Red - and I hear it was a good drop - 'cordial', that is. A lot of our members were away so couldn't make it. Hilton Devereux was going to fly back from the USA but was unable to get connecting flights. Hilton has been visiting the Marine base at Cherry Point, North Carolina, where his daughter is living. He is a good representative for us at the base.

Rick Hammond has won his appeal for his heart condition with 'Repat' and is now the proud owner of a Red Card. Well done, Rick!

Guess where Ron Tate wanted to take 'Toz' when he was in Perth? You've guessed it - the Casino. We did ease his pain by going the following Sunday. I'm still waiting to hear of any winners. Ron stated that he

wants to keep his hand in for the 'Pokies' when he returns to Nowra in November for the opening of the Museum.

Another visitor to the West was Colin Bushe-Jones, President of the ACT Division. Colin was over to see the new Grandson so not much was seen of him by the WA Members, but he and Geoff Vickeridge had several hours together over the National draft Constitution. From all accounts a lot was achieved. Only time will tell.

Jack Leisk has returned to Queensland after spending twelve months at Rockingham. We wish him all the best and he will send me his address and phone number to me when he settles down. He has invited anyone travelling that way to drop in. He didn't say for how long!!!

A message for Dick Prentice - I haven't forgotten the photo's, they have been mislaid during the move. As soon as they are located I will send them over. By the way, Dick Low spent the day waiting for the person who rang to arrive, he does blame you.

Keith Murdock is still going strong and sends regards to all, he has to front up for his check-up soon, but is still the same old Keith. The tax people have just had a lend of him, taking back a large slice of the money he got from the 'Asbestos people'. He is now no better off but he still jokes about it, so we've nothing to whinge about, even if we think we are hard done by.

Must get this off to Nowra or will miss out. It's great to hear that all the States are going to contribute to Slipstream, I hope to hear from lots of people. Any WA members who wish to contribute any items, please send it to me so I can include it in the next issue. Any snippet, unless it's defamatory or an outright untruth, please send it in. Old photo's of the mob, provided they are sharp copies.

Best of luck and health to you and your families where ever you are, from all of us in the West.

** *Theo Bushe-Jones*

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Firstly - to all those active members who put this magazine together.....well done. A truly informative magazine with a good balance of news, recollections and humour.

South Australia is battling along in our 7th year with average membership numbers. Those members who participate in our various functions gather together that Spirit of Friendship formed by a common bond.

Our functions include barbecues at the delightful HMAS Encounter, a Poets Night complete with an Aussie Roast, visiting the Submarine Corporation, an

ever popular Scottish Night which includes a better understanding of why the Scots speak like they do, and finally, our Christmas Dinner which allows us to re-cap on the past years progress. Always a good night with ladies in their posh frocks and gentlemen in jackets.

As I prepare this States newsletter with all the reading it requires, I am reminded of wise words from Woody Allen who said.....

" I took a speed reading course and read War and Peace in 20 minutes.

It involves Russia."

** *Roger Harrison*

VICTORIA

Greetings and salutations to all our shipmates and to the many other subscribers to 'Slipstream'. I feel that in the very short space of time that this journal has been in production, it has become a credit to those dedicated people that forage and research for the articles that appear within and I must commend you all.

Hopefully, starting with this issue, 'Slipstream' will become the instrument of the National Association by which a closer contact with ex and serving members of the Fleet Air Arm can, and will, be maintained. At the time of writing, I believe that investigations are going ahead to determine the best methods of producing 'Slipstream' on a national basis, with consideration being given to the extra work load involved whilst keeping costs to a reasonable level.

I heard a whisper that Sir Victor Smith was able to attend a commemorative service on the 50th anniversary of the loss of HMAS Canberra, of which he was a survivor. It's great to know that he can still venture out to participate in some of these moments of remembrance.

There is little movement socially in our division with our last Sunday luncheon attracting only two members and their associates, they were Ron and Val Christie and Roy and Dot Weddell. Betty and I had to attend our grandson's third birthday party on the same day, but being President, I felt it my duty to be in attendance at the Division's Luncheon, I made it, albeit late.

We welcome yet another new member to our ranks, Ron Forbes. Although he was a member previously, he had dropped out of sight. It's good to have him back. Ron and his wife Lois run a charter bus service to the NSW 'pokies' venues.

September sees Terry 'Darcy' Egan off to Disneyland taking a couple of his grandchildren. He tells me that Jackie Herbert has gained his Arts degree and is now

studying for his Masters.

Monsignor Kevin Ellis is not too well and has lost most of his sight.

'Danny' O'Keefe has had the weight lifted having had a cancer scare which prevented him from attending the recent reunion. It turned out to be a bad case of pneumonia with complications. I ventured up to Maryborough to see him and he is in fine spirits. At the same time I called in to see Arthur Traynor, unfortunately he was out but Danny said that he is well after his by-pass surgery.

Jock Lacy is not as well as expected, it is thought that he may have an aneurism behind his left eye which could require surgery. I will keep you posted on this one.

Ray 'Alki' Annand had surgery twice. Once for the 'old man's complaint', prostate problem, and secondly for associated cancer. He tells me he is fine; I don't know what Kath thinks!

Jeff Craske was in the Repatriation Hospital, on making enquiries, it was found that he had been discharged to his home at Pyalong.

I contacted John Slade to see how he was, apart from breathing problems when he walks. He said that he's surviving.

Ron Breaden hasn't been the best for some time but I've no further news.

Ron Christie is back at work after a spell on Work Care, it is possible that he will have to retire in the very near future. It would appear that back injuries claim a lot of us in our mellowing years.

'Happy' Clarke got his ugly face on TV recently, he is involved with one of the conservation groups. He was paying out one of the local Councillors for having some of the foreshore greenery removed to make a walking track.

I hear that Jim 'Junior' Davidson is involved with the 'new' Compass Airlines. He appeared in a photograph showing a group that were organising the restructuring of Southern Cross, which are really the new Compass.

Les Jordan has become dangerous since having surgery to rectify the blood flow in both legs. Combined with his previous by-pass surgery, I believe he's ready to take on Ben Johnson over 100 metres.

One of the original AEO's of the 'Reg Green' vintage, George McGregor, had a by-pass op' not long ago and has retired to Moama to get in a few rounds of golf each week. Betty and I called in to see him and his wife, Linda. Both were really happy in their new environment. He told me that Warwick Robinson

recently spent a couple of days with them for a well earned break from his work load. It's time you gave it up, 'Wokka'!

Did you know that Syd Mitchell is a qualified masseur? Rumour has it that he doesn't have many male patients.

For the readers in the UK, we have in our membership the following:

KEELEY (nee LEES) Barbara ('Babs') HMS Heron (1949) WRNS

PRICE Mike Lt(P) HMS Raven (1947)

SMITH Alan POAF HMS Gamecock (1948-49) HMS Daedalus (1954)

THORNE Mike S/Lt(P) HMS Drake RNB Devonport (1952-57)

WATSON David LCdr(AE) HMS Daedalus (1943-46)

WESTON Maurie POAF(O) HMS Venerable (1942-46)

Others known but not currently members:

HOLDEN Edgar POAF HMS Birmingham (1939-46)

NEWMAN Jack AA1 HMS Daedalus (1946-70)

PEPPER Wally Tel HMS Fencer (1941-46)

PUNNETT Cyril LAM(O) HMS Godwit (1942-46)

WILSON Ivan NA1 AM(E) HMS Implacable (1948-55)

ROBERTS Tom AM1 HMS Seahawk Culdrose (1952-72)

COLAM Dennis Tel HMS Illustrious HMS Implacable (1943-46)

COOKE Eddie AM(O) HMS Daedalus (1943-46)

NB: The ships or establishments named, are the last ones where these shipmates served prior to discharge.

* Although Faye was born in the UK, for a long time she thought that Winchester Cathedral was the place where they held shotgun weddings.

* At a recent survey on sex, I was asked when it was I last had sex; to which I replied 1955. The surveyor commented that it was a long time ago. I promptly retorted that it wasn't too long ago as it was only 2030 then!

From the membership and committee of the FAAA of A (Victoria) Inc., we extend to all recipients of this journal, our heartfelt message of goodwill and 'ship-mateship' that is, and always will be, the same that we experienced as the backbone of the Navy for many years. May the Esprit de Corps never diminish.

** *Clem Conlan - President and de-facto Honorary Secretary*

ACT DIVISION

The ACT Division welcomes the proposal for SLIPSTREAM to become the National publication for the Fleet Air Arm Association and wishes the editorial staff well in this new venture. We hope to be able to contribute to each edition and convey the news of the ACT region to members of other Divisions.

Other members might be interested to know that this Division now has 68 members and more keep trickling in. There is a monthly meeting on the last Wednesday in every month, normally held at RSL Headquarters in Constitution Avenue commencing at 1930. Moves are afoot to make these meetings more of a social occasion about 4-6 times a year and if so, this will probably be held at the Canberra Services Club at Manuka.

Our next big social event will be a Cocktail Party on November 13th at RSL Headquarters and notices of this will be going out to members in the near future. A similar event last year proved very popular and a very happy occasion.

*** Brian Treloar - Secretary*

QUEENSLAND

At the National FAAA meeting held in Nowra during the reunion, we realised that Queensland is the only State without a Division. About 40 of us are members of the NSW Division and most seem keen to get one going here.

Five of us have formed a Steering Committee with the aim of getting a Queensland Division established.

The committee have sent letters to most of the people on our lists and others we know of, to advise them of our goal.

We are in the process of arranging a venue for a General Meeting to elect a State Executive. The venue will be the Maritime Museum - Brisbane at 11:00am, Sunday the 17th or 25th of October. When the exact date is available, we will be contacting everyone once again. Wherever you are, please make an effort and be there. On conclusion of the meeting, we'll probably adjourn to the nearest tavern for a couple or three!

One of the things that has been discussed, was that we should endeavour to arrange a major get-together for ANZAC Day, 1933, and march as a division - whichever centre suits i.e Brisbane, Townsville etc..

As we are widespread, each centre will most likely have its own branch, if you know of any ex-FAA types in your general area, please make contact and ask them to spread the word. Names, addresses and 'phone/fax numbers can be forwarded to any of the Steering Committee shown on the enclosed list of

FAAA of A contacts.

We are sure that with the interest shown so far, together with the number of ex-FAA personnel in Queensland, that the goal of our own Queensland Division of the FAA Association will be achieved in the very near future.

*** Kind regards, Barry Lister.*

NEW SOUTH WALES

Our spokesman and report person extraordinaire, President Bob Cronin, has gone to Victoria on urgent family matters. As it is uncertain when he will return, I submit this report on his behalf.

Bob's unexpected departure was sudden and he did not have time to brief me on such matters as arisings from meetings of the Directors of the Naval Aviation Museum which he attends as an observer on behalf of the FAAA.

However, the need for volunteers from our Association to help the skeleton permanent museum staff increases as the official opening of Stage Two draws near.

After the official opening of the museum on Sunday 01 November, the museum restaurant will cater for the dignitaries. Various other food outlets will cater to the appetite of the general public.

We have offered to operate our Hot Dog stand on the day, but as yet we are uncertain as to whether the offer will be taken up. However, any 'Nowra Natives' prepared to give a hand if required, please get in touch.

A workshop has been constructed off the Western wall of the museum hangar. Initially this will cater for the construction of displays, restoration of memorabilia and such like.

At the moment the workshop is BARE. Remember, the museum complex is an entirely separate entity from Albatross and receives no Federal Government funding.

Some of the items desperately needed by the museum and the workshop are four drawer filing cabinets, library shelving, benches, power tools, general workshop tools and even cleaning equipment.

The most important factor is manpower to operate the equipment and perform the tasks.

If you can help by donating equipment, it doesn't have to be new, or by supplying your labour, please contact the Museum Administrator, Derek Whyte, on (044)211920.

As Vice President FAAA (NSW), my responsibilities

include liaison with Derek. I will be in a position to advise members of urgent or specific needs as workshop activities get under way.

I also hold the position of 'Public Officer'. In the latter capacity, a requirement of the Associations Incorporation Act. I have continuing correspondence with the Dep't of Consumer Affairs (Corporate Affairs Commission) and with Charities Administration (Chief Secretary's Dep't).

Consumer Affairs has accepted the amendments to our Constitution (NSW) passed 08 March last, but Charities Administration has more stringent requirements.

Briefly, for any body which 'Appeals for Support', including the collection of membership subscriptions, and has 'Patriotic Purpose', such as included in the aims of our Constitution, 'it is compulsory to be registered as a charity'.

Consequently, our present Constitution has been amended to comply with the Model Rules set down under the Charitable Collections Act.

The recent General Meeting(s) at which the amendments were approved and ratified were poorly attended.

Monthly open forum meetings have been temporarily suspended until we locate a more suitable venue. Local members will be informed through the medium of the local press.

Our social activities in 1992 have met with mixed success. The National FAA Reunion '92 held in May, provided the opportunity for old shipmates from near and far to rekindle past friendships. This was an outstanding social success.

The George Blondell Memorial Yulefest Dinner in July was a great success, but reduced numbers of FAAA members was evident.

The FAA 44th Anniversary Dinner has been reported as successful. It is the first one I've mis-

sed since inception, but family commitments took me over the border into ACT. However, perusal of the records shows that numbers were well down on previous occasions. Seventy were catered for, including four official guests. A debit of \$300 would appear to indicate that eight tickets reserved by members have not been paid for. If you're a guilty party, please contact the Treasurer ASAP.

Perhaps our activities require more sustained advance publicity, plus a more aggressive marketing. Here's a preview of coming events.

The next function is a pre-Xmas BBQ to be held at the RANAS Senior Sailors Mess on Saturday, 05 December. Mark the date in your FAAA Pocket Diary.

We start 1993 with a Picnic Race Day on Saturday 13 February. Mark that one down too.

If you don't have a FAAA Diary, order one now! Get one for yourself and one for your friends. If you need 1993 refills for your current 1992 diary, use the same order form enclosed in this issue.

This being the last issue of Slipstream for 1992, I take this opportunity to wish all readers the Compliments of the Season.

**** Jim Lee - Vice Pres. NSW**

FAA celebrates birthday



* Pictured at the the Fleet Air Arm 44th Anniversary Dinner held at the Wardroom, HMAS Albatross, (from left) Joe Dunner, Bob Cronin and 'Chips' Gray. * Photo courtesy Shoalhaven & Nowra News

AIR DAY TO MARK NAVAL AVIATION MUSEUM OPENING

The completed first stages of the Australian naval Aviation Museum at Nowra, on the NSW South Coast, will be opened to the public at a special Air Day on 1 November, 1992.

The main hangar of the museum, together with the entry display area and function centre, will be officially opened by the Governor of New South Wales, His Excellency Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair, AO RAN.

The \$3.5 million first stages, financed by a public fundraising campaign, represent the halfway mark in a project to house one of Australia's outstanding aviation collections.

On display on November 1 will be the museum's collection of historic Naval aircraft and mementos dating back to the early days of Australian naval aviation.

The opening will be marked by an Air Display, featuring both historic and modern warplanes.

Aircraft taking part will include Skyhawk jet fighters, Seahawk helicopters and other current military aircraft. Historic aircraft expected to attend include Russian-built MIG-15 fighters, an S2G Tracker, a Harvard, a Dakota and many others.

As well as watching the flying display, visitors will be able to have a close-up view of the aircraft and talk to the aircrews and maintainers.

Gates will open at 9:00am. The official opening of the museum is expected to take place at 12:00 noon and the formal flying program will start at 12:30pm and conclude by 3:00pm. Activities during the morning are expected to include model aircraft flying, Naval Police dog and firefighting displays, as well as band recitals.

Entrance to the Museum day will be by an admission charge of \$5.00 per adult and \$2.00 per school age child or pensioner. Food and refreshments will be on sale. Proceeds of the day will go towards further development of the museum.

Further information can be obtained from Mr. Derek Whyte at the Naval Aviation Museum, telephone (044)211920 or by Fax (044)211999. * Photo Top Right-Museum Stage 1.* Lower Museum Stage 2. (Photos courtesy RAN)



