



# Slipstream

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## Heroic Rescue For Downed Aircrew in Korea



Sub-Lieutenant MacMillan and Observer 1 (CPO) Hancox (with the Owen sub-machine gun) dash for the rescue helicopter after being shot down in their Firefly over North Korea  
(Painting by David Marshall hanging in the Fleet Air Arm Museum)

### Rescue as reported by SBLT MacMillan

At 1500 on Friday 26 October 1951, 26 Flight, consisting of five Fireflies, was catapulted off HMAS Sydney to attack a railway tunnel, north-east of Chaeryong. On approaching the target the flight split into two sections; 26 Leader and 2 were going to attack from the north.

The first section went in, made their attack and pulled away. At this time my section leader and I commenced a steep diving turn to port, preparatory

to running in on the target. We were to carry out a low-level run, endeavouring to place our bombs, fused for a 25-second delay, into the mouth of the tunnel. On the run-in I was positioned about 300 yards (275 m) astern, and just below my section leader, who was strafing the tunnel entrance as an

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anti—flak precaution. It was just prior to releasing my bombs that I saw what I thought to be ammunition links from my leader's aircraft passing over my canopy.

This was later ascertained to have been tracer from a flak position situated near the entrance to the tunnel. At no time during this period had I felt any hits on my aircraft.

After releasing my bombs I pulled away and at the same time my observer, Observer 1 Hancox, informed me that we had been hit. The port nacelle tank was streaming fuel, while the starboard wing had two six-inch (15-cm) holes in it, one through the gun-bay, and the other through the roundel. I immediately informed my section leader of the damage and asked him to come and check my aircraft for any further signs of hits. As I did this, I smelt burning in the cockpit and, on checking the engine instruments, found the oil pressure to be reading zero.

### Enemy Concentrations

At this time my altitude was 1000 feet (300 m), so I immediately switched off the engine and fuel and told my leader that I was carrying out a forced landing, there being quite a few flat paddy—fields in the area. I had to abandon the field I had first chosen due to high tension lines across my approach path. I chose another and we jettisoned our canopies. I failed to jettison my nacelle tanks. The approach and landing were quite satisfactory, the aircraft coming to rest at the intersection of two large ditches in the western corner of the field. The time of landing was 1555. The nacelle tanks remained on the aircraft and the radio was still working. However, not knowing what enemy concentrations were in the area, my observer and I cleared the aircraft at once. (It was later pointed out at FEAF HQ that enemy troops had been ordered to shoot at the cockpits of forced-down aircraft for the very purpose of preventing the survivors from using the radio.)

We moved about 50 yards (45 m) along the ditch running east—west. I carried my parachute while



**Firefly 204 flown by Sub-Lieutenant MacMillian with Observer 1 Hancox**

Observer 1 Hancox brought the Owen submachine gun and his navigation bag and maps. On settling into the ditch we placed out our yellow fluorescent panels to signal to the remainder of the flight, now acting as RESCAP, that we were both uninjured.

Having done this, we took stock of what we had and where we were. Between us we had: one .38 revolver and 50 rounds; one .45 automatic and 40 rounds; one Owen SMG and two magazines, each of 28 rounds; two 'X' packs; three emergency rations (tins); special rations (tins); one pair of binoculars; and 50 cigarettes. We were both warmly clothed and wearing heavy boots.

As for our position: approximately 200 yards (185 m) to the north-west was a small group of houses. Two of the inhabitants, wearing white robes, were peering at the aircraft through a picket fence. Assuming them to be civilians we did not worry about them. To the west was a knoll about 200 feet (60 m) high, about a mile (1.6 km) distant,

### *From the Editor's Desk*

Unfortunately there were some 'teething' issues with the change of hard-copy format in the June edition. However, these problems have been resolved with this issue and should not arise again in the future.

*(Note: Main Stories from the June 2019 issue will be republished in one or two articles per issue over the next 12-18 months—subject to space; particularly for those who don't have an internet connection.)*



**Activity on HMAS Sydney's Flight Deck off Korea  
Preparing Sea Furies and Fireflies for the task ahead**

from which concentrated automatic fire was engaging the RESCAP all the time we were down.

About five minutes after landing, one of the aircraft from 26 Flight fired a green very cartridge, letting us know that help was on the way. This cheered us up no end. By this time the Fireflies had been joined by four Sea Furies and a flight of Meteors from 77 Squadron.

We then noticed several men situated on the knoll to the west, looking in the direction of the aircraft. Through the binoculars we identified them as enemy troops. However, they disappeared over the other side of the hill and we did not see them again.

### **Rescue Helicopter**

Forty-five minutes after landing, the Air Group Commander flew low over our position and dropped a message in a container, which landed about 25 feet (8 m) from the edge of the ditch. The Air Group Commander's aircraft was hit during this run and subsequently returned to a friendly airfield. The message was a very welcome one, stating that the ETA of the rescue helicopter was 1730.

From that time, until about 1720, Hancox and I kept a lookout for signs of enemy activity and awaited the arrival of the helicopter. At 1720 we heard two bursts of machine gun fire nearby. Looking over the edge of the ditch we saw a Chinese soldier about 100 yards (90 m) away, who immediately starting waving his arms and shouting, no doubt calling us to surrender. At that moment Observer Hancox saw the helicopter (Sikorsky HO3S-1 Click

[here](#)) coming, so I opened fire on the soldier with the Owen gun. He very smartly dived into the ditch that ran at right angles to ours. I then placed a red panel alongside the yellow, pointing to the enemy. (This is the Air Group's signal meaning that we were being fired on from the direction indicated).

At once, two Furies dived and strafed the area.

By this time the helicopter was on its way down, while the air crewman in it was firing his submachine gun at the enemy troops. The helicopter landed some 20 feet (6 m) from our position alongside the ditch. I fired several rounds at the enemy

position as Hancox climbed aboard, and I then followed him—at the rush. As we were taking off one of the enemy stood up to fire at the helicopter, whereupon he was shot by Air Crewman Gooding.

The trip to Kimpo was uneventful, except that the last 30 minutes were flown in darkness. I should like, here, to praise the helicopter crew for their devotion to duty in travelling 120 miles (193 km) to affect the rescue, knowing full well that they could not return to a friendly base before nightfall.

A link to the history of the Fleet Air Arm in the Korean War can be found [here](#). (online only)

*Footnote: Observer I's were subsequently commissioned and transferred to, primarily, Air Traffic Control. One is known to have transferred to be a 'Phot' Officer. In those days the RAN wouldn't allow those commissioned as SD officers to continue flying. I worked with three in ATC; 'Hank' Hancox, 'Taff' Morris and Len Kenderdine. 'Taff' reached LCDR and was SATCO for a period whilst 'Hank' and Len both rose to the rank of LEUT. 'Taff' Hughes ended up a LEUT as the 'Photographic Officer'.*

*It was while sitting around on a quiet day in ATC in the mid 70's just chatting when Len reading a letter suddenly said: "That B@\$^&d". He was referring to the USN CPO Pilot, a friend, who flew the rescue helicopter on that mission. You see he'd loaned the guy his Owen Sub-Machine Gun, but the 'yank' said he'd lost it in action only to be told 20 years later that he'd kept it as a souvenir .....Ed!*

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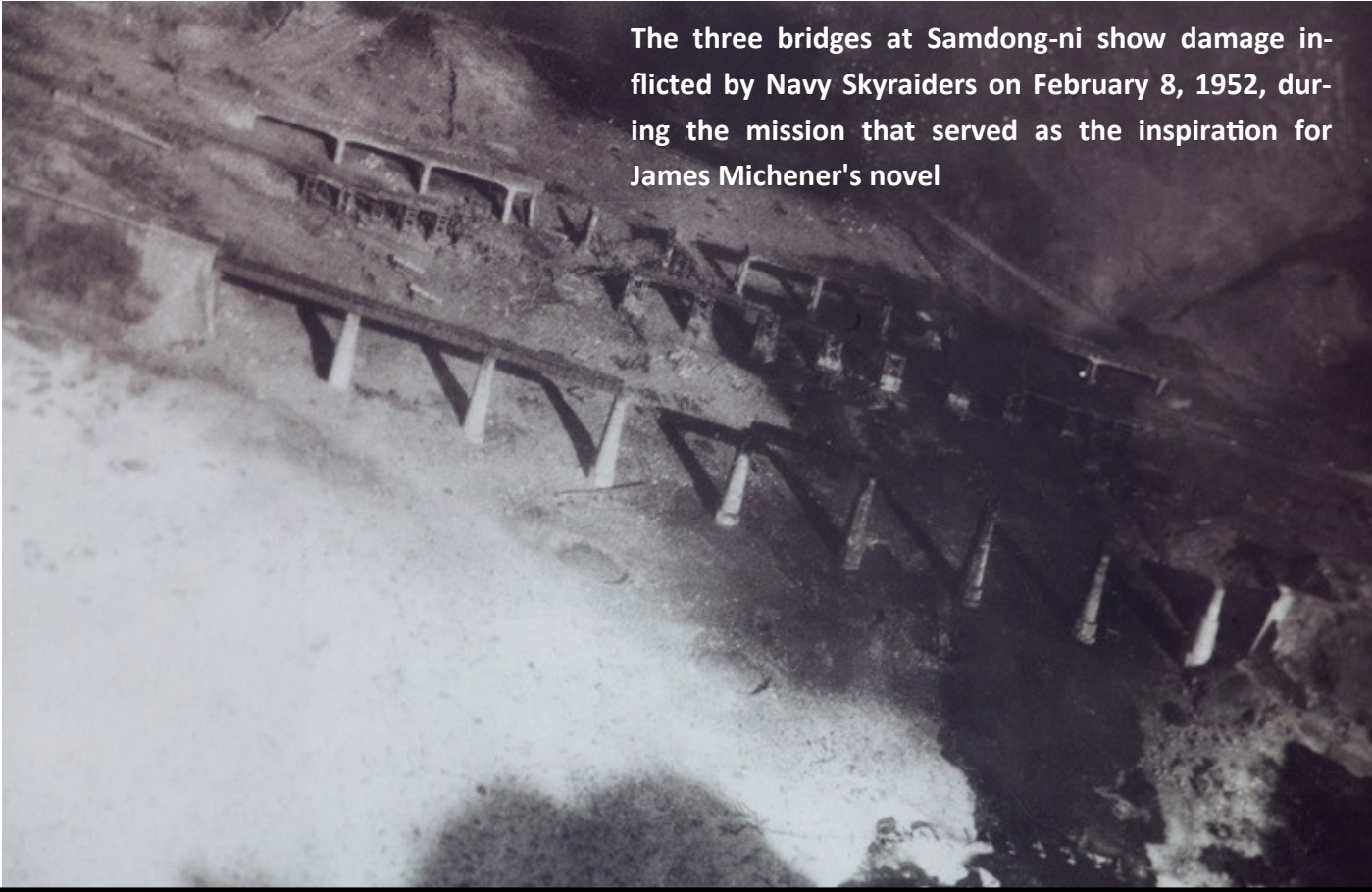
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The three bridges at Samdong-ni show damage inflicted by Navy Skyraiders on February 8, 1952, during the mission that served as the inspiration for James Michener's novel

## The Real Story of 'The Bridges at Toko-Ri'

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By Don Hollway

(For Don Hollway's website click [here](#))

James Michener's bestseller and movie adaptation were based on one very bad day in North Korea.

In January 1952 a correspondent for Reader's Digest and the Saturday Evening Post joined the Task Force 77 commander, Rear Admiral John "Black Jack" Perry USN on his flagship, the aircraft carrier *USS Valley Forge*. James A. Michener was researching what would become the classic story and arguably greatest film about the Korean War: *"The Bridges at Toko-Ri"*.

"In those days of research for Toko-Ri I would participate in catapult takeoffs and cable-grabbing landings many times," wrote Michener, a World War II naval officer. The "Happy Valley" was then on its third of four tours of Korea, and earning a

darker nickname: "Death Valley." Since early December 1951 its air group had lost eight aviators, starting with 25-year-old Harry Ettinger. On his first night-interdiction mission, Ettinger's Douglas AD-4NL Skyraider was hit by anti-aircraft fire south of Wonsan. He and his crew of two bailed out. Almost two months later on February 7, Army intelligence revealed that Ettinger had been spirited from captivity by anti-Communist North Korean partisans. They were packing him out on a stretcher toward Wonsan Harbor and in need of helicopter pickup.

The rescue fell to Chief Petty Officer (Aviation Pilot) Duane Thorin on the heavy cruiser *USS Rochester*. One of the Navy's first chopper jocks, Thorin had made more than 130 pickups from hostile territory with his little Sikorsky HO3S-1. He was sceptical of this mission though, particularly when an Army intel operative insisted not only on coming along, but also loaded down his "Horse" (helicopter) with medicine and a radio for the partisans. "Weight is very critical in this machine, especially in this kind of operation," Thorin warned. "...We could carry very little no more than 150 pounds including his transceiver. And it was stressed that it must all be out of the helicopter before we brought the man (Ettinger) aboard."

At 6 a.m. on the 8th three F4U Corsairs and three Skyraiders took off from *Valley Forge* on a ResCAP: i.e. rescue combat air patrol. The frozen hillside pickup site appeared to be clear of enemy troops, but its terraced, stair-stepped rice paddies were too narrow for Thorin's Sikorsky to set down. He planned to hover while the supplies were offloaded and the passenger put aboard, but when the "Horse" came down, the "stretcher-bound" Ettinger darted out from cover. Thorin shouted at the Army agent: "Dump that stuff out! Right now!"

Too late. Ettinger hurled himself aboard. Burdened with all three men plus the extra gear, the chopper grounded, one wheel off the terrace. It tipped, rolled and struck its rotor blades on the frozen ground.

Out at sea *Valley Forge* prepared to launch the morning's scheduled mission. At Samdong-ni, near the villages of Poko-ri and Toko-san (names Michener would later combine for his fictional Toko-ri), three bridges crossed the bottom of a deep, winding river valley. Lieutenant Commander Robert "Iron Pants" Schreiber of attack squadron VF-194 would lead the strike against them, but not in flashy new jet fighters. "The big prop-driven AD Skyraiders were the Navy's only aircraft able to destroy the bridges," conceded Grumman F9F Panther pilot Lieutenant Kenneth C. Kramer, noting they were capable of carrying "the big 2,000-lb. blockbuster bombs."

Recon photos had revealed the valley of Samdong-ni was studded with Russian-made 37mm radar-controlled quad cannons. Panthers would speed ahead to take out the guns, and two Corsairs would try to keep any stray Korean heads down, but the bridges were up to the Skyraiders. "We had no illusions as to what we were in for," remembered Schreiber's wingman, Lt. j.g. Richard Kaufman. Lieutenant Bob Komoroff, who had been best man at Kaufman's wedding, would lead the second section, with Ensign Marv Broomhead as last man through. "I was very uncomfortable," recalled Kaufman, 'knowing that the rescue helicopter from the Rochester was not available'.

### **Strafe them with Cannons**

At the helo wreck near Wonsan, the Americans had barely extricated themselves when North Korean troops emerged from cover and closed in. The ResCAP came down to strafe them with cannons. "The explosive rounds sounded like popping corn," recalled Thorin of huddling against a bank as shrapnel "...sizzled through the trees above us, close enough that I felt the breeze."

The enemy gave back just as hot. Five of the six ResCAP planes took hits. Lieutenant John McKenna's F4U-5N lit up. He radioed that he was making for open water, but the flames spread to his cockpit. The Corsair struck the ocean, McKenna going MIA. Lieutenant Mel Schluter's Skyraider was hit,



**Lieutenant Commander Robert Schreiber (left) led VF-194 against the bridges. Ensign Marv Broomhead, downed during the attack, waves from a helicopter after his repatriation at war's end**



**A Skyraider takes off from USS *Valley Forge* in March 1951 while a Sikorsky HO3S-1 rescue chopper acts as plane guard**

though he managed to reach air base K-50, just over the border at Sokcho-ri. The others circled the crash site as long as they could, but finally, out of ammo and low on fuel, they had to make for K-18, Kangnung.

Meanwhile Schreiber's half-dozen prop planes arrived over Samdong-ni. "We spread out in a loose tailgate racetrack pattern 12,000 feet above the bridges," Kaufman recalled, "so as to attack out of the sun. We were to drop the three centreline and inboard 1,000-pound bombs on the first run, saving the 250-pounders carried on the wings if necessary." Seeing little evidence of flak suppression, they guessed their jet escort had hurried on to the Thorin crash site. "The Panthers put the gun crews on alert," Kaufman realized, "so when we arrived a half hour later, they were waiting for us."

As Schreiber's dark blue AD rolled into its bomb run, Kaufman saw the snowy white valley erupt: "All hell broke loose. In my 30 missions over North Korea thus far, it was the heaviest flak I had ever seen." And it was his turn to head into it.

"I was diving about a thousand feet behind Schreiber," he remembered. "I descended into the valley in a 60-degree dive, dive brakes extended to stabilize at 280 knots at the release point." For 15 seconds each Skyraider ran a deadly gantlet, the likes of which movie audiences would only remotely experience. "We went in so low that the guns on the hilltops were shooting down at us," Kaufman recalled. "I really didn't have time to concern myself with the flak tracers and bursts all around me. Accelerating to 360 knots at full power, 1,000 feet

and 4 g's on the pull-out was our plan to get through."

Miraculously, it worked. The Skyraiders all came out of the valley of death untouched.

Looking back from 6,000 feet, though they saw that only two of the bridges were down. They would have to tempt fate again.

At Wonsan, Thorin remembered, "There were covering aircraft overhead throughout the day." A flight of Corsairs from [\*USS Philippine Sea\*](#) was keeping watch when an HO3A-1 from a landing ship off the coast came to the rescue. "The 'flop-flop' sound of a helicop-

ter roused all of us," said Thorin, recognizing the aircraft and even the faces of its crew, but hearing "...some firing at the helicopter by the troops above the cutbank, and the distinctive 'splat' of one round striking it." The chopper made two approaches, but was driven off to an emergency landing on the cruiser [\*USS St. Paul\*](#).

Huddling beside Thorin, Ettinger said, "I'm sorry I got you guys into this mess." Thorin blamed Army intel.

At Samdong-ni, Kaufman followed Schreiber down on their second bomb run with 20mm cannons blazing, trying to suppress some of the groundfire. He pickled his wing bombs and banked away, Komoroff right behind him. With four aircraft dropping dozens of 250-pounders on one bridge, the smoke and dust was so thick they couldn't immediately discern the damage, but saw the odds had caught up to them. Broomhead's AD was fleeing eastward down the valley, streaming smoke.

### **A Snow Covered Mountain Top**

"I am hit," Broomhead radioed. He had been grazed in the head by shrapnel or a small-caliber round. His Skyraider didn't have the power to climb. "I'm losing rpms."

"Bail out," Schreiber told him.

"I'm already too low," Broomhead said. "I have to find some place to set down."

"We followed him about nine, ten miles," recalled Kaufman. Broomhead spotted a snow-covered mountaintop clearing and brought the stricken Skyraider in. "The crash was sudden in a flurry of snow as he hit and skidded to a stop in

about 300 feet. The engine broke off but there was no fire. All was quiet.” Broomhead had fractured his back and broken both ankles. He finally dragged himself from the cockpit. “As I buzzed over him on a go-around circle, I saw him lying by the wing in the snow,” Kaufman said. “He rolled over and waved to me.”

The two Corsairs were already low on fuel. While Kaufman and Komoroff orbited down low against the inevitable arrival of enemy troops, Schreiber went high to call a rescue chopper. With two already down, the nearest was 100 miles up the coast, off the light cruiser [USS Manchester](#). Marine Corps pilot Lieutenant Edward Moore

and 1st Lt. Kenneth Henry were artillery spotting for shore bombardment, Henry having volunteered just for a taste of combat. They hurried south.

The multiple shootdowns were sucking in aircraft like a Pacific typhoon. Aboard *Valley Forge*, Michener was listening to the radio chatter. “Word of the situation flashed through the fleet,” he would write. “...Pilots insisted on going in to get their men.”

### Hang Fired

Lieutenant Ray Edinger, executive officer of VF-653, took the assignment on his day off. “They gave me three Corsairs and one AD...to go out and relieve the ResCAP” at the Thorin site. Partway there, they were alerted to Broomhead’s crash. Edinger diverted the Skyraider and a Corsair to it while he and his wingman relieved the *Philippine Sea* flight over Thorin. They spent two hours strafing with cannons and 5-inch HVAR (high-velocity air-launched rockets). One of Edinger’s hang fired and his wingman took a hit. Just as a second flight of “*Phil Sea*” Corsairs arrived, Edinger heard a thump and was told he was streaming oil. “I looked out at the left wing, and sure enough, it’s all running out,” he recalled.

When Moore’s HO3S-1 wafted up to Broomhead’s mountaintop crash site, now surrounded by North Koreans, it ran into a barrage of groundfire. The Horse collapsed onto the snow and rolled on its side. Both crewmen got out—Henry hobbling with



**USS Valley Forge in Korean Waters at the time of Korean War**

a sprained knee—and managed to reach Broomhead, who was now unconscious. The Americans circling overhead saw them drag him away from his wrecked Skyraider.

Things were getting worse at Thorin’s crash site, too. “Some time after noon a Marine helicopter came looking for us, moving upslope over the open area about 200 yards outside of our hideaway,” he said. “An HO4S, it had capability of taking all three of us.” [The Sikorsky Chickasaw](#) had a crew of two and could carry 10, but by now the downed Americans realized they were just bait in a trap. Thorin knew that “If we were to break out into the open area where this helicopter could pick us up, both it and ourselves would be a well-centred target for all of the troops in the vicinity. All things considered, it seemed best to let the Marine helicopter pass on by.” He and Ettinger stood up so every aviator and enemy soldier in sight could see them raise their hands.

Meanwhile Edinger, fleeing seaward at full throttle, realized his Corsair’s engine should be dead. His leak wasn’t oil, but hydraulic fluid. It meant putting down on *Valley Forge* with no flaps, no locked-down landing gear, maybe not so much as a tail hook, not to mention the hung rocket still on his wing. But having made it out over the water—and against the advice of the carrier crew, who all but ordered him to ditch or divert to K-18—Edinger was determined to come aboard, no matter what.



“They wouldn’t let me land until...they put the (crash barrier) fences up and were going to put a line of donkeys (tow vehicles) there.”

His first approach—no flaps, straight in—was too fast, and Edinger got a wave-off. He wound the F4U back around the circuit and hung it in the air at near-stall speed, hose-nose so high he had to slide open the canopy and stick his head out to see the LSO give him the ‘cut’ signal to chop the throttle. The Corsair smashed down on its bent wings. On impact the live HVAR tore loose, skittling across the deck until two anonymous, heroic deckhands tackled it and pitched it overboard. Edinger’s F4U was dragged below on its belly.

### Pilot’s of Admiral Peery’s Task Force

A bad day was coming to a bad end. “A stolid fury settled upon the U.S. fliers,” wrote Michener, “and with it an agonizing despair.” As darkness descended, the Siberian wind gusted toward 60 knots over North Korea. An Army chopper couldn’t quite reach Broomhead, Moore and Henry. “It had space for only two men, and Broomhead was unconscious,” Michener learned. “To try to carry him the 200 yards under enemy fire would be fatal. Moore and Henry might make it in a quick dash, but they would not leave Broomhead. They waved the helicopter away.”

Night fell. At first light aircraft hurried back to the crash sites, to find only the remains of the wrecks and blood on the snow. “We gave all those guys up for dead,” Kaufman said.

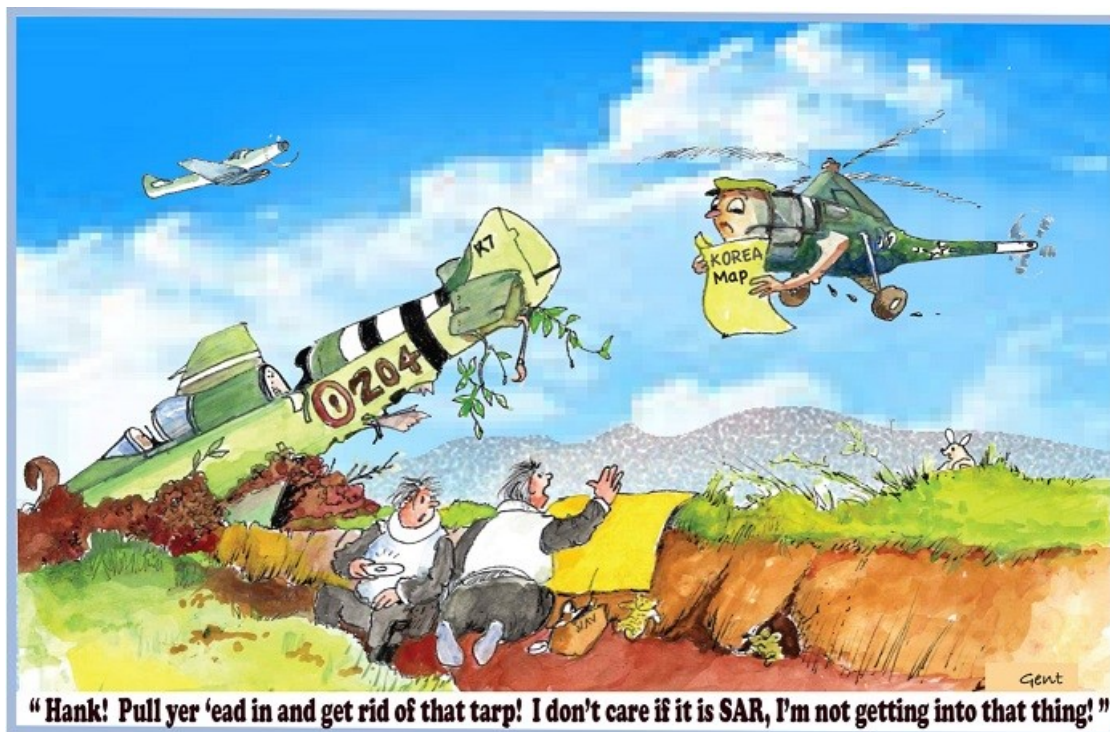
“Here was complete failure,” Michener declared in the July 1952 Readers Digest. “...Helicopter[s],

planes and men were lost in the futile tragedy. The enemy had a field day and we had nothing. Nothing, that is, except another curious demonstration that sometimes defeat does actually mean more to democracy than victory.” When the chips were down, Michener assured Saturday Evening Post readers, “These pilots of Admiral Perry’s task force are as heroic as any men who have ever fought for the United States.”

And the defeat, it turned out, wasn’t total. Photo-recon planes revealed all three bridges at Samdong-ni had been taken down. Ettinger, Thorin, Broomhead, Moore and Henry, even Ettinger’s Skyraider crew and Thorin’s Army intel passenger, all survived and were among those repatriated in a prisoner exchange at war’s end.

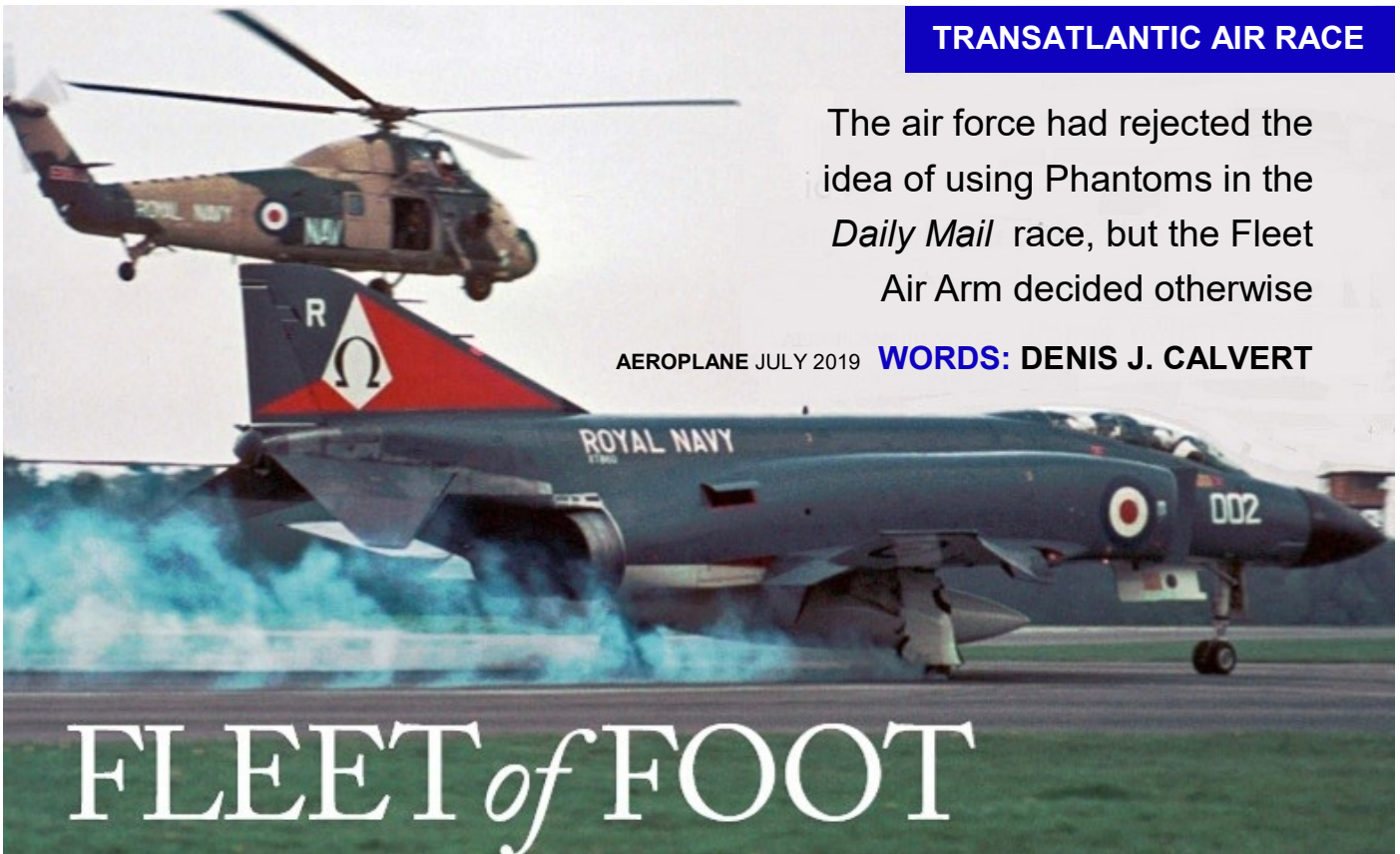
“I cherish those experiences as among the most exciting I’ve ever had,” Michener would recall. “When the time came to write the novel...I strove to capture each violent action and its significance.” He would become famous for massive historical epics. His story of Korea, published in its entirety in one issue of Life magazine was one of his shortest, though Michener always called it his “best single piece of writing.” For many, *The Bridges at Toko-Ri* remains their only experience of the Forgotten War.

Frequent contributor Don Hollway thanks Richard Kaufman for his photos, video and recollections of his friend James Michener and flying the “Toko-ri” mission, as well as Christina Thorin for sharing photos and memories of her father. For further reading, Hollway recommends: *Such Men as These*, by David Sears; and, of course, Michener’s *The Bridges at Toko-Ri*, both the film and novel.



The air force had rejected the idea of using Phantoms in the *Daily Mail* race, but the Fleet Air Arm decided otherwise

AEROPLANE JULY 2019 **WORDS: DENIS J. CALVERT**



# FLEET of FOOT

With enthusiastic braking, LCDR Doug Borrowman brings Phantom FG1 XT860/002 to the most rapid stop possible on the Wsley runway on 4 May 1969. The following Royal Navy Wessex HU5 is ready to whisk observer LEUT Paul Waterhouse off to the base of the Post Office Tower.

*Reproduced with Permission of Aeroplane Magazine (Click [here](#)) and the author Denis J. Calvert.*

*(This year was the 50th Anniversary of the Transatlantic Air Race. Well what may you ask, has this to do with the RAN? Participating in the race was LEUT Al Hickling who later transferred to the RAN becoming SP, then CO of 724 Skyhawk Squadron.)*

When the Daily Mail announced, on 26 April 1968, its intention to stage a Trans—Atlantic Air Race almost exactly one year later, the first Phantom FG1 for the Royal Navy had not yet been delivered to the UK. That event would occur just three days later, on 29 April, when three aircraft touched down at RNAS Yeovilton. Initial Phantom deliveries were to OP Naval Air Squadron, the Intensive Flying Trials Unit, whose brief it was to fly the new machine for several hundred hours and to build experience on the type. With its task completed, it would disband

and its air and groundcrews would form the nucleus of 892 NAS, which was to be the RN's only front-line Phantom squadron.

It was in summer 1968 that the Phantom community at Yeovilton first put forward a proposal for a race entry. Making five in-flight refuellings from RAF Victor tankers and flying six supersonic legs over the Atlantic should, it was calculated, make for an unbeatable flight time — provided a rumoured entry from the US Air Force using a B-58 Hustler did not materialise. Such planning was initially low-key, but in January 1969 Flag Officer Naval Air Command (FONAC) gave his backing, authorising detailed planning and an assessment of the logistical support required. A team was put together under the captain-designate of the refitted HMS *Ark Royal*, Ray Lygo, with engineers, planners and, yes, a PR man.

Three race crews were selected. All six pilots and observers were, at the time, on OP but were slated to join 892 when it formed on 31 March 1969. Team 1 comprised LCDR Peter Goddard

**“The decision was made early on to fly west to east to take advantage of the prevailing winds”**

(observer and race entrant) with LCDR Brian Davies (pilot and CO of 892), team 2 LEUT Paul Waterhouse (observer and race entrant) with LCDR Doug Borrowman (892's senior pilot), and team 3 LEUT Hugh Drake (observer and race entrant) with LEUT Al Hickling (pilot).

Race planning involved making supersonic flights out into the Atlantic to get accurate figures for fuel consumption under different conditions, as well as practising join up procedures with a Victor tanker, although on the initial sorties another Phantom was employed to represent the tanker. Meanwhile, other team members were assessing fixed- and rotary-wing landing sites on both sides of the Atlantic and the speediest methods of transport for the 'city' ends of the journey.

The decision was made early on to fly from west to east to take advantage of the prevailing winds. Detailed examination suggested that a more practical solution would be to use only three in-flight refuellings and one long subsonic leg, this to ease the support load. Victor tankers of No 55 Squadron at Marham were assigned the role of providing Air-to-Air Refuelling support for the Phantoms.

The team had some useful American connections. The CO, Brian Davies, had flown on the F-4K test programme with McDonnell at St Louis,

while the other team members had been on exchange postings with VF-121 at NAS Miramar, California. Paul Waterhouse recalls, "With all the crews who had been on exchange, we were firm friends with the US Navy.

They arranged for us to go into the Naval Air Station in New York, Floyd Bennett Field, literally in Queens". From the lift at the bottom of the Empire State Building, the entrant —or 'runner'— would ride pillion on a BSA motorcycle to the West 30th Street heliport in Manhattan, then climb aboard a helicopter to NAS New York and, after the shortest of sprints, into the rear cockpit of the Phantom for an immediate take-off. It is said that air traffic control had to stop all movements at Kennedy Airport to clear the skies for a Phantom take-off from Floyd Bennett. Who says the Americans are not sporting?

At the UK end, use of BAC's test airfield at Wisley was agreed, while a building site suitable for helicopter landings was identified very close to the Post Office Tower. Good naval negotiating skills and the possibility of publicity for the construction company sealed consent for its use. RNAS Lee-on-Solent provided a Wessex HUS helicopter and the services of LEUT John Dines, a Royal Navy pilot with experience of flying into jungle clearings and



FAA Phantom crew members involved: from left to right, LCDR Peter Goddard, LEUT Paul Waterhouse, LCDR Doug Borrowman, LCDR Brian Davies, LEUT Al Hickling and LEUT Hugh Drake.

thus well-qualified to operate from Wisley into this most central (but short-lived) of city centre heliports.

The flight profile finally adopted for all three race attempts was to take off and climb to 33,000ft, then to cruise to Nantucket Island at 650kt. The Phantom would accelerate to 1,100mph, climb to 45,000 ft and continue supersonic, finally slowing down to join the Victor for a first in-flight refuelling south of Nova Scotia. A second supersonic leg would then be made, before again slowing to meet the tanker off Newfoundland.

The next leg would follow a great circle route and be flown at high subsonic speed, ending with a third and final refuelling. From there, the Phantom would once more go supersonic, passing south of Ireland before decelerating west of Lundy and flying over land for the run-in to Wisley.

Final preparations and trial runs were made in the UK involving both the planned flight profiles and the city connections, before three 'race' Phantoms — XT859/001, XT860/002 and XT861/003 —were flown from Yeovilton to Floyd Bennett Field. From New York, it was decided that the teams would fly in the order 2, 3 and finally 1. From early May a close eye was kept on the meteorological forecasts, looking for a day with suitable winds, good visibility and acceptable cloud-base at the main and diversion airfields. Given an appropriate forecast, team 2 of Waterhouse and Borrowman in



**Ready to jump out before Wessex HUS XT770 has even landed, Paul Waterhouse prepares to make his final dash to the Past Office Tower, just a few hundred yards from the temporary helipad**

XT860 elected to go on 4 May, the first day of the race. It was recognised that this flight would be part of a learning curve and the crew's experiences would be fed back to refine the process for the following two entrants. That said, things went well apart from their encountering higher-than-expected temperatures at altitude, which impacted fuel consumption.

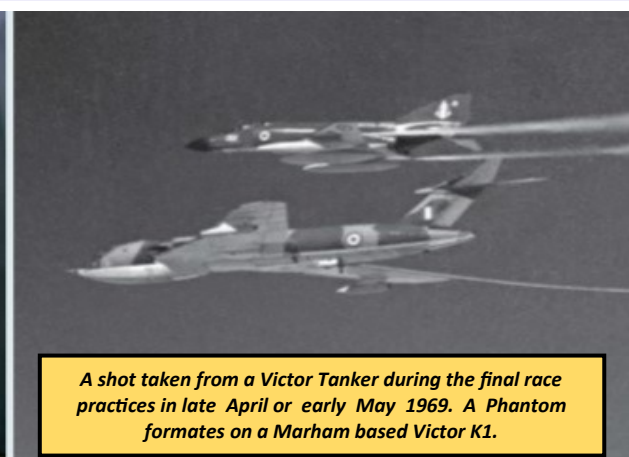
Paul Waterhouse says, "We navigated by dead-reckoning. We had TACAN, but there aren't many TACAN beacons in the middle of the Atlantic. There was one weather ship off the coast of America, which was useful, and we also had the air-to-air TACAN facility between aircraft, but that was mileage only. It only told you range; it couldn't tell you azimuth. We did two refuellings off the coast of America and one off the southern coast of Ireland, controlled by HMS *Nubian*, an air defence frigate. We landed at Wisley, where we burst both the tyres. Then I was whisked off in a Royal Navy Wessex helicopter to a building site that just happened to be right next to the Post Office Tower".

His time was a very creditable five hours 30 minutes 24 seconds. Both crew members then returned to New York the following day by BOAC, to relate their experiences to the teams that would follow. Team 3 of Drake and Hickling flew on 7





*The Wording applied to Phantom XT859, pictured at RAF Biggin Hill's Battle of Britain 'At Home' Day in September 1969, said it all*



*A shot taken from a Victor Tanker during the final race practices in late April or early May 1969. A Phantom formates on a Marham based Victor K1.*

May in XT861. This passed off well, apart from some radio problems and one late refuelling from the Victor. With more assistance from tailwinds, Drake achieved a time of five hours 19 minutes 16 seconds, an improvement of 11 minutes on team 2. Team 1 of Goddard and Davies flew in XT859 on the final day of the race, Sunday 11 May. Refinement of the 'New York end' travel arrangements won them a couple of minutes, the refuelling went much as planned and tailwinds were in their favour. As a result, Goddard's time was the race—winning one of five hours 11 minutes 22 seconds. Even the junior service was generous: in a memo to the First Sea Lord, the Chief of the Air Staff said, "Many congratulations on setting a new record for getting

away from America. I always knew the Royal Navy loved England — but the speed of the Phantoms' return reflects fine airmanship and training."

The Royal Navy's success brought great kudos to the service for its organisation and professionalism, and put the new Phantoms and their aircrew on the front pages of newspapers across the world in a way that is hard to imagine happening today. Nothing, surely, could better have underlined the message 'Fly Navy'.

*(Click [here](#) for Newsreel Coverage of the Air Race. Click [here](#) for Phantom & Buccaneer Squadrons joining HMS Ark Royal for the ship's last cruise—online versions only.)*



## RACE REUNION

To mark the 50th anniversary and the opening of its new trans-Atlantic flight exhibition 'First to the Fastest', containing Vickers Vimy replica NX71MY and Harrier GR1 XV741, Brooklands Museum held a reunion on 8 May, which brought together a good number of participants from 1969. Among them were RAF Harrier pilots Tom Lecky-Thompson and Graham Williams, four of the Royal Navy's Phantom aircrew who took part, and Anne Alcock, niece of Sir John, who was herself a competitor as well as a licensed (by the Postmaster General) mail carrier. Only the rain spoiled the party.



*The four surviving aircrew members of the 892 NAS race team of 1969 together at the Brooklands reunion on 8 May: from left to right, Paul Waterhouse, Peter Goddard, Al Hickling and Hugh Drake.*

# All The News from Victoria



***Captain Michael Oborn CSM RAN (CO HMAS Cerberus),  
Chaplain Grant Ludlow RAN, Members and Families  
outside St. Marks Chapel at HMAS Cerberus for the  
Annual Memorial Service***

members travel quite a distance to join us with Col MacKenzie from Tasmania, Greg and Sandra MacKenzie from Heyfield to name a couple. We were delighted to see Alan ( Happy ) Clark join us and thank his daughter and son-in-law Lyn and Stephen Hemsley for arranging this. The Head Chaplain, Grant Ludlow conducted our service and his efforts in assisting me were appreciated. Thanks also to Rob Gagnon and George Self who participated along with the Commanding Officer of HMAS *Cerberus*, Captain Mike Oborn who laid the wreath in the memorial gardens. The weather was kind to us and the rain held

**G**reetings from the Victoria Division. Since our last report we have held our June meeting which was reasonably well attended considering the weather at this time of the year in Melbourne. Our meeting / function venue The Mission to Seafarers is at the start of a major renovation but I am assured that we will be accommodated at our next meeting in early December.

I note in the latest edition of FLYBY that some eighty nine members nationally have not re-joined the association this year. Unfortunately we are not immune from this and we have ten members in this group. We have had some new members join recently which is great but it is a never ending battle to maintain or increase the numbers.

Our major event of the year was held on the 24/25th August. Our Annual Dinner was held at the Hasting Club on Saturday 24th with numbers being slightly down on previous years but an enjoyable night was had by those attending. Our Treasurer Paul Thitchener was kind enough to extract a few dollars from his kitty and purchase a drink for those in attendance. This was supplemented by our Vice President Scott Myers. This gesture guarantees they will be re-elected next year.

The Annual Memorial Service was held in St Marks Chapel at HMAS *Cerberus* on Sunday 25th. This was our best attendance for some years with quite a few members having family join us. Some

off until our service was completed.

*Yours Aye  
Mal Smith*



***Captain Oborn with Seaman Grace  
Tiesse-Smith (Mal Smith's granddaughter)  
prior to the wreath laying***

# George Plant Remembered

**On Tuesday 16 April 2019, a Memorial Service was held at the Wall of Service adjacent to the Fleet Air Arm Museum at HMAS *Albatross* for former member of Shoalhaven Sub-Section of the RSL, Warrant Officer A.V.M. George Plant RAN.**

George had died eight years prior. His niece Marion and husband Michael returned to Nowra to present George's medals to the Fleet Air Arm Museum.

The service was conducted by Fred Dawson, President of RSL Shoalhaven Sub Section with participation from Chaplain Steve Estherby RAN from HMAS *Albatross*.

Twenty two members of the sub section witness the presentation of George's medals to Museum manager Stuart Harwood, and curator Ailsa Chittick.

Following the service, all enjoyed a BBQ lunch in the White Ensign Club adjacent to the museum.



**Michael O'Connor, Marion O'Connor, Fred Dawson, Ailsa Chittick, and Stuart Harwood adjacent to the 'Wall of Service' Fleet Air Arm Museum, Nowra NSW**

## Enjoy Reading this Magazine???

Then why not join the Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia, if not already a member?

If you have service in the FAA of Australia, a Commonwealth Country (RN, RCN, RNZN etc) or any Allied Country (USN etc) you are eligible to join.

Anyone who has an interest in Naval Aviation may also join as an Associate member.

Reunions, Luncheons, Meetings are held at regular intervals throughout the year. It's open to both ex and serving members of the FAA.

Application Form on the Fleet Air Arm Association is located on the website [here](#) or contact your State Secretary listed on Page 4 of this publication.

## DVA Changes To Allied Health Treatment Cycles

**The Government has decided that the treatment cycle changes to allied health referrals will now be introduced on 1 October 2019.**

The Government has recognised that DVA clients, allied health providers and general practitioners (GPs) need more support to ensure they understand and are able to manage the requirements of the treatment cycle.

The new 1 October start date will enable DVA to work closely with key stakeholders to address issues that have been identified in recent feedback. DVA will provide detailed information on the treatment cycle arrangements before they start.

**Referral arrangements for Totally and Permanently Incapacitated (TPI) clients:**

During the recent Federal election, the Government announced that the treatment cycle does not apply to physiotherapy or exercise physiology services for DVA clients who have a Totally and Permanently Incapacitated (TPI) Gold Card.

As a result of this commitment, current referral arrangements will continue to apply for TPI clients for exercise physiology or physiotherapy services where these services are clinically necessary. The treatment cycle will apply for TPI's for referrals to other allied health services.

DVA Health and Well Being page on Improved Dental and Allied Health Services for clients can be found [here](#) (online only).

## Flying the Tiger Moth

Basil Nash  
and the Tiger Moth

*By Basil Nash*

The De Haviland Tiger Moth was an incredible aeroplane. Introduced in 1932, there were about 28,000 built worldwide. The last one built was in the mid 1940's. They operated in UK, Canada, South Africa, Australia and Rhodesia

A two-seater biplane it was mostly wood and fabric covered. The engine was the De Haviland Gipsy Moth. It was a training aircraft, strongly built and with the minimum of extras. My introduction to one was in August 1945, when as stores officer in 1837 Corsair Squadron at Eglinton Northern Ireland I was sent to Worthy Down near Winchester on a stores course.

There was a Tiger Moth, and as a qualified pilot I asked CMDR (Air) if I could fly it and would he show me the "Nobs". He looked at me a bit quizzically and said: "There aren't any." and went on to explain, there was a throttle control, a mixture control, and an elevator trim tab.

The fuel tank was in the top wing and worked by gravity,

The flaps in the top wings worked automatically to slow the stall. There were no conventional flaps in the lower wings. There were no brakes and there was a tail skid at the back.

It was easy to fly if you concentrated but, apt to wander with a stalling speed of 45 knots. It was well-built and strong so took a fair amount of punishment. Cruising speed was about 80 knots and you could do

100 knots if you dived it vertically from a good height.

To get the engine started it was swung manually by ground crew as there was no self-starter. Because of the lack of power, it was a very difficult plane to aerobate well. If you stayed inverted too long the engine stopped. This was OK if you had some height, say 3000 feet, when you could dive it vertically down and hope the engine started. If not, you looked for a field somewhere underneath!!

My next meeting with Tiger Moth was at Marshalls at Cambridge in November 1945 where there was an RAF Training Squadron. In August 1945 all wartime Fleet Air Arm Squadrons had been disbanded and we were all sent on indefinite leave and being paid.

### Monitors All Over

Being bored I wrote to the Admiralty and asked for a job, so two of us were sent to the Psychological Labs in Cambridge to do tropical Heat experiments. This involved sleeping in the Labs at specific temperatures each night with monitors all over you to measure all movements during the night. Cambridge in November was an extremely cold place so some contrast!!

This of course left us free during the day. So again, I wrote to Admiralty and said as we were qualified pilots, could we fly with the RAF at Cambridge?

Much to our surprise they said "Yes". Off we went and grudgingly they let us in. Although we had about 200 hours in, they made us do three hours dual



before they would let us loose on our own!. By the beginning of December, when we had finished, we had done about 12 hours each.

After the end of WW 2 in 1945, LCDR Sproule went to Germany and “freed” a number of German gliders. The Kranish, a two seater and the Grunau Baby a single seater were brought to Lee on Solent where the Navy made trailers to move them around the country. Thus was born “Sproules Circus”. This was taken round all the Air stations to give aircrew the opportunity to glide.

In August 1947, I was with 790 Squadron at RNAS Dale in South Wales flying Mosquitos, Fireflies and Seafires training RN Navigators to become Fighter Direction Officers, i.e. to control aircraft by Radar from ships.

All that was needed was a Tiger Moth with the necessary towing gear. These were held at Lee on Solent, so I got dropped off at Lee in a Mosquito and collected a Tiger Moth. It was about 180 miles from Lee to Dale. Navigation was easy. Steer NNW until you hit the Bristol Channel and then follow the railway from Cardiff to Haverfordwest, 10 miles on to St Anne’s Head and home. I stopped at RAF St Athan to refuel. Total flying time 2hours 20minutes with maximum cruising speed 80 knots. We had perfect weather for the weekend and a lot of gliding was done. Very few up currents and over the whole weekend only one person soared.

The Kranish was used to take up non-flying personnel.

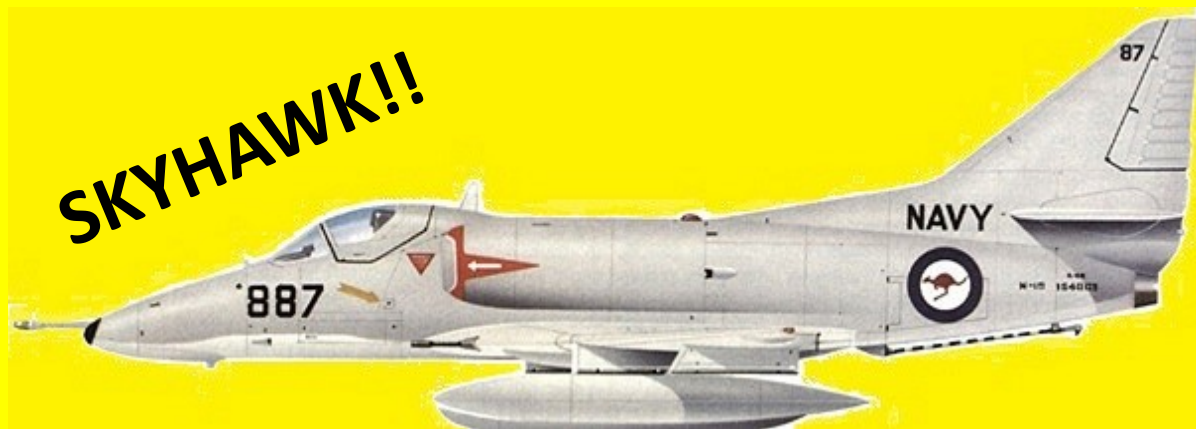
Not until April 1949 did I fly the Tiger Moth again when as a Maintenance Test Pilot at Stretton, near Warrington we had about a dozen through. Total flying time five hours. I did in fact have the engine stop on one trip but, I had taken the precautions to go up wind of the airfield so I had sufficient height to glide home.

### Gliding at NAS Nowra

In the early 1950’s Nick Goodhart a LEUT [E] pilot was on transfer to the RAN and started a Gliding club at NAS Nowra. What they used for towing I don’t know but probably a Tiger Moth. He was an instructor at Yeovilton with me on the MTP course [700 Squadron] in 1948.

Last but not least in 2015, I had 45 mins in a modern Tiger Moth at Camden, Sydney, for my 90th birthday. I was quite pleased at the end the Instructor said: “You haven’t forgotten”. Today they cheat as you have hydraulic brakes, steerable tail wheel, and metal covered fuselage!

*(Basil was a pilot in the RN during WWII and later, retiring in the rank of Lieutenant (A) RN. The edited version appeared first in the Naval Officers Club Newsletter No.113 dated 12 June 2018. Permission to publish the full version in ‘Slipstream’ was provided by the author—Basil Nash)*



The McDonnell-Douglas A4G Skyhawk only served with the RAN for 17 years, but it represented a quantum leap forward from the Sea Venoms that preceded it, and proved to be one of the best loved and most successful aircraft of our time.



In the latest addition to our website’s ‘Heritage’ articles, we examine the life and times of this extraordinary aircraft through the eyes of those who flew and maintained them.

Featuring dozens of photographs, pages of stories and facts and ‘pop-ups’ filled with interesting material, this feature is the biggest and best we have done.

To read about it, go to our website and click on the “Skyhawk” banner – or click on this link [here](#) to be taken to the interactive page map.





## Letters to the Editor



### Sea Venom Pilot's Response

I read with more than a little interest the article by Max Speedy (p.40 Vol 30 No 2 June 2019) that addressed in part the accident to Sea Venom WZ-900 (866) in HMAS *Melbourne* on 28 April 1966, in which I participated. Max postulates that my Observer, Ted Kennell, did not have enough time to operate either of his ejection seat handles after he had pulled the canopy release handle, before the Sea Venom hit the water (and therefore he did not leave the aircraft).

That version of the event does not match the final Navy Office report (that was based on my A25 report and statement to the Board of Inquiry). My report at the time was that I had heard Ted's seat "fire" just after the cockpit canopy was released, but before I felt the aircraft hit the water, when I had ejected. Of course all of this happened in a few seconds but my recollection was, and is, clear. Ted was a big man and Navy Office concluded, after independent scientific calculations, that the combination of the rate of descent of the aircraft and the weight of the Observer, did not allow the ejection seat to provide enough vertical velocity for him to completely clear the aircraft. This is partly supported by the sighting by the SAR chopper crew of Ted, apparently unconscious in the water but relatively clear of the aircraft, before he and the aircraft sank from view.

On the other hand, since the rate of descent had ceased in my case, I got the full Martin Baker benefit, even though the aircraft speed was most probably below the recommended airspeed for its safe operation (90 knots). Indeed, photographic record of the event showed that my parachute had not completely developed before I entered the water (quite violently, I recall).

The other aspect of Max's article relates to my injuries. There is no evidence that I was struck by the top front of the cockpit canopy as I ejected. Indeed I did not suffer from any scraping injuries to my legs. I did, however suffer a broken talus bone in my ankle, which led to some conjecture by the Navy's medical world as to how this could have been caused, given the very short but thick nature of that bone, and the nature of the fracture. It seemed improbable that the bone broke by striking any part of the cockpit or on entry into the water.

Some time later, I had cause to see a Common-

wealth Medical Officer for an assessment (for 'compo') of any residual injury. It turned out that the CMO was an ex-RAF WWII Medical Officer who, on reading my x-rays proclaimed that I had suffered a "classic rudder-bar fracture", of which he had seen many cases following wheels-up landings by Tempest and Typhoon fighter aircraft during WWII. He opined that the Sea Venom's rudder bar must have been violently pushed back when the aircraft struck the water. I certainly had not had the time to think about removing my feet from the rudder pedals; in any case that's why we wore "gaiters" that automatically pulled our legs back to the seat on ejection.

So there you go, Max. It is not my intention to criticise your story, but merely to put the story straight in the light of my personal knowledge.

*John DaCosta*

### We've Found Him!!

One of my church friends (Ted Davies) who subscribes to your magazine grabbed me this morning and said "I have a magazine for you and you were mentioned in the Wanted column"...! Well, you could have knocked me over with a feather. Fond memories of my exchange posting to the Australian Fleet Air Arm 1966-1968 were suddenly resurrected! I was given the job of Senior Observer on 817 (CO LCDR Alun Evans who sadly has passed away) and what a great crowd they all were. My memory is not so good these days and I have difficulty recalling names; Zork Rohrsheim was Senior P, Jim Buchanan, Bob Ray, John Leak, Jim Firth, Dave Anderson (exchange pilot, whose



**Ron then an  
RN Observer**



## Letters to the Editor



**Ron-still smiling!**

Vietnam and Pat Vickers who suffered the same fate shortly afterwards. The squadron was bereft of pilots except for Jim Buchanan and some joker suggested that the Observers who were left should push a Wessex around the perimeter track each morning to show evidence that the squadron was still functional!

Much, much earlier when I was on the Instructional staff of the Helicopter Training Squadron based at HMS *Osprey*, Portland Dorset, I was flying with two Australian Pilots on a Sonar Sortie (I was training one of our own SBLT trainees on the sonar system) when we ditched in the Portland Races on our way to the exercise training area. We all got out thankfully; unfortunately the names of the two pilots eludes me. The helicopter was a Westland Whirlwind in the days when we were losing a few through engine problems. They were eventually modded and returned to service and the ditchings ceased (not entirely).

I returned to the UK in 1968 and was immediately bundled, kicking and screaming, onto *Bulwark* as Ops 2 plus four other jobs which made life a bit miserable for me to the extent that I vowed to resign my commission on expiry of my 12 year term; this decision I have deeply regretted to this day. I emigrated to Oz in 1970 and now live in Mandurah WA fully retired and (yes!) still doing what I love doing most of all; drawing, painting and cartooning. I have enclosed a file of some of my JPEGs to give you some idea of my work. Health issues have slowed me down somewhat but I am still able to retain my sense of humour which is all that matters

wedding I attended at *Albatross*) and others whose names will gradually dawn on me after I have posted to you this letter. It was Bob Ray who informed me of the passing on of Alun Evans. However I couldn't forget Tony Casadio, ( a true gentleman) the first Australian pilot to be killed in

to me now! I am still active (sort of) in the local Drama Theatre but sadly 'grandpa roles' are few and far between. Golf and Sailing has also gone by the board.

If any of my old shipmates during that posting can remember me I will always be pleased to hear from them.

My email is: [gents@westnet.com.au](mailto:gents@westnet.com.au).....

Ph No. 08 9535 2743



*Ron Gent*

### **RN Pilot Remembers**

I was glad to see Slipstream again after some 60 years. I was a Pom who did 2 years loan service at Nowra 1956 to 58, and in fact have a couple of editions of Slipstream from those days. I spent time in 851 Squadron flying Fireflies (CO LCDR Martin Scott) and 805 Squadron flying Sea Furies (CO LCDRs Gill Campbell and Brian Stock).

The article on the Sea Furies shooting down the run-away Auster should add the sequel that one of the RN pilots who shot it down was given an award by his ground crew of the "Auster-Alien Medal", a gaudy tin cross and chocolate-box ribbon!

Good to see news from one of my favourite Air Stations and I look forward to seeing more!

*Dave Eagles.*



## Enjoyable Memories Brought Back

Thanks very much for the enjoyable read in the new 'Skyhawk Heritage' section of our website. It brought back many enjoyable memories – and some not so enjoyable as per the story below.

In July 1970, I had just finished a Skyhawk course (Peter Welsh, Ben Link, and others) on the Friday and joined VC 724 Sqn on the Monday as a young Artificer 3rd Class, (a Tiffy 3, a LS equivalent). I had a head full of knowledge but as yet no real practical skills – a typical MOBI but not brash or full of myself. As I entered the J Hangar after lunch I was summonsed by a Tiffy 2 (PO) who was in need of help to get an engine out of a Skyhawk. He was by himself and I knew from last weeks course that we needed to have at least 4 others (approx 6 all up) to perform the task successfully. To my "We need more people" was met by his "It's all right, I have done this before" I went to my position that of the person who would the engine out using the extraction frame onto the transport dolly. I was to use the speed brace attached to a chain that pulled the engine out. "What do you want me to do" asked I to his "Just wind it out and tell me if it gets hard to wind". What could go wrong with that?

So, I start to wind and almost immediately "Its hard to wind" says I. With that he darts between both fuselage side ports, to the underside of the engine to the hell hole at the back under the engine. "It's Ok" he says "Keep winding as it must be misaligned a bit". I wind half a turn and tell him "It's still tight". He again does the inspection of all access points and finds nothing wrong and tells me "Keep winding" which I do. "Its still tight" repeats I to his "Keep winding" and as I do there is an almighty bang and winding becoming extremely easy.

Next day (perhaps day 2 on the SQN, the memory is a little dim here) as I'm standing in front of a row of CMDRs, LCDRs, LEUTs and none of them wearing a happy face, I tell my story of what happened. It seems that while the hydraulic line could withstand 3000 psi of internal pressure it couldn't withstand the mechanical advantage I had over it. Also there were some electrical wires that resisted my mechanical advantage for a while then there was the slight matter of the Constant Speed

Drive (CSD) that was bolted to the front of the engine. The CSD was cunningly hidden behind a close fitting door that had managed to fall down from its propped open position and close itself during the engine extraction process. The CSD door locking mechanism managed to get itself embedded in the oil tank of the CSD until my mechanical advantage overcame it tearing a hole in the CSD. All these things appeared to happen all at once with the bang that was heard throughout the hangar.

The offending Tiffy 2 was taken off the squadron and I'm not sure what happened to him but he may have been retrained as an X-Ray machine technician in his post RAN career.

*David Prest*

*(The new Skyhawk Heritage site [here](#) . . . . . Ed)*

## Sea Fury in Gun Sponson

In reference to the letter on Page 15 of the June 'Slipstream' by Rear-Admiral Robertson. It did happen on 18 July 1951 that a certain SBLT did not 'straighten' his Sea Fury with the deck markings and proceeded at an angle; caught an arrestor wire and dropped over the port side onto a Bofors gun.

He vacated the cockpit up onto the wing 'faster than a rat up a drainpipe' and was grabbed by some Aircraft Handlers and dropped on the deck. After some expletives, a voice was heard to say: "Please, Sir, don't corrupt the Handlers" as if one could!

That was not the end, I left the RAN in 1956 and joined Trans Australia Airlines (TAA) to pursue my deep interest in flying.

After 34 years with the airline I retired. I then joined a group from the local RSL who helped War Widows—doing odd jobs.

I mowed an 'Irene's' lawn and during a 'cuppa' she told me her new neighbour was ex-RAN. Next time I mowed her lawn, I met this chap and he was telling me that a stupid 'pilot' nearly chopped him to pieces by landing on a Bofors gun that he was servicing while in HMAS Sydney!

On the next visit, I brought a photograph of the Sea Fury wrapped around the Bofors gun. I informed him that I was the guilty 'pilot'. He responded by saying: "Well, you did us a good turn because we got a new gun!

*Noel Knappstein (ex-808 Squadron)*

# Oh, for the Navy Life!!

**M**issing Navy life? Here's how to recapture the atmosphere of the old days and simulate living onboard a ship once more.

- **Build a shelf** in the top of your wardrobe and sleep on it inside a smelly sleeping bag. Remove the wardrobe door and replace it with a curtain that's too small.
- **Wash your underwear** every night in a bucket, then hang it over the water pipes to dry.
- **Four hours after you go to bed** have your wife/husband/girlfriend/boyfriend whip open the curtains, shine a torch in your eyes and say: "Sorry mate, wrong pit."
- **Renovate your bathroom.** Build a wall across the centre of the bath and move the shower head down to chest level. Store beer barrels in the shower enclosure.
- **When you have a shower** remember to turn the water off while you soap.
- **Every time there is a thunderstorm** sit in a wobbly rocking chair and rock as hard as you can until you're sick.
- **Put oil instead of water** into a humidifier then set it to 'HIGH'.
- **Don't watch TV**, except for movies in the middle of the night. For added realism have your family vote for which movie they want to see – then select a different one.
- **Leave a lawnmower running** in your living room 24 hours a day to re-create the ship's proper noise levels. (Mandatory for engineering types).
- **Have the paperboy** give you a haircut.



- **Once a week blow compressed air** up through your chimney; ensure that the wind carries the soot over onto your neighbour's house. When he complains laugh at him.
- **Devise your family menus** a week in advance without looking in the fridge or pantry.
- **Set your alarm clock** to go off at random times through the night. When it goes off, leap out of bed, get dressed as fast as you can then run into the garden and break out the garden hose.
- **Once a month** take every major household appliance completely apart, then re-assemble.
- **Invite about 85 people** you don't really like to come and stay for a couple of months.
- **Install a small fluorescent light** under your coffee table, then lie under the table to read books.
- **When baking cakes** prop up one side of the cake tin while it is baking. When it has cooked spread icing really thickly on one side to level it out again.
- **Every so often throw your cat** in the bath and shout "man overboard", then run into the kitchen and sweep all the dishes and pans onto the floor while yelling at your wife for not having secured for sea properly.
- **Put on the headphones** from your stereo, do not plug them in. Go and stand in front of your dishwasher. Say, to nobody in particular "Dishwasher manned and ready sir". Stand there for three or four hours. Say, once again to nobody in particular, "Dishwasher secured sir". Remove the headphones, roll up the headphone cord and put them away.

*Forget the doom and gloom, seize the opportunity!*

# Air Operations Aboard HMAS Canberra

Right, Air Traffic Controller Flight Lieutenant Paul Atteridge coordinating flying operations in Flyco onboard HMAS Canberra during Exercise Talisman Sabre June—August 2019



Left, a Royal Australian Navy clearance diver fast ropes from the MRH-90 maritime support helicopter to the flight deck of HMAS Canberra



Below, Leading Seaman Aviation Support Daniel May marshalls Army ARH Tiger helicopters on board HMAS Canberra



Left, on completion of a sortie Royal Australian Navy MRH-90 Maritime Support Helicopter pilot Lieutenant Tim Wright on the flight deck of HMAS Canberra

# News From Down South in SA

**W**ell, here we go again with another winter issue of Slipstream delivered to your door or shipped via some form of magic directly to your electronic device.

Now to wish everyone “Hello” from your mates and colleagues here in South Australia. I may just add that a few lucky members have had the opportunity to travel overseas in the hope of escaping the brutal and chilly weather here in South Australia. For our Queensland colleagues, “chilly an adjective meaning, cold, tending to cause shivering, cool in manner or feeling, discouraging.”

Those who travelled overseas from the top of my pointed head were John and Anna Siebert, also Fred and Dianne Driver. All over the USA and without an appropriate handgun. Some of us travelled to the West to see family on a farm in Boyup Brook. “Wear the fox hat.” Others travelled locally or stayed indoors with the heating going ballistic.

Hoping Mal Parrington, Vic Byas, Brian Dutch and Henry Young are all doing OK as we sometimes get reports to the contrary. I look back through our Membership Listing and think of how delightful the colourful membership we have seen here over these past 34 years. You are included Barry Dooley Lord.

## **Saddened by Deaths**

At our last Meeting held at The Windsor Hotel, 17/7/19 the members were saddened to hear of the passing of Mike Heneghan and John Sendy 13/7/19. Although John was Adelaide born and attended several meetings and functions back in those early years, later John lived too far away (Edinburgh) to attend or take part in our meetings and functions. John along with Fred Driver recently received a Bravery Citation Award when attached to the Helicopter Flight Vietnam. (RANHFV)

A reminder that the S2E/G Tracker reunion will be held at HARS Albion Park over 23/24th October. If you wish to view any of those FAA aircraft you worked on or flew, then get along to HARS and be the first to scratch your name down the side of the aircraft. The SA Division will plan an expedition down to Port Adelaide to wander through the Aviation Museum which has stored a Sea Venom and a Wessex chopper, I believe. The walk through will

be followed by a light lunch at a local hotel. Entrance fee for Ancient Mariners will be \$8.00.

Still talking museums, this Division will plan a tour through the Military museum at the historic Keswick Barracks with a picnic lunch beforehand. Opening hours on Sundays are 12 noon till 4pm. The Museum began in 1992 when a need to collect and preserve our military history was recognised. I would be surprised if they had a section covering the Royal Australian Navy, but I will wait for the visit to confirm yes or no. Ramming a Wessex chopper into a dark corner of their museum would be an impossibility, ‘cos it ain’t that big. After this visit, our members would be over museums and their dusty smells. Cost of entry to the museum, \$3.00.

## **Delegate for Federal Council AGM**

Wishing SA President Michael Stubbington (Stubbo) a cheery “Get better” as he battles a few war wounds received throughout his busy life. Here I suggest a naval Aussie Rules football representative from the 60’s, who would play hard and I am sure some of you would remember him bearing down on you with a firm hand. (Skinhead Kelson, another) As for his overseas jaunts, I am too young to remember them.

Bob and Pat Scobie made it along to our July meeting and considering his career was focused on General Service and all that navy stuff we sometimes hear about, he’s looking great. Thank God I was directed into the FAA aircraft engineering branch. Those General Service sailors consider themselves the “Real Navy”. Who cares!

John Siebert will be our Delegate to the 26th October Federal Council AGM in Nowra, and a warning to others, dot the eyes and cross your knees, he is a sharp boy. Thankyou John.

Next SA Division’s General meeting is on September 18th at The Windsor Hotel, 1130 for lunch followed by a short meeting. Everyone is welcome to attend, although dogs and Stokers are always excluded.

*Regards to you all.*

*The Whipping Boy.*

*South Australia Division.*

# Feedback

on 'online' and new hard copy format

*(These are the responses received addressed to Paul Shiels (Editor Slipstream), Marcus Peake (Webmaster) and Paul Norris (National Data Manager) regarding the new 'on-line' and hard copy format)*

## Likes, Dislikes and Opportunities

Congratulations on the new format. Never nice having to roll out anything that includes "change" however I think you've done a great job. As requested, here is some constructive feedback:

### Likes

General format and user interface is good.

Hyperlinks to e-mail addresses are very handy and interact well with my MacBook

Hyperlinks to DVA forms and other websites-fantastic!!!

### Dislikes

The ads are really annoying and if you can upgrade the version of the program to avoid them, it will be a good thing.

### Opportunities

If photos can be selected in order to open in a separate window, this will make it easier to zoom in on photos. Very handy for the old "group" photos where we're trying to determine who's who. That said, scrolling in enlarges the whole page so I can essentially achieve this anyway.

Anyway, not a lot of feedback but better than nothing I guess.

*Anthony Wills*

*(The popup ads are annoying Anthony and the only way to remove them is to upgrade from the Basic Plan to the Premium Plan. This is a financial decision for the National Committee to whom I'll refer your suggestion to.....Ed)*

## Errors in Auster Article

Congratulations on the latest version of "Slipstream"; it is certainly a vastly improved version on the earlier ones, which were, at least to my mind, a bit too 'rubbishy'.

However, one complaint about the latest hard copy is that many of the articles were incomplete, thus disparaging the whole publication! At least the on-line version overcame that problem.

You may guess, from these comments therefore, that I would like to receive the on-line version from here on in.

One other thing... when authors submit articles, please ask them to thoroughly research them before sending them in. I get pretty p\*\*\*ed of whenever an article on the pilotless Auster appears anywhere as it is generally incorrect in parts. In this particular one, the remarks about the RAAF aircrafts' shortcomings are entirely incorrect. Should you wish to know the true version, I'd be only too happy to inform you as, being one of the "shooters' down" (even though I'm a 90-year old fart), I am aware of the facts, having talked about them on numerous occasions with the late AVM Jim Flemming, who piloted of one of the Meteors and who, each time we met, would greet me with, "You bastard McNay!".

By the way, being a NSW member, do I need to separately notify the Treasurer of my decision.

*Peter McNay*

*(Unfortunately Peter the research carried out was done through newspaper articles at the time. In retrospect I should have sort your advice. I will be re-running major stories from the June 2019 issue again to allow those without internet connection to view whole stories (1 or 2 articles at a time depending on space) over 12-18 months. Prior to running your story again, I'll check with you first to ensure errors are omitted or corrected. Yes, I'd notify the NSW Treasurer as well.....Ed)*

## Thanks!

Thanks Paul. I like the new format.

*Tony Horton*

## Happy with On-Line Version

Congratulations to all concerned on the new online Slipstream. Please put me down for online versions in future and take me off the hard copy mailing list.

*Les Anderson*



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# Feedback

on 'online' and new hard copy format

## Enjoy Reading Slipstream

I was very impressed with the first on line copy of Slipstream. Too much to read in one sitting! Many thanks for your effort. Although it is many years since I was part of the Fleet Air Arm I enjoy reading the articles and hearing about the current news as well as some of those I served with. Please continue with my on-line copy. The hard copy can be discontinued.

*Stafford Lowe*

## Lifeline Invaluable

Good morning Paul, thank you for the information. I am eternally grateful to you and others who give your time so generously to the members. As I live well away from social contact with former members, the lifeline you and others provide is invaluable. I just wish more of our former FAA members would sign up and strengthen our association.

*Jock Hetherington*

## Numerous Errors in June 2019 issue

Not sure if you have been advised that the Hard Copy of the current Slipstream has multiple errors throughout the issue, namely end of article being left off the page as per your electronic copy which is excellent.

I can guarantee you will have lots of feed-back on this issue. Pity.

Not sure if you get the Hard Copy to check but I am willing to drop past and show you mine, just give me a call on 0419 etc.

Pages in question are: 2, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 19, 21, 22, 27, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 42, 43, 45, 46 and 47.

*Roger Harrison. SA Vice President*

*(Unfortunately Roger, the format was incompatible with the Printer's. It has meant adopting completely different formats for both on-line and hard copy versions. The problems experienced in the June 2019 issue should not reoccur. I've explained under Peter McNay's letter my intentions for re-runs of major stories)*

## Prefer Hard Copy

Thank you for the update on the new electronic version/format for Slipstream. I have downloaded and viewed the PDF version of the June Edition on the web site and found the layout, links to further information on subject items, and presentation of the articles to be of good quality.

Also thanks to Paul Shiels for taking on the Editorship, and introducing the new electronic improvements for the Associations' mainstream magazine with ongoing articles of interest for the Association's membership.

At present I am happy to stay with the hard copy version, call me old school, but I will keep an open mind in the future.

*Jim Bush, WA Vice President*

## Link Wouldn't Open

Clicked on the link as suggested to read Slipstream and up pops ISSUU. Sorry the page you've requested is not here. Was it ever? We'll never know. Kind of if a tree falls in the forest kind of mystery, isn't it? Speaking of trees, thank you for making the world a greener, leafier place by reading on ISSUU?? Please explain!

*Brian Simpson*

*(Brian I'm not sure what could be happening here as the majority of others have been able to access this website. You always have the option of a pdf copy through the FAAAA website or receiving a hard copy)*

## Not Happy

I received my hard copy in the post today thank you.

However it now looks like a cheap copy of a magazine, and not what I would expect of the mainstay of publicity of our Assn.

*Joe Mumford*

*Continued Page 41*

# An Old Man and a Bucket of Prawns



*Old Ed came strolling along the beach to his favourite pier*

This is a wonderful story and it is true. It happened every Friday evening, almost without fail, when the sun resembled a giant orange and was starting to dip into the blue ocean.

Old Ed came strolling along the beach to his favourite pier. Clutched in his bony hand was a bucket of prawns. Ed walks out to the end of the pier, where it seems he almost has the world to himself. The glow of the sun is a golden bronze now.

Everybody's gone, except for a few joggers on the beach. Standing out on the end of the pier, Ed is alone with his thoughts . . . and his bucket of prawns. Before long, however, he is no longer alone. Up in the sky a thousand white dots come screeching and squawking, winging their way toward that lanky frame standing there on the end of the pier.

Before long, dozens of seagulls have enveloped him, their wings fluttering and flapping wildly. Ed stands there tossing prawns to the hungry birds. As he does, if you listen closely, you can hear him say with a smile, 'Thank you. Thank you.'

In a few short minutes the bucket is empty. But Ed doesn't leave. He stands there lost in thought, as though transported to another time and place.

When he finally turns around and begins to walk back toward the beach, a few of the birds hop along the pier with him until he gets to the stairs, and then they, too, fly away. And old Ed quietly makes his way down to the end of the beach and on home.

If you were sitting there on the pier with your fishing line in the water, Ed might seem like 'a funny old duck,' as my dad used to say. Or, to onlook-

ers, he's just another old codger, lost in his own weird world, feeding the seagulls with a bucket full of shrimp.

To the onlooker, rituals can look either very strange or very empty. They can seem altogether unimportant . . . maybe even a lot of nonsense. Old folks often do strange things, at least in the eyes of Boomers and Busters.

Most of them would probably write Old Ed off . . . That's too bad. They'd do well to know him better.

His full name: Eddie Rickenbacker. He was a famous hero in World War I, and then he was in WWII.

On one of his flying missions across the Pacific, he and his seven-member crew went down. Miraculously, all of the men survived, crawled out of their plane, and climbed into a life raft.

Captain Rickenbacker and his crew floated for days on the rough waters of the Pacific. They fought the sun. They fought sharks. Most of all, they fought hunger and thirst. By the eighth day their rations ran out. No food. No water. They were hundreds of miles from land and no one knew where they were or even if they were alive.

Every day across America millions wondered and prayed that Eddie Rickenbacker might somehow be found alive.

The men adrift needed a miracle. That afternoon they had a simple devotional service and prayed for a miracle. They tried to nap. Eddie leaned back and pulled his military cap over his nose. Time dragged



*The Seagull that saved their lives at sea*



**Captain Eddie Rickenbacker / cover of his life story**

on. All he could hear was the slap of the waves against the raft . . . suddenly Eddie felt something land on the top of his cap. It was a seagull!

Old Ed would later describe how he sat perfectly still, planning his next move. With a flash of his hand and a squawk from the gull, he managed to grab it and wring its neck. He tore the feathers off, and he and his starving crew made a meal of it -- a very slight meal for eight men. Then they used the intestines for bait. With it, they caught fish, which gave them food and more bait . . . and the cycle continued. With that simple survival technique, they were able to endure the rigors of the sea until they were found and rescued after 24 days at sea.

Eddie Rickenbacker lived many years beyond that ordeal, but he never forgot the sacrifice of that first life-saving seagull . . . And he never stopped saying, 'Thank you.' That's why almost every Friday night he would walk to the end of the pier with a bucket full of prawns and a heart full of gratitude.

*(Reference: (Max Lucado, "In The Eye of the Storm", Chapter 24, pp.221, 225-226)*

PS: Eddie Rickenbacker was the founder of Eastern Airlines. Before WWI he was race car driver. In WWI he was a pilot and became America's first ace. In WWII he was an instructor and military adviser, and he flew missions with the combat pilots.

## Death Notices

**GILL , Ryland Edwin, LEUT (P) RAN (Rtd)** on Wednesday 21 August 2019 late of Mackay Qld. He made the 20,000 landing on HMAS Melbourne 816 Sqn. in Gannet 894.

John Stewart  
Secretary Qld.

**HENEGHAN, Mike, RAN (Rtd).** Mike's wife Jane informed me that Michael crossed the Bar on Thursday 20th June 2019

Mike was a Life Member of this Association and gave many years of service to it not only as Secretary of the NSW Division but also as National Secretary. He will be sadly missed by his shipmates

Our condolences go out to his wife Jane and family

Dick Martin,  
National Secretary

**SENDY, John Patrick, NAAH R58926 RAN (Rtd)** - (commonly called 'Sludge' in my day. Apparently also known as Bat 7, possibly from days in Vietnam). John died on Saturday 13th July 2019. A remembrance service was held in the Edithburgh RSL, SA, on Saturday 20th July.

John was in the first draft of 46 mem to boost the Australian Force in the 1st Contingent RAN HFV.

Dick Martin  
National Secretary

**SIMPSON, Barry RAN (Rtd).** It is with sadness and regret that I must inform you all of the passing of Barry Simpson.

Barry was a member of the Tasmanian division and a Life Member of our Association.

Barry crossed the Bar last Friday and his funeral was held on Monday 5th August.

Our condolences go out to Barry's Wife Rhona and daughter Mandy-Jane'

Dick Martin  
National Secretary

**STRATHIE, Ian, CPO Air Electrical RAN (Rtd).** It is with sadness and regret that I must inform you all of the passing of NSW member Ian Strathie. Ian crossed the bar on Thursday 24th June after a long battle with illness.

Our condolences go out to his family and friends.

Dick Martin,  
National Secretary

# DVA - War Widow(er)'s Pension and Orphan's Pension

## What are war widow(er)'s pension and orphan's pension?

These are pensions that are paid under the Veterans Entitlement Act (VEA) to compensate widowed partners and dependent children of veterans who have died as a result of war service or eligible defence service. War widow(er)'s pension and orphan's pension are not affected by other income, except from other compensation payments.

For information on the current rates of war widow(er)'s pension and orphan's pension payable under the VEA, see DVA Factsheet DP43.

## Who can make a claim?

The following people can claim this pension:

- a widow or widower – a person who was legally married to, or was in a de facto relationship with, an Australian veteran immediately before the veteran's death and has not since remarried, married or entered into a de facto relationship with another person; or
- a dependent child – the natural or adopted child of a veteran, or a child who was wholly or substantially dependent on the veteran. The child must be under 16 years, or under 25 years and still undertaking full-time studies. Orphan's pension may not be payable if the child is aged 16 years or over and is in receipt of Commonwealth educational assistance through Youth Allowance; Assistance for Isolated Children Scheme; ABSTUDY; Post-Graduate Awards Scheme; or the Veteran's Children Education Scheme.

## When are they automatically paid?

A pension will be granted to a dependant automatically, without regard to whether the death was caused by war or eligible defence service, if the veteran was:

- an ex-prisoner of war, or
- receiving the Extreme Disablement Adjustment, or
- receiving a disability pension at the Special Rate (including a veteran who was in receipt

of a Special Rate disability pension for blindness in both eyes), or

- receiving a disability pension at the Intermediate Rate, or receiving a disability pension at the Temporary Special Rate, or
- receiving a disability pension at an increased rate for a condition specified in any of items 1 to 8 of subsection 27(1) of the VEA (these items relate to double amputees who may also be blind in one eye).

## When are they not automatically paid?

In all other cases a claim needs to be lodged with the Department before any pension is granted.

A pension will be paid to an eligible widowed partner or dependent child once the veteran's death is determined to have been caused by war or eligible defence service.

Individuals who lodge a claim for the war widow(er)'s pension within six months of the death of the veteran and are deemed eligible, have their pension backdated to the day after the date of death of the veteran. If the claim is lodged more than six months after the death of the veteran, the pension is backdated three months.

When a veteran passes away their Gold Card is not transferred to the surviving partner or any other dependant. Partners and other dependants who are eligible to receive the Gold Card are issued with one in their own right.

## How do I claim?

Unless the war widow(er)'s pension and/or orphan's pension is automatically payable, you need to complete DVA Form D2663 and return it to DVA.

DVA Forms can be obtained from your nearest DVA office or from the DVA website at [www.dva.gov.au/dvaforms](http://www.dva.gov.au/dvaforms)

When completing the form you must state the reason you think the veteran's death was related to service. You should provide as much information as you can about the doctors and hospitals that treated the veteran. You should also provide a copy of the veteran's death certificate if you have it.

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## What if I need help filling out the form?

Preparing a claim for war widow(er)'s pension or orphan's pension can be complex, so we strongly encourage you to seek assistance.

Ask your ex-service organisation, as most have pensions officers or advocates who can help you with the claim. Alternatively, you can contact DVA for assistance.

## How are claims for war widow(er)'s pension or orphan's pension decided?

When you lodge a claim for a war widow(er)'s pension or orphan's pension, the delegate of the Repatriation Commission will obtain evidence about your claim. The evidence includes documents of the veteran's service history, medical history and, in some cases, personal history.

The delegate of the Repatriation Commission will examine this evidence to see whether the circumstances of the veteran's case satisfy the relevant Statements of Principles. Where there is no Statement of Principles for the condition that caused the veteran's death, the delegate will determine your claim by reference to the best medical evidence available.

If the claim satisfies one or more of the factors in the Statements of Principles, and those factors can be related to the veteran's service, the delegate will determine that the veteran's death was war or defence-caused. For more information, please see DVA Factsheet DP22 [here](#).

## How long does it take to consider a claim?

Claim processing can take up to two months or longer depending on the complexity of the case, particularly where there is a requirement to obtain coroner's notes or hospital and/or nursing home records.

This processing time is required to:

- obtain copies of service documents if the veteran had not previously claimed a benefit;
- obtain information from the veteran's doctor about the conditions being treated prior to death; and
- ask you, or your representative, for information about the veteran's personal history, if it is relevant to the claim.

## How will I be told of the decision on my claim?

The delegate of the Repatriation Commission will write to you to tell you what the decision is on your claim. In the letter, the delegate will explain

how he or she reached the decision. The letter will also tell you what to do if you are not satisfied that the correct decision has been made on your claim.

## Are these pensions taxed?

War widow(er)'s pension and orphan's pension are not taxed. There is no need to declare them as income in your tax return.

## What happens to the pension if I remarry or enter into a de facto relationship?

If a person who is receiving a war widow(er)'s pension re-marries or enters a de facto relationship in the future, the pension will not be affected.

## What other benefits and services are available?

Recipients of war widow(er)'s pension and orphan's pension are issued with a DVA Health Card — All Conditions (Gold Card). This card entitles the holder to a range of health care for all conditions within Australia. For further information regarding the Gold Card, please see DVA Factsheet HSV60 [here](#).

War widows and war widowers may be entitled to income support supplement, an income and assets tested pension that provides additional regular income. For further information, please see DVA Factsheet IS03 [here](#).

War widows and war widowers may also be entitled to receive Energy Supplement. For further information, please see DVA Factsheet CEP01 [here](#).

War widows and war widowers may also be entitled to concessions on the costs of public and private transport services and public utilities. Contact the office of the service provider to enquire about entitlement to concessions.

Dependent children of veterans whose death has been accepted as war-caused may be entitled to a range of benefits, including financial assistance and counselling from the Veterans' Children Education Scheme. For further information, please see DVA Factsheet MRC47 [here](#).

A funeral benefit may be payable to assist with the cost of the funeral of a veteran whose death has been accepted as war-caused. For further information, please see DVA Factsheet BR04 [here](#).

A veteran whose death has been accepted as being war-caused is entitled to official commemoration. For further information, please see DVA Factsheet WG02 [here](#).

*(Reprint of [Factsheet DP60](#) - War Widow(er)'s Pension and Orphan's Pension)*

# RAN Fleet Air Arm—Roll of Honour

The criteria for inclusion on the RAN Fleet Air Arm Roll of Honour is:

- a. RAN and RANVR personnel who lost their lives as a result of naval aircraft operations; and
- b. other Service personnel who lost their lives as a result of naval aircraft operations.

Date	Aircraft	Location	Fatalities	Details
19/03/1930	Seagull	Off Tasmania	L(TAG) D.O.McGowan RAN	Aircraft crashed while gun spotting for ship
25/09/1940	Walrus	Dakar	LCDR (O) F.K.Fogarty RAN	Killed in Action off Dakar
25/09/1940	Walrus	Dakar	FLTLT G.J.I.Clarke RAAF	Killed in Action off Dakar
25/09/1940	Walrus	Dakar	PO(TAG) C.K.Bunnett RAN	Killed in Action off Dakar
6/04/1941	Seagull	Cook Strait, NZ	LEUT (A) J.J.Hoath RNVR	Aircraft crashed on being catapulted from ship
19/02/1942	Seagull	Off NSW Coast	FLOFF E.J.Rowan RAAF	Aircraft hit side of ship after landing
23/02/1942	Albacore	Mediterranean	LEUT (O) F.G. Gordon RAN	Missing in Action
29/11/1945	Seafire	Schofields NSW	SBLT (P) L.J. Norton RANVR	Killed in Aircraft Crash at Schofields
12/03/1946	Seafire	Off NSW Coast	SBLT (P) N.S. Faulks RANVR	Killed in Aircraft Crash (HMS <i>Implacable</i> )
17/11/1949	Wirraway	RAAF Point Cook	P/Pilot K.J.B.Sheridan RAN	Crashed while training
22/02/1950	Seafire	United Kingdom	LEUT (P) N.S.Ferris RAN	Crashed while training in England
23/06/1950	Seafire	United Kingdom	Pilot 4 G.K.Eldering RAN	Flew into the sea off Lossiemouth, UK
10/07/1950	Firefly	United Kingdom	LEUT (P) K.F.Wilson RAN	Crashed at St Merryn, UK
16/02/1951	Firefly	HMAS <i>Sydney</i>	LEUT (P) R.E.Smith RAN	Crashed into sea when landing on carrier
3/05/1951	Sea Fury	HMAS <i>Sydney</i>	LEUT (P) R.W. Barnett RAN	RATOG failure on take off. Crashed into sea.
25/06/1951	Dragonfly	United Kingdom	LEUT (P) M.B.A.Brown RAN	Crashed while training in England
25/09/1951	Firefly	United Kingdom	Pilot 4 D.J.Slater RAN	Crashed while training in Northern Ireland
25/09/1951	Firefly	United Kingdom	OBS 4 E.J.Edmonds RAN	Observer with Pilot Slater
18/10/1951	Wirraway	RAAF Point Cook	PNA N.F.Sweeney RAN	Crashed while training
1/11/1951	Sea Fury	United Kingdom	SBLT (P) R.W.Williams RAN	Crashed while training in England
5/11/1951	Sea Fury	HMAS <i>Sydney</i> - Korea	LEUT (P) K.E. Clarkson DFM RAN	Killed in Action in Korea

<b>Date</b>	<b>Aircraft</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Fatalities</b>	<b>Details</b>
7/12/1951	Sea Fury	HMAS <i>Sydney</i> - Korea	SBLT (P) R.R.Sinclair RAN	Killed in Action in Korea
2/01/1952	Sea Fury	HMAS <i>Sydney</i> - Korea	SBLT (P) R.J.Coleman RAN	Killed in Action in Korea
3/02/1952	Firefly	United Kingdom	LEUT (E)(P) F.A.Sturgess RAN	Crashed while training in England
19/02/1952	Firefly	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	SBLT (P) D.H. Saunders RAN	Crashed during night exercises in Nowra area
19/02/1952	Firefly	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	LEUT (O) B.H,F. Wall RAN	Observer with SBLT Saunders
22/02/1952	Firefly	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	SBLT (P) D.P.E. Small RAN	Crashed during night exercises in Nowra area
22/02/1952	Firefly	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	OBS 1 J. G. Sharpe RAN	Observer with SBLT Small
16/07/1952	Sea Fury	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	LCDR (P) D.R. Hare RAN	Crashed during night Flying Display Practice
26/02/1953	Firefly	United Kingdom	ASLT (P) B.D.A. Wren RAN	Crashed while training in Northern Ireland
17/05/1953	Sea Fury	Wagga Wagga	LCDR (P) R.A. Wild DFC RAN	Mid-Air Collision at Wagga
20/11/1953	Firefly	United Kingdom	ASLT (P) R. Roberts RAN	Crashed while training in England
9/12/1953	Firefly	United Kingdom	ASLT (P) N. Boden RAN	Crashed while training in England
29/12/1953	Sea Fury	HMAS <i>Sydney</i>	ASLT (P) M.J. Beardsall RAN	Crashed in sea after take-off from carrier
15/01/1954	Flight D. Accident	HMAS <i>Sydney</i>	ASLT (P) J.H. McClinton RAN	Struck by aircraft propellor on flight deck
21/07/1954	Tiger Moth	RAAF East Sale	LEUT (P) E.C. Gray RAN	Crashed while training East Sale
16/09/1954	Sea Fury	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	LEUT (P) R.G. Owen RN	Crashed in sea off Jervis Bay
9/06/1955	Wirraway	RAAF Point Cook	PNA K. Roberts RAN	Crashed while training
21/07/1955	Sea Fury	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	LEUT (P) R.J. Leeson RAN	Crashed onto Beecroft Range, Jervis Bay
19/10/1955	Sea Fury	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	ASLT (P) K.C.W. Henry RAN	Crashed into sea near Wreck Bay
10/11/1955	Gannet	United Kingdom	SBLT (P) J.P. Van Gelder RAN	Crashed into sea off coast of Isle of Wight
10/11/1955	Gannet	United Kingdom	LEUT (O) D.P. Padgett RAN	Observer with SBLT Van Gelder
10/11/1955	Gannet	United Kingdom	ACMN (T) N.J. Self RAN	Telegraphist with SBLT Van Gelder
5/01/1956	Sea Venom	United Kingdom	LEUT (P) P.H. Wyatt RAN	Crashed on take-off near Yeovilton
5/01/1956	Sea Venom	United Kingdom	CMDR (P) G.F.S. Brown DFC RAN	Passenger with LT Wyatt
11/04/1956	Sea Fury	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	ASLT (P) B.J. Howe RAN	Crashed during night flying at Nowra
6/08/1956	Vampire	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	LCDR (P) W.E. Dunlop RAN	Crashed at Nowra

<b>Date</b>	<b>Aircraft</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Fatalities</b>	<b>Details</b>
9/08/1956	Sea Venom	HMAS <i>Melbourne</i>	LEUT B.Y. Thompson RAN	Crashed after catapult launch from carrier
9/08/1956	Sea Venom	HMAS <i>Melbourne</i>	LEUT (O) K.C.M. Potts RAN	Observer with LEUT Thompson
8/10/1956	Vampire	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	CMDR (P) D. Buchanan RAN	Flew into sea during night flying at Nowra
27/11/1956	Firefly	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	ASLT (P) A. Arundel RN	Crashed after mid-air collision over Jervis Bay
27/11/1956	Firefly	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	MIDN N.F. Fogarty RAN	Observer with LT Arundel
19/03/1957	Firefly	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	SBLT (P) W.J. Brown RAN	Crashed during night flying at Nowra
19/03/1957	Firefly	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	MIDN I.T. Caird RAN	Observer with SBLT Brown
30/01/1959	Gannet	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	LEUT (E)(P) P.J. Arnold RAN	Crashed on flight Banks-town to Nowra
20/05/1959	Sea Venom	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	LEUT (P) S.R. Carmichael RAN	Flew into Sea off JB
20/05/1959	Sea Venom	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	ASLT (O) M.C. Williams RAN	Observer with LEUT Carmichael
28/12/1959	Gannet	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	ASLT (P) L.A. Mauritz RAN	Crashed while training at Nowra
11/02/1960	Sea Venom	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	ASLT (P) F.G. Hodgson RAN	Crashed at NAS Nowra
11/02/1960	Sea Venom	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	EM(A) M.W. Holloway RAN	Passenger with ASLT Hodgson
3/12/1964	Sea Venom	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	ASLT (P) G.J. Geerlings RAN	Crashed at NAS Nowra
23/03/1965	Gannet	HMAS <i>Melbourne</i>	ASLT (P) J.M. Hutchison RAN	Crashed into sea after deck hook failure
20/01/1966	Vampire	RAAF Pearce	MIDN A.H. Hammond RAN	Crashed while training
28/04/1966	Sea Venom	HMAS <i>Melbourne</i>	LEUT (O) E.G. Kennell RAN	Killed when ejecting from aircraft at sea
11/10/1967	Vampire	RAAF Laverton	SBLT (P) M.D. Lynch RAN	Crashed on take-off
11/10/1967	Vampire	RAAF Laverton	FLOFFS.R. Barkley RAAF	Passenger in SBLT Lynch aircraft
22/02/1968	US Iroquois	Vietnam	LCDR (P) P.J. Vickers RAN	Killed in Action
5/06/1968	Iroquois	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	LEUT (P) P.C. Ward RAN	Crashed in sea off Beecroft Range
5/06/1968	Iroquois	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	POACM D.J. Sanderson RAN	Crew with LEUT Ward
5/06/1968	Iroquois	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	NAMAE R.K. Smith RAN	Crew with LEUT Ward
21/08/1968	US Iroquois	Vietnam	LEUT (P) A.A. Casadio RAN	Killed in Action
21/08/1968	US Iroquois	Vietnam	POACM O.B.I Phillips RAN	Killed in Action
3/01/1969	US Iroquois	Vietnam	ASLT (P) A.J. Huelin RAN	Killed in Action
31/05/1969	US Iroquois	Vietnam	LACM N.E. Shipp RAN	Killed in Action
16/05/1974	Skyhawk	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	LEUT (P) R. McMillan RAN	Crashed into sea during exercise with carrier
17/07/1975	Skyhawk	HMAS <i>Albatross</i>	SBLT (P) R. McCoy RAN	Mid-Air Collision over Beecroft Range
4/12/1983	Wessex	RAAF East Sale	LSA G. Macey RAN	Ditching off East Sale
4/12/1983	Wessex	RAAF East Sale	CPL G. Campbell RAAF	Ditching off East Sale



Date	Aircraft	Location	Fatalities	Details
20/12/1995	Sea Hawk	HMAS Albatross	LEUT (P) G.M. Brooks RAN	Fell from strop during wet winching drill
16/02/2001	Skyhawk	HMAS Albatross	SQNLDR M. Neilson RNZAF	Practising for Air Display
2/04/2005	Sea King	Relief Ops Indonesia	LEUT (P) P.J. Kimlin RAN	Killed when aircraft crashed on Nias Island
2/04/2005	Sea King	Relief Ops Indonesia	LEUT (P) J.C. King RAN	Killed in crash on Nias Island
2/04/2005	Sea King	Relief Ops Indonesia	LEUT (O) M.P. Goodall RAN	Killed in crash on Nias Island
2/04/2005	Sea King	Relief Ops Indonesia	LSA S.A.C. Bennett RAN	Killed in crash on Nias Island
2/04/2005	Sea King	Relief Ops Indonesia	SQNLDR P.S. McCarthy RAAF	Killed in crash on Nias Island
2/04/2005	Sea King	Relief Ops Indonesia	LEUT MED M.P. Davey RANR	Killed in crash on Nias Island
2/04/2005	Sea King	Relief Ops Indonesia	FLT LT L. E. Rowbottom RAAF	Killed in crash on Nias Island
2/04/2005	Sea King	Relief Ops Indonesia	POMED S.C. Slattery RAN	Killed in crash on Nias Island
2/04/2005	Sea King	Relief Ops Indonesia	SGT W.E. Jones RAAF	Killed in crash on Nias Island

### ABBREVIATIONS

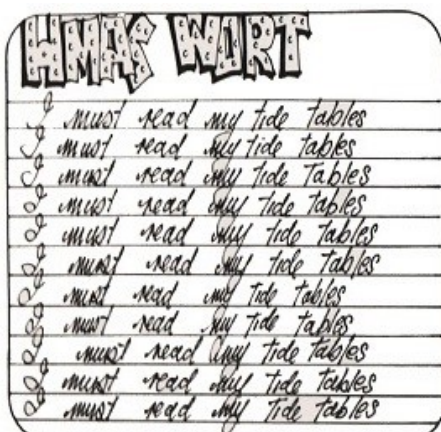
- (A) **Air Branch—May be Pilot or Observer. AEOs, ALOs and other non –aircrew Air Branch officers in the RN also wore the ‘A’ in the curl of stripe up until the early 1950’s.**
- (O) **Observer**
- (P) **Pilot**
- (TAG) **Telegraphist Air Gunner**
- (ACM) **Aircrewman**
- (MED) **Officer or Sailor of the Medical Branch**
- RN **Royal Navy**
- RAN **Royal Australian Navy**
- RANR **Royal Australian Naval Reserve**
- RANVR **Royal Australian Naval Volunteer Reserve**
- RAAF **Royal Australian Air Force**
- RNZAF **Royal New Zealand Air Force**

## Official Roll of Honour

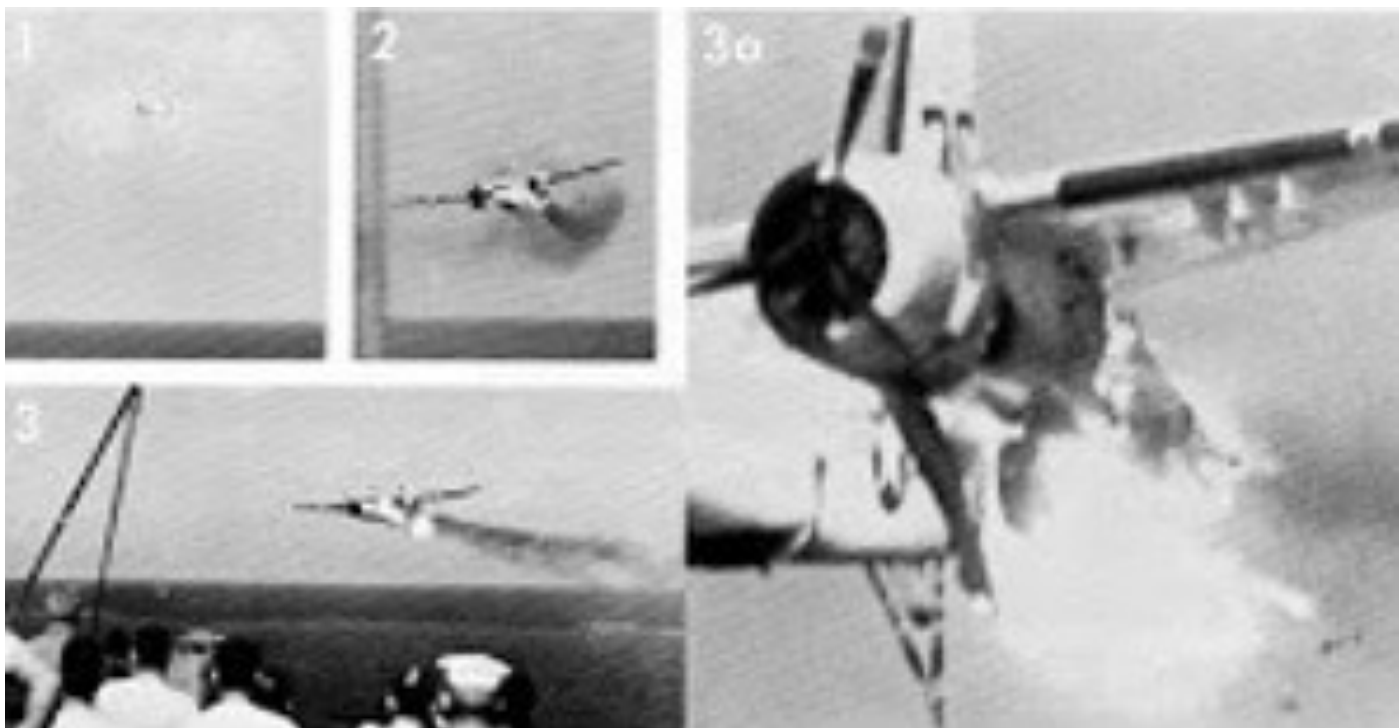
Can either be found on the webpage located [here](#) and/or the Honour Board located in the Fleet Air Arm Museum, Nowra. If the webpage doesn’t open, the Roll of Honour can be located in the ‘Our Heritage’ page of the FAA of Australia website:

(<https://faaaa.asn.au/faa-roll-honour/>).

Each name describes the history of the accident or incident.



Cartoon by Ian Hughes



## Pilot's Blinded by Smoke in Cockpit - Ditched on Instruments

*Extract from 'Approach' Magazine  
(USN Naval Aviation Safety Magazine)*

The first indication of trouble came immediately after the free deck launch of the TS-2A (Tracker) for another carquial landing. Both pilots smelled a tar-like odour and noted smoke from the after compartment. A "Mayday" call was broadcast, an emergency turn downwind was started and the gear was dropped. At this time, the port engine fire warning light came on. The gear was raised and the wings levelled. The pilot, an instructor under training, noted heavy black smoke coming from the oil breather and cowl flap/oilcooler areas. The instructor/copilot, yelled, "You fly the aircraft and I'll secure the port engine!" The time - 1127.

The engine fire-inflight procedures for the port engine were accomplished—mixture first, feather prop, close the emergency switches, and so forth. On the downwind leg, the pilot saw flame in the oil breather area and the copilot saw them in the aft compartment. The port fuel selector was turned off and the port engine fire extinguisher actuated. The fire subsided momentarily and then burst into flames again just prior to the 180 degree position when photo number one was taken.

A single-engine approach was commenced from the 180. The port prop had feathered; however, it intermittently turned very slowly until the aircraft

reached the 90. When the meatball was picked up, the copilot placed the gear handle in the down position and changed the flap setting from one-third to two-thirds.

The wheels failed to extend!

Rather than attempt a single engine wheels-up landing on board ship, which could have been disastrous to shipboard personnel, the decision was made to ditch along the starboard side of the ship. The pilot placed the wheel handle UP to prevent the wheels from coming down prior to ditching. After the 90, the smoke became so thick in the cockpit that the pilots outside vision was practically non-existent. Both pilots were on instruments and could see the water only occasionally through a clear area near the bottom of the bubble side windows.

*(It is believed that the smoke entered the cockpit through the port wingroot and then went out through the open hatches over the pilots.--Ed.)*

Control forces were extreme, requiring the coordinated strength of both pilots. The rudder assist was inoperative. Photos three through five record progress up the starboard side and six shows the ditching.

Impact was hard, about 3 degrees nose-down at about 90 knots. A split second before impact, the outboard port flap pushrod burned through, causing the left wing to drop. This, plus the trailing port gear, caused the aircraft to enter the water left wing



down. A left-to-right shearing force split the cockpit just forward of the pilots.

Escape from the aircraft was made immediately. The left seat pilot had no cockpit left in front of him—he merely released his belt and harness and floated to the surface.

The copilot was less fortunate. First, he pulled his broken left leg free from wreckage with his hands. Next, he removed a piece of webbing that was re-straining him. After floating to the surface, he pulled the toggles of his mae west. The preserver had been punctured during the ditching and would not inflate. With multiple fractures of both legs; a dislocated left shoulder, and a broken hand, he somehow managed, through sheer perseverance, to tread water for the few seconds until the helo could pick him up.

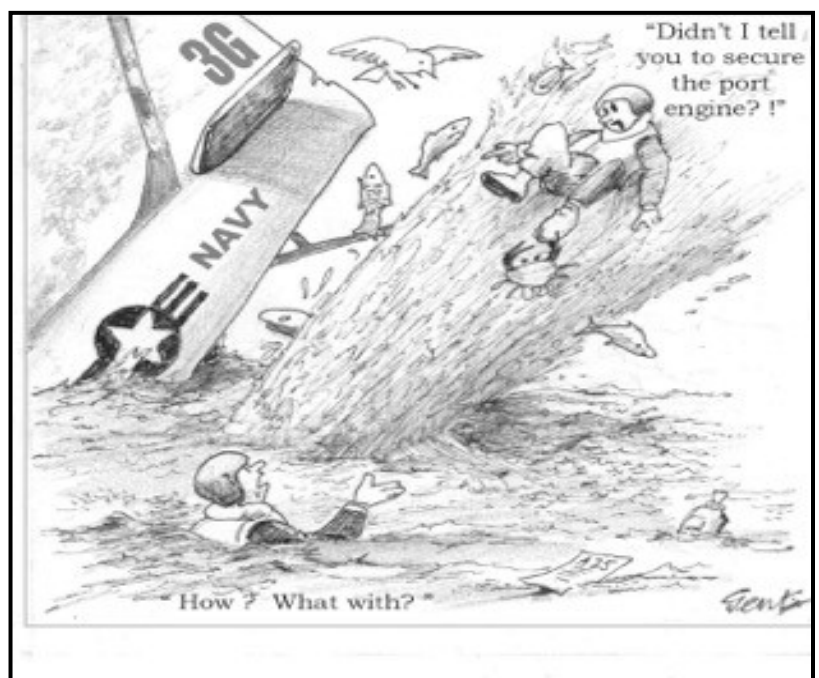
Both pilots were on the carrier's flight Deck at 1131 ½ exactly 4 ½ minutes after the first "Mayday" was transmitted.

Later, when questioned as to how he managed to stay afloat, the instructor/copilot answered: "I don't know—that adrenalin is good stuff. In fact, I didn't even notice that I was hurt until I was in the helo."

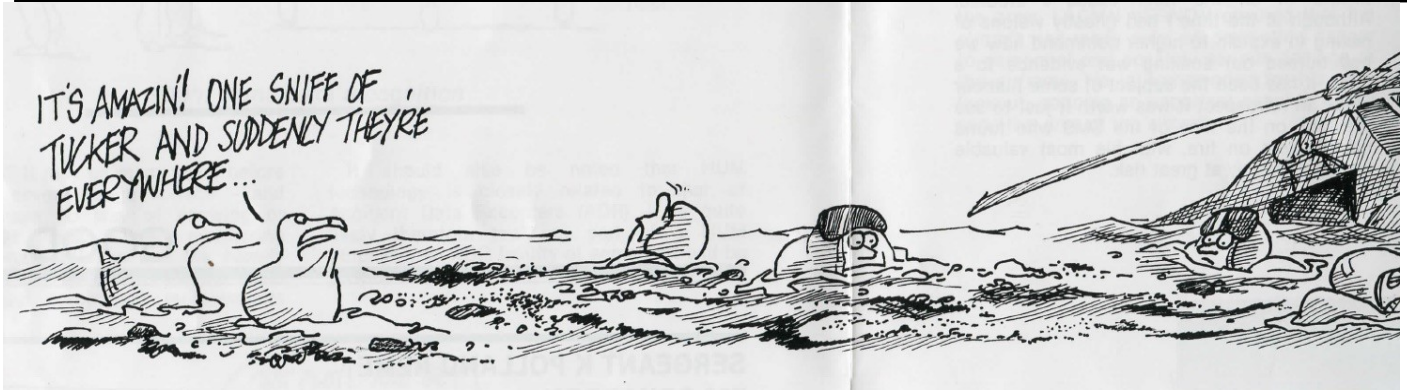
Here's a couple of naval aviation's "old pros" in action in the clutch. Both

knew their emergency procedures cold, and more important, put them to work perfectly. They coordinated and conducted their cockpit duties with precision as the emergency situation changed. Their ability to remain calm and to function flawlessly was truly remarkable.

*(Copies of 'Approach' Magazines available [here](#) - online versions only)*



# Water, Water, Everywhere



**By Marcus Peake**

Some readers will remember, in the days before the new sewage treatment plant was opened near Bondi, the unsavoury brown smear that used to taint the blue waters off Sydney, not too far south of the Heads. On a good day on the beach they say you could catch something nasty by walking without a pair of sturdy shoes on: certainly it was not the place to do press-ups, or swimming.

So thought the crew of an RAN Wessex, who were in the happy position of flying over the brown mess and looking down on it from a safe height, wrapped securely in a familiar cockpit, on their way to a week in warmer climes to the north.

The Captain of the aircraft, an aviator of some experience, remembers commenting that it would not be a good time to have an engine failure. It was an ill-considered remark, for the God of Aviators, ever alert for the idle tone of complacency, nudged the sixth stage compressor of the beast and the ancient engine quit without further ado, plunging the luckless occupants into the sea some half a mile off the coast.

From that height it was all over in a few seconds ... some of the passengers didn't even have time to take a deep breath before they were competing with the seagulls for the awful flotsam.

The Engineer and I received the message not long after the Wessex was in the water. The crew, alive and unhurt but rather unhappy, had been rescued and were being detoxified on the cliff edge (a big job!). With the human element safe, and the salvage crews on site attempting to tow the hull into Botany Bay, our job was to investigate the cause of the accident.

By the time the wreck was lifted onto the quayside, it had been dragged semi-submerged for eight hours, and the immediate impression, as it dangled

from the crane in a dripping, tangled web of wires, panels and struts, was how thoroughly *wet* it was.

Throughout the night the engineering team hosed the wreck with fresh water to attempt to stop the corrosive reaction between brine and magnesium alloy. Not long before dawn, with the hulk impossibly even wetter than before, they coated it in WD40 and snatched a few hours sleep.

We were greeted with a beautiful day: the kind that starts with pale sunshine lighting every crevice of the morning with such clarity that you feel you can see forever, where angles are sharp and precise and every colour is bright and vivid.

## Beating Himself Vigorously

Weary and unshaven, feeling like a stunned mullet and looking forward to a long and dreary day, I gazed over the quay to where the crane had just lifted the tired hull of the old Wessex onto the flatbed trailer; and as I watched, a figure - obviously the Senior Maintenance Sailor (SMS) - leapt from the back of the aircraft and, from my vantage some distance away, appeared to have a violent fit: rolling around on the ground and beating himself vigorously.

The other maintainers appeared to group around him obscuring the twitching figure momentarily before helping him to his feet - obviously all was now well. A moment later, however, he was back on the ground, tearing at his clothes and his friends scattered - some running to a nearby hut and some to a water hydrant.

Even in my semi-comatose state I was able to deduce quickly that something bizarre was occurring; so, jumping in my car, I raced over to the hulk to investigate the apparent madness that had overtaken the group. It had to be madness - they had the hose on the unfortunate man now, on his feet struggling against the jet of ice cold water.

Behind him the dripping wreck sat slightly canted on the trailer, wisps of smoke issuing from its

innards. Smoke?! It wasn't possible - not in something so totally, absolutely, positively drenched.

My mind, overawed at the sight of the SMS now tearing off his trousers, refused absolutely to accept that the precious evidence in front of me, which was going to tell me how and why the engine had failed, was on fire: but as I watched, little goutts of flame leapt up at apparently random intervals over the floor and the pools of water trapped in the dents sized and spat at them.

Behind me, the SMS's trousers, discarded like a tired whale skin, started smoking and suddenly they too were alight; further over another sailor suddenly wriggled like a startled eel and beat at his legs, his overalls smoldering. In an instant, the scene deteriorated to a farce.

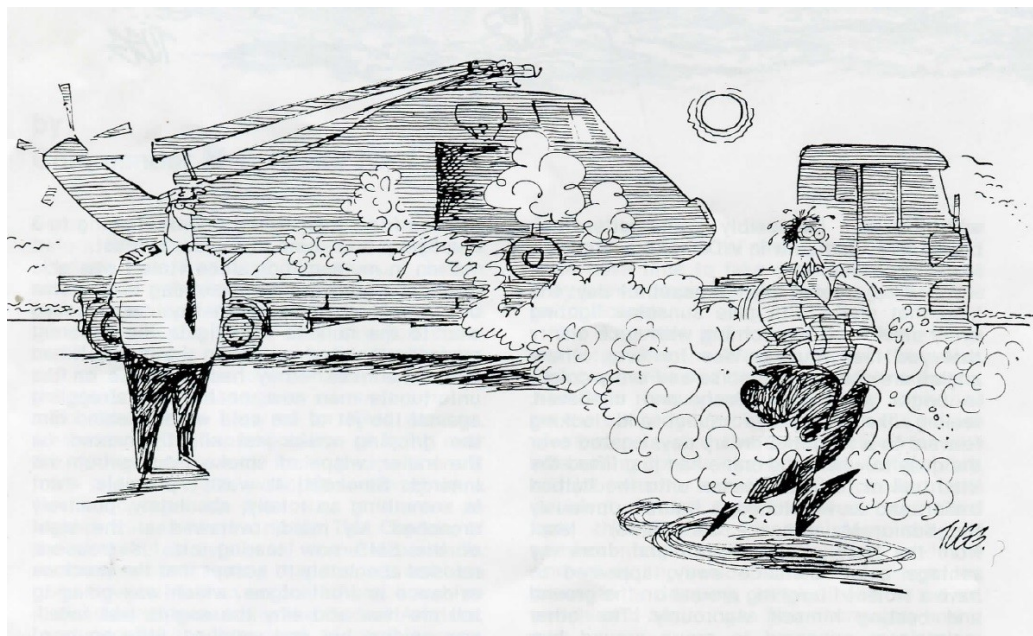
With the help of two fire engines, a chemical spill specialist unit (in the biggest yellow fire truck I have ever seen), an ambulance and a large and amused crowd of dockside workers who thought their luck had changed, control was eventually restored. The fires were put out (with a lot of difficulty), and the SMS reunited with his trousers, which smoldered on and off for the rest of the week.

### Lifting of the Wessex

During that day the wreckage was returned to Nowra intact, with the Engineer Officer stopping every few miles to extinguish the spot fires which persisted in springing up in the wreckage. I'm told that even the passengers' luggage, salvaged as sodden remnants from the cabin, caught fire when it was later hung on the respective washing lines to dry. All in all it was an interesting experience.

And the reason? The aircraft was carrying the faithful pusser's Marker Marine when it ditched, one of which had broken open to release apparently thousands of small pieces of white phosphorus into the cabin.

Whilst the aircraft was wet, or covered with WD40, it remained inert. The lifting of the Wessex on to the trailer caused residual water in the hull to wash the phosphorus clean and, once exposed to the air, it began to burn. The SMS and his team, clam-



***“It was worth it just to see the look on the face of the SMS who found his trousers on fire with his most valuable assets at great risk”***

bering around inside the hulk, had phosphorus stuck to their trousers and even the luggage had minute specks clinging to it.

There's no moral to this story, other than that one should expect the unexpected in aviation. All the text books on accident investigation didn't prepare me for this one, and I can't say I ever had anything quite so bizarre in all the later cases I studied. Although at the time I had ghastly visions of having to explain to higher command how we had burned our soaking wet evidence to a crisp, it has been the subject of some humour since. In retrospect it was worth it just to see the look on the face of the SMS who found his trousers on fire and his most valuable assets suddenly at great risk.

## December Edition

Closing date for all Articles to be considered and Divisional Reports to be into the Editor no later than  
**1 December 2019**

## They Gave Me A Seafire

By Commander R. 'Mike'  
Crosley DSC\* RN

Every book I read stays with me in one way or the other. Some, of course, really strike a chord and give more than just a good reading experience. These are the books that just keep giving and even the mere sight of them on the shelf makes me smile (and cause me to wax lyrical...). Regular readers of 'Aircrew Book Reviews' will know how special 'Mike' Crosley's *They Gave Me A Seafire* is to me.

'Mike' Crosley signed up for the Fleet Air Arm at the height of the Battle of Britain because the 'wait list' for the RAF was too long. Joining a service that was struggling with its own identity, a lack of modern aircraft and components of the leadership team who vehemently questioned the very existence of the aviation branch, he makes it through intensive - albeit occasionally archaic and amusing - training before flying operationally.

He survives the sinking of HMS *Eagle*, the North African landings, Arctic convoys and so much more before taking command of a Seafire squadron prior to its deployment to the war against Japan as part of the British Pacific Fleet. He is frank about the service's failings, particularly the mis-use of the Seafire and fighter force in general, but highlights the phenomenal job everyone did despite them.

The Fleet Air Arm, by the end of the war, was a very effective fighting force and was perfectly placed to take advantage of the massive advances in naval aviation, many developed by the service itself, that were to come in the years immediately following the war. Crosley was there for all of it.

*They Gave Me A Seafire* generated a wonderful response from the author's wife who, pleasingly, has written a beautiful postscript, using excerpts from letters, about her husband. While the main body of the book, because it is so well written, allows the reader to build the perfect picture of Crosley the man, this postscript looks at him through the eyes of his wife of more than 40 years. She writes, understandably, with heart and passion remembering a committed family man, a talented woodwork-

## BOOK REVIEW



er who built many a boat and a fine pilot who contributed so much to naval aviation.

What really adds to what I guarantee to be a brilliant read is the two sections of now glossy photographs. The collection of photos used, with some exceptions, are the same as the earlier edition. The additional images do add to what has already been published but, they are placed at the end of the second section and in some cases, are out of order chronologically.

If you have not already read this superb book, this is the perfect opportunity to right a wrong. If you've read it, introduce a friend or younger type who has not yet had the pleasure! It remains one of the most honest, candid and truly delightful memoirs I have read. This new edition, with the postscript, is the perfect memorial to one of the Fleet Air Arm's greats (Edited Version).

Andy Wright

Aircrew Book Review website located [here](#)

# Courage In the Skies

By John Eames

**C***ourage in the Skies* is the story of Qantas at war and the heroic deeds of its aircrew and ground staff as the Japanese advanced towards Australia.

John Eames the author had been involved in aviation since he began work as an aviation writer in the 1960's. He had been a Ministerial Press Secretary and aviation adviser to governments and to a senior executive with Qantas. He has been the author of eight books including *Taking to the Skies* and *The Flying Kangaroo*.

Eames explains the early days of Qantas describing how it all started on 16 November 1920 at Winton before moving to Longreach in 1921. Eames then describes why the move to Brisbane in 1930 was necessary. He says, the major leap for Qantas occurred on 26 February 1935 when Qantas made its first overseas trip in a DH86 aircraft with a service between Brisbane-Darwin-Singapore taking four days.

In 1938, Qantas introduced the Empire C Class flying boats named: *Cooee*, *Coorong*, *Carpenteria*, *Coogee*, and *Corio*. Shortly after, Qantas pilots were introduced to the Catalina flying boat when they initially brought out 19 for the RAAF.

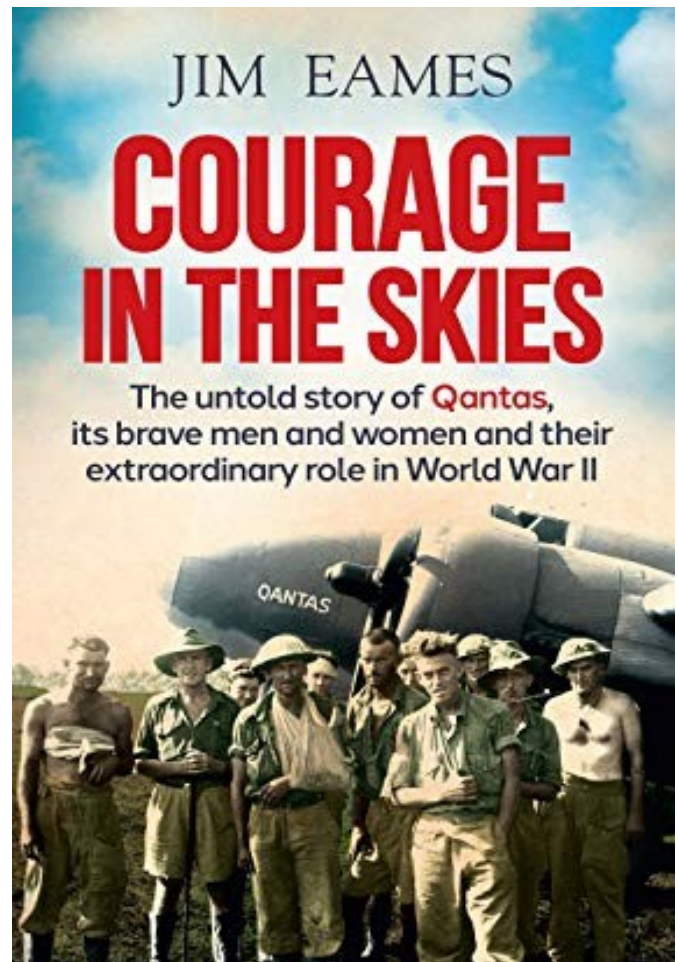
From there, the book elaborates that both the British and Australian governments were wary of emerging American efforts to extend their services on from New Zealand.

The book moves onto the risks of flying of unarmed aircraft through war zones and at times under enemy fire, with Qantas supplying the front lines, evacuating wounded and undertaking surprising escapes, including carrying more than 40 anxious civilians on the last aircraft to leave besieged Singapore.

The author outlines and displays graphic images of the various routes taken to avoid war zones. However, this wasn't to be ongoing as Qantas later experience the ordeal of a war zone.

This was evident in Papua New Guinea where Qantas aircraft both land and water based, were used in transport and rescue of downed aircrew as part of the US Air Transport Command.

## BOOK REVIEW



*Courage in the Skies* reveals that between 1942 and 1943, Qantas lost eight aircraft in war zones. The first of these was Flying Boat *Corio* shot down off Timor. In the coming months it is disclosed that four other Qantas aircraft were lost: *Circe* off Java; *Corinna* and *Centaurus* at Broome and *Corinthian* at Darwin.

Around mid-1943 the link between the UK and Australia was re-established with Qantas flying Catalinas between Perth and Ceylon with the British responsible for the remainder of the journey.

Overall, over 60 passengers and aircrew died in war zones while with Qantas. The book further explains Qantas exemplary contribution to Australia's war effort and courage of its people in those difficult times. Yet, most of this contribution is now forgotten. A worthwhile read.

*Paul Shiels*

# Second Class of Joint Helicopter School Graduates

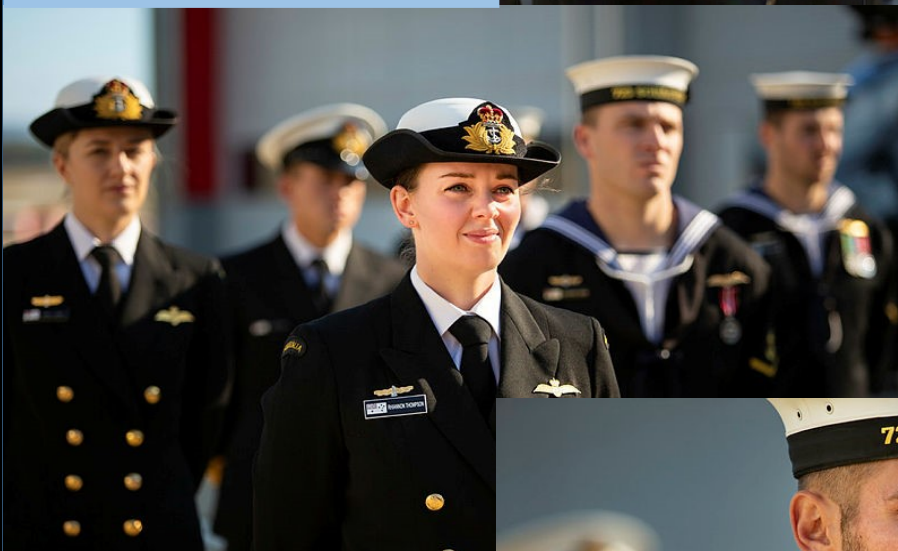


*Left, Five EC-135's conduct a fly-over during the Joint Helicopter School No.2 Pilot, Aviation Warfare Officer and Aircrewman graduation at 723 squadron HMAS Albatross earlier this year.*

*Right, Commander Fleet Air Arm, Commodore Don Dezentje, CSM, RAN, inspects the parade*



*Left, Sub Lieutenant Rhiannon Thompson RAN, in front, stands on parade during the graduation ceremony*



*Right, Leading Seaman Michael Bennet during the graduation of the second class of the Joint Helicopter School*





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# Feedback

on 'online' and new hard copy format

*Continued from Page 25*

## **Printer's Fault?**

I have just received the latest Slipstream via post. In some previous issues, many stories are not printed in full, and I have found this to be repeated in this last issue.

I presume this is a printers issue and not yours. I feel it is time the printer made sure that all stories are printed in full without missing the end bits. I would have thought the editor at the print end would read the stories before going into full print.

*Ian Laidler SA Committee Member*

*(Unfortunately, it's not entirely the Printer's fault. The problem arose with me located in Adelaide and the Printer in Bomaderry. Without face-to-face discussions it proved difficult to convey each other's pre-requisites. This matter has now been resolved where a local Nowra member will liaise with the Printer and check a copy for errors on my behalf prior to the whole order being printed .....Ed)*

## **Hard Copy Doesn't Match On-Line Version**

Was great to hear you were taking on the massive task of Editor of Slipstream. My hard copy arrived in the mail Thursday and I have been slowly working my way through it.

I like the new layout and am thoroughly enjoying reading the articles. Unfortunately I have found a 'glitch' with my hard copy.

On the off chance this has not already been brought to your attention I shall try to explain.

The typesetting of each printed page of the hard copy does not match that of the on-line copy which has resulted in lines(not just one or two) missing altogether from the printed hard copy. On reading each article It's been like getting to the end of the book only to find the last page missing!

Thankfully I received a link to view the on-line version so have been able to fill in the missing lines.

No doubt this little 'glitch' can be ironed out for the September issue which I am already looking forward to receiving.

*Michael Cain*

## **Prefer Hard Copy**

At the age of 84 I prefer the hard copy, hope you can continue with this until my demise as I have enjoyed Slipstream for many years now.

*John Fenner*

## **Electronic Format Annoying**

I have to admit that I find the electronic format annoying i.e. slow to load blanks in and out and I cannot download it.

Also I cannot access the form for the FAA Wall of service so can you send me a copy. Pdf will be fine.

And if possible can you put me on the distribution list for the hard copy .

*Neil G Forbes*

*(I am sorry you had problems loading the electronic format Neil. Most others managed to open it satisfactorily. "Forms for the Wall of Service", if you prefer not to apply electronically, can be downloaded [here](#), or obtained from the [webmaster](#) on 0413 250 969")*

## **Pop-up Ads Annoying**

This will take some getting used to. I am able to negotiate through it all. I am on a Mac so it works ok on this system.

The pop-up ads are a bit annoying but that is the way of the internet these days.

A spin off.... I was able to read other association's magazines.

The system that Navy News uses I suppose is too expensive for Slipstream?

*Trevor Rieck*

*(Pop-up Ads can be removed if upgraded to Premium version. A decision for the National Executive!)*

# The Latest from the West

*By Sharron Spargo*

At the West Australian division AGM in April the 'Scribe' keyboard was passed to me simply as a means to lighten Keith's considerable load. With 'L plates' firmly attached, here we go.



For many of us Anzac Day 2019 began with the beauty and solemnity of a Kings Park dawn service where an estimated 30,000 gathered to honour our service men and women. After the main service a group of Aboriginal dancers performed a moving Corroboree and a specially written Haka called 'Whakapuakitanga' or 'The Declaration' performed by New Zealand dancers, followed. This 30 minute performance drew many thousands of those who attended the dawn service and it's hoped that this ceremony will become an additional Anzac Day tradition.

Under a cloudless blue sky a large cheering crowd greeted the marchers, more and more of whom were driven through Perth streets this year, as I'm sure is the case throughout Australia with the passing of the years. Our numbers were down a little at our Northbridge hangout - Rosie's - this year but by the level of noise and the amount of drinks sunk, you would have been hard pressed to know it. Guests included Secretary of the Queensland Division, John Stewart; Tasmania Division Tassie Browning and his grandson former Chief Adam Fletcher; Bill Sonsee, his son Gavin and daughter - in - law Raelene, who are presently serving in the Army.

Once again the Flight Training School, this year led by CO Stu Marshman, were a popular addition and showed every sign of thoroughly enjoying all the 'warries' shared. To that end, a very gratefully accepted anonymous donation of US\$500 (AUD\$671.80), went a long way to keeping tonsils lubricated!

Our division has kept busy with our now annual April fundraiser, again drawing many members to gather for that quintessentially Aussie tradition; the Bunnings sausage sizzle. It's a long hot day of hard graft and it always amazes me how many sausages people will eat! Mike and Lyn Keogh organise the whole enterprise from buying to rostering the work force and as we always run out of snags, (and rolls this year) Mike's role is expanded to include that of mercy dasher to the nearest supermarket. It's always a fun day but not without its hazards; Squizzy Taylor sported an impressive burn on his stomach (the sup-

plied BBQ was on its last legs and the heat couldn't be turned down) and we all sported wrinkled fingers a la kids on summer school holidays! Every time I lifted my hand to wipe the sweat from my face or push my hair back, a steady stream of 'water', having collected in my surgical gloves, poured down (up?) my arms. Not a good look. I suppose neither was me standing in a drinks tub of iced water in an effort to cool down my burning feet! Just to be clear, the tub was empty of drinks and I was wearing my shoes!

Its just as well the day always swells our coffers successful as its not for the faint hearted but the crew are motivated to enjoy a laughter filled day with great mates for a good cause. Bring on next April!

## Travelled to Hawaii

Keith, Greg Kelson and Jim Bush have represented our division at various services of late with the DVA Australian Veterans Children Assistance Trust, The Battle of the Coral Sea Ceremony at the state War Memorial and then at Council House being just a few. Keith and Doris Taylor once again attended the United States Memorial Day celebrations, where Michael Munjac, USN (Rtd), President North American Veterans Unit, usually presides. As Michael was unwell, a representative of Veterans of Foreign Wars stood in this year.

W. A. member Paul Hodgkinson travelled to Hawaii to take part in the commemoration for those lost in the collision between HMAS *Melbourne* and USS *Frank E. Evans*. Held onboard the RMS *Queen Mary*, Paul described it as 'an experience he will remember for the rest of his life'. He had nothing but praise for the quality and presentation of the service with 'the US do it well' summing it up.

Awards of Navy and Marine Corps Commenda-



*A group of WA Division having drinks at "Rosie's"*

tion Medal for Meritorious Achievement were awarded at the ceremony with CMDR Geoff Vickridge being awarded his medal for 'Heroic Actions' here in Perth at the Fiona Stanley Hospital on March 2, 2019, six days before his death.

FAAA founding member Theo Bushe-Jones was awarded a Plaque of Appreciation recently by the Republic of South Korea for his service during the Korean War. Theo's fellow Korean War veteran and founding member, Jack Suriano, along with his wife Shirley travelled to South Korea as guests of the South Korean government to receive his Plaque earlier this year.

As mentioned earlier, Geoff Vickridge crossed the bar earlier this year. His funeral, held on March 20, was very well attended by our members and we were stunned to hear that Robert Leslie (Lou) Burns died the same day. Lou had been unwell for some time but in true Lou style, he was cracking a joke to the very

end. His funeral was held one week after Geoff's. They will be sadly missed.

On happier note; John Selsmark once again hosted the members to a day's bowling at the Mosmon Park Bowling Club. This would have to be one of the most beautiful bowling venues anywhere. Uninterrupted views over the stunning Swan River with the sunshine reflecting off the water, makes it pretty hard to focus on the bowling. With the BBQ, salad, desert, a few drinks and lots of laughter, the scores were... who cares!

August 18 will see many of our members attend the 53rd Vietnam Veterans Day, Battle of Long Tan Day service at Kings Park. August will also see Keith and Doris attending the Merdeka Day commemorations which remember Australian, Commonwealth and Malaysian Service men and women and their families who have served in Malaysian and South East Asian conflicts since World War 11.



*Members of the WA Korean Association and WA Divisions Members with wives at the Presentation by Jack and Shirley Suriano*

Jack Suriano and wife Shirley were part of a sponsored group of Korean Veterans from England, Canada, New Zealand and Australia invited to South Korea for Anzac Day 2019.

They were overwhelmed with the care and attention that was shown to all those who attended.

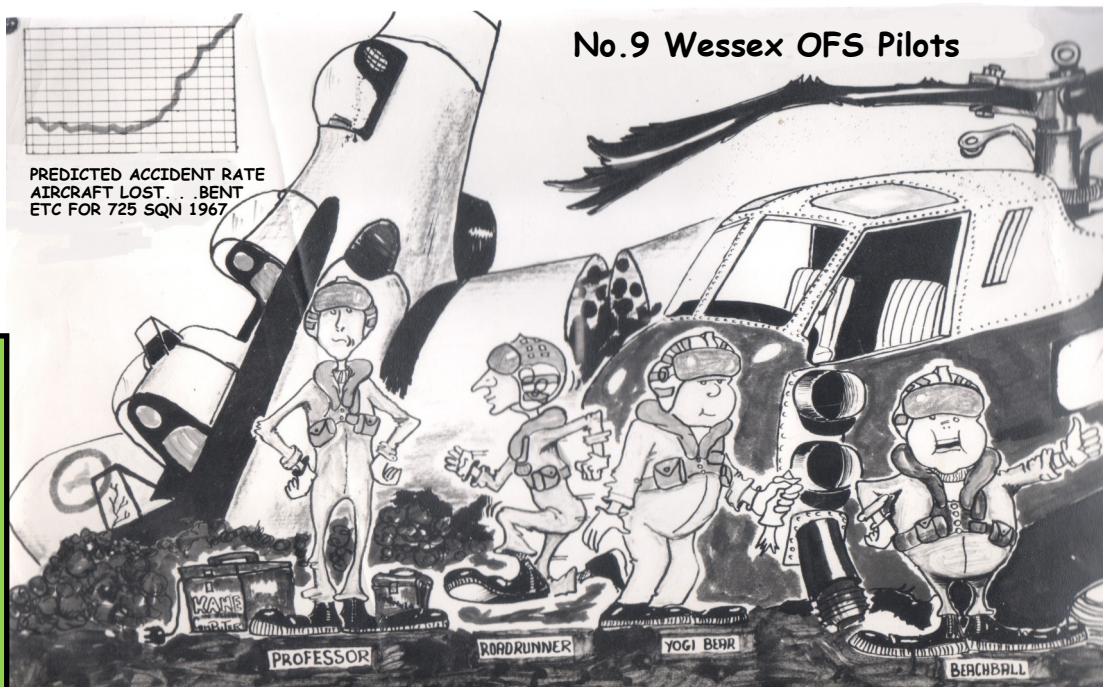
A special video was produced and the WA Division invited the Honourable Consul General for South Korea and Members of the Korean Association to attend our General Meeting on Sunday 11 August to view the video.

We hope to get copies of the video that we can circulate around the Division, where I'm sure Korean Vets in the Division would enjoy watching it.

*Keith Taylor  
WA Secretary*

**No. 9 Wessex OFS  
for Pilots: Staff Lowe  
(Professor);  
Tony Casadio  
(Road Runner);  
Jeff Dalglish (Yogi  
Bear); and  
Ray Godfrey  
(Beachball)**

Any member who wishes to change their delivery preference for 'Slipstream' should advise their State Division Secretary in the first instance with an information to National Data Director [here](#)



## Eric Brown's First Mosquito Carrier Deck Landing!



Recently I (.....Ed) was provided a YouTube link by a friend outlining deck trials by well-known test pilot, Captain Eric 'Winkle' Brown RN. As I found this video to be so interesting, I thought I'd paraphrase it for those who only receive the hard copy of 'Slipstream'.

It was in January 1944 that the then Lieutenant Brown RNVR was asked by the Admiralty if he could land a Mosquito on an aircraft carrier. The Mosquito undertook its carrier deck landing trials on HMS *Indefatigable* in the Irish Sea, making it the first deck landing of a British heavy twin-engine aircraft.

In the introduction to the video 'Winkle' says there were three British aircraft that stood out in World War II—the Spitfire, Mosquito and the Lancaster.

He then explains how he and a Scottish 'boffin', assigned to him to help with figures, set about the trial. There were a few problems that needed to be worked out in the first instance. Because of the limitations of the performance of the arrestor gear, 'Winkle' was told that the maximum speed he could enter the arrestor gear was 83 mph. The Mosquitos normal approach speed was 125 mph, so he and the 'boffin' had to work out how to reduce the approach speed by around 40 mph.

### Stalling Speed

'Winkle' said that more powerful engines would be needed as well as four bladed propellers instead of the standard three on the normal Mosquito. The main concern was that because these were experimental propellers they couldn't be feathered. So, an engine failure on the approach would be disastrous. Trialling an engine failure at a higher level 'Winkle' found that the aircraft would invert itself within two seconds.

The stalling speed for the Mosquito was 110 mph but because of the low approach speed required, the stalling speed had to be brought down to 83 mph. The only way he could do this was put more power on the engines and hang off the props at about 90 mph. When no more than three feet above the deck he'd cut the engines. It worked out better than 'Winkle' thought with entry into No.2 arrestor wire at 78 mph.

The largest aircraft that had been landed on a British aircraft carrier until then was the 'Grumman TBF Avenger' at 10,545 lbs. The Mosquito started its trial

at 16,000 lbs going up to 20,000 lbs with a further increase to 21,000 lbs on take-off with a full bomb load.

Strength of the aircraft came into it, as most who are familiar with carrier operations would know. With the Mosquito having a wooden frame, many predicted the hook or back end would be torn off. 'Winkle' said that there was only a small amount of strengthening added in the fuselage. On take-off there was this powerful swing to port. Luckily, it was away from the carrier's island.

### Japan's Capitulation

'Winkle' elaborates that the objective for these trials were for 'Operation Highball'. With the concept of a seaborne Mosquito proved, the Royal Air Force prepared for Highball attacks on the Imperial Japanese fleet, assigning two carriers and 24 aircraft to the mission. The specially trained No.618 Squadron RAF and their modified Mosquito B Mk.XVIs were deployed as far forward as Australia aboard HMS *Fencer* (D64) and *Striker* (D12) in December 1944. However, bickering between RN and USN commands, and then Japan's capitulation, meant No. 618 Sqn would get a world tour but no action.

By coincidence, *Indefatigable* was on station in Japanese waters at the time of the surrender.

Still, from Eric Brown's remarkable trials, the Mosquito TR. Mk.33 would be developed. Only 50 would be built, along with six slightly updated TR.37s, and the 'Sea Mosquito' entered service with the Fleet Air Arm in August 1946.

This story again demonstrates the need for fixed wing aircraft to be located at sea on aircraft carriers. The 'Doolittle Raid' from a US carrier to attack Japan, the Battle of the Coral Sea; the Battle of Midway; and much later the Falklands War all demonstrated the need for ship borne fixed wing aircraft to be within easy reach of the target where land based aircraft were and are unable to fulfil the task.

To view the full video of Captain Eric 'Winkle' Brown RN on the Mosquito trials click [here](#). (On-Line subscribers only). The website "Movie Library" contains many other films [here](#)

# Medal Presentation Marks 50th Anniversary of HMAS Melbourne and USS Frank E. Evans Disaster



**Left to Right: Commodore Mathew L. Hudson RAN, Kerry James, Robert Winston, Patrick Richardson, Steve Kraus & Commodore Gabriel Varela USN**

*By Steve Kraus*

*President USS Frank E. Evans Association*

It was in late March 2019 the USS *Frank E. Evans* Association received a query regarding 17 shipmates that were aboard HMAS *Melbourne* (R-21) on the dreadful morning of 3 June 1969.

According to the communication it was believed they had been recommended for a Navy Commendation clear back in October 1970. However, they were never presented the medals because Australian law prohibited Australian Military personnel from wearing a foreign country's medal.

The Association's immediate response was that we knew several sailors aboard HMAS *Melbourne* (R-21) who had acted in a heroic manner during the recovery of USS *Frank E. Evans* (DD-754) Sailors, but we were unsure of their identities.

Upon further investigation we learned that 17 of HMAS *Melbourne's* crew members had been recognised by the United State Navy and recommended for receipt of medals.

The plan was to present the medals on 3 June 2019 in Sydney, Australia. However, it was determined that three of the recipients had made plans to attend the 50th Remembrance gathering in Long Beach, California. Plans went in motion to present the medals at one of the evening banquets, but it was important for this to be a complete surprise! It stretched our imaginations on how to pull off such a presentation. The Association requested Commodore Gabriel Varela USN to be the keynote speaker at the 3 June evening ban-

quet and to present the medals. To surprise the Australians, Commodore Varela began his speech with "Shipmates, Mr. Richardson, Mr. James, Mr. Winston, friends and family of the *Frank E Evans* Association. I am honoured to be here with all of you today to remember the 74 Sailors who lost their lives 50 years ago today, and to specifically recognize the heroism of three men, who exhibited extreme bravery during the aftermath of this terrible accident."

Commodore Varela went on to say "No matter what country's military you serve in and in what capacity, one of the very first thing you learn is that you are part of a team and the men and women in that team are a family and you are part of that family and it is your duty to protect

that family. These three men are exemplified in a bible passage in Psalm 107: "They that go down to the sea in ships; That do business in great waters; They see the works of God and his wonders of the deep." For the official presentations of the medals, Commodore Mathew L. Hudson, CSC, RAN and Association President Steve Kraus joined Commodore Varela on stage. (*Commodore Hudson had presented a wreath during the morning memorial ceremony on behalf of Australia.*)

## **RAN Medal Recipients**

### **Navy and Marine Corps Medal**

LEUT Robert Burns

AB Alan Evett

AB Patrick Richardson

### **Air Medal**

CMDR Geoffrey Vickeridge

LCDR Des Rogers

LCDR Leslie Powell

### **Navy Commendation Medal**

CMDR Errol Stevens

LCDR Colin Patterson

LEUT James Buchanan

CA Stanley Heares

LS Liam McDonald

AB Lewis Farkas

EM Wayne Baldwin

EM Kerry James

NA Ian Hartley

NA Robert Winston

OS Chris Harris

# Support Sought for Photographic Branch History

**A**re you able and willing to assist in capturing the early days of the Navy's Photographic Branch? As the unofficial co-ordinator of the Photographic Branch history I seek your assistance in gathering the material that we can use to produce an historic endeavour that can be published (electronically) that captures our collective efforts in recording the Australian Navy's exploits, successes and disasters.

I am not asking for willing workers to write a thesis, nor a Pulitzer Prize tome, just what happened or what is being described based on experience, knowledge and qualifying references (where available). Having observed the increasing material being populated on Alan Moore's Photographic Branch Facebook link, unfortunately, there is only limited depth to the placements covered, and a more robust and detailed means of capturing past events is required. Therefore, your knowledge and expertise in the following areas are sought.

Overall, the ultimate Navy historic events and ship histories affecting photographic policy, postings and tasking is the overarching theme:

## CHAPTER 1 "THE CHALLENGE" PURPOSE AND ROLE

### CHAPTER 2 THE EARLY YEARS

### CHAPTER 3 THE YEARS 1947-1959

### CHAPTER 4 THE YEARS 1960-1969

### CHAPTER 5 THE YEARS 1970-1979

### CHAPTER 6 THE YEARS 1980-1989

### CHAPTER 7 THE YEARS 1990-1999

### CHAPTER 8 THE YEARS 2000-2009

### CHAPTER 9 THE YEARS 2010-

### CHAPTER 10 "THE TOOLS" - TECHNOLOGY

### CHAPTER 11 "THE SALT MINES" - PHOTOGRAPHIC SECTIONS AND POSTINGS

### CHAPTER 12 "THE SELECTED FEW" - PEOPLE AND COURSES

### CHAPTER 13 "THE WORKERS" - BIOGRAPHIES

Each chapter is meant to cover the photographic branch people, equipment and materials that met the requirements of the Navy during the period or topic in question. These cover the following (and more): mission, role, changes, introduction of technology, activities, war service, deployments, inputs and outcomes, amusing incidents, embarrassing moments, acts of notoriety (legends in own life times), sports prowess, equipment, photographic sections, etc.

Please give the project your serious consideration.

Those early years (Chapters 2 to 5) are slipping past at an ever increasing speed (or so it seems). In addition, Chapters 6 to 9 are also increasing speed and will need to be captured, although a greater body of living storytellers do remain with us to capture the "tall and true", hopefully soon after the first 30 plus years section.

## CHAPTER 13 - PERSONAL BIOGRAPHIES

- Photograph (Mug Shot / Portrait)
- Pre Navy
- Where born
- Where grew up
- Schooling
- interesting personal circumstances Navy and Navy Photography Involvement

*To suggest, but just a few:*

- ⇒ Posting.
- ⇒ Position / job.
- ⇒ Dates.
- ⇒ Other photographers involved.
- ⇒ Activities.
- ⇒ War service.
- ⇒ Deployments.
- ⇒ Inputs and outcomes.
- ⇒ Amusing incidents.
- ⇒ Embarrassing moments.
- ⇒ Acts of notoriety. (legends in own life times) Etc.
- ⇒ Post Navy
- ⇒ Employment.
- ⇒ Further learning and professional successes.
- ⇒ Home base.
- ⇒ Family.
- ⇒ Community successes.
- ⇒ Examples of Individual's Special or Work-Related Photographs

The amount of information can be as much as the individual feels comfortable with.

As with any research undertaking, the outcome for each chapter will rely, primarily, on the information provided, the links to allow further research to be undertaken, and much more.

From the, hopefully, sizeable amount of material provided by the individual the other chapters will be able to be fleshed out.

The suggested format for Chapter 13 – Biographies, will be reduced to a single A-4 length column for the sake of brevity. Possibly in a triple column per page arrangement.

*Best regards,  
Charlie Lammers*



*724 Squadron Macchi Aircraft in Formation flying over the Nowra area in the mid 1970's*



*On the left,  
Three Navy Dakotas  
from 851 Squadron in  
formation overflying  
NAS Nowra in the  
early 1970's. Suspect  
photo was taken  
from fourth Navy  
Dakota?*

(Note: You can see a Heritage Article on our 'Daks' on our website [here](#) under "Heritage Menu/Heritage Articles/The Douglas Dakota. . . . . Ed).

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Please contact Denis Mulvihill at [djmuli@gmail.com](mailto:djmuli@gmail.com) or text to 0412510150, with your request, and address details. He will then get back to you with pricing and payment details (payment either via EFT or cheque)